THE

WORKS

OF

THE LATE REVEREND

JAMES HERVEY, A. M.

RECTOR OF WESTON-FAVELL, IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

CONTAINING

MEDITATIONS AND CONTEMPLATIONS.
THERON AND ASPASIO.
ASPASIO VINDICATED.

SERMONS.
MISCELLANEOUS TRACTS.
A COLLECTION OF LETTERS.

WITH

A PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF THE

LIFE, CHARACTER, AND WRITINGS OF THE AUTHOR.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

A TABLE OF THE SCRIPTURES EXPLAINED,

AND A COMPLETE INDEX OF THE PRINCIPAL MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE WHOLE.

I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST: FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION, TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH.——*ROM. I.* 16.

DO WE MAKE VOID THE LAW THROUGH FAITH? GOD FORBID: YEA, WE ESTABLISH THE LAW.——*ROM. III.* 31.

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THE LIFE OF THE REVEREND JAMES HERVEY, A. M.

A REGARD to eminent writings, which diſplay genius, learning, orthodoxy, and piety, naturally excites a deſire to be acquainted with the writer; and this deſire is the ſtronger, when theſe writings are not only truly excellent in themſelves, but are univerſally admired, eagerly read by good people of all denominations, and calculated to promote the beſt intereſts of mankind. Hence one is fond to know the author in private life, how he ſpent his time, how he ſuſtained his character as a public teacher of religion, what influence the doctrines of grace, which he ſo warmly inculcated on others, had on his own heart and converſation; and finally, how he cloſed the laſt ſcene. Abundant ſatisfaction, as to all thoſe particulars, will be obtained from the following account.

Mr JAMES HERVEY was born on Friday the 26th of February, 1713-14, at Hardingſtone, a country-village, one mile from Northampton; his father being then miniſter of the pariſh of Collingtree, within two miles of Hardingſtone. His firſt inſtruction was from his mother, who taught him his letters and to read. Under her tuition he continued till he was ſeven years of age; when he was ſent, as a day ſcholar, to the free grammar-ſchool at Northampton, of which the Rev. Mr Clarke, Vicar of St Sepulchre's in the ſaid town, was at that time maſter.

At this ſchool he remained till he was ſeventeen years old, and learned the Latin and Greek languages; in which his genius and memory would have enabled him to have made a much earlier progreſs, if it had not been prevented by his ſchoolmaſter, who would not ſuffer him, or any of his ſcholars, to learn faſter than his own ſon. Whilſt Mr Hervey was at ſchool, though he ſhewed a remarkable dexterity at all the innocent games uſual among children; yet he had a perfect indifference for the acquiſitions he made by his ſkill in theſe games, which he practiſed only for exerciſe and amuſement.

In the year 1731; at the age of ſeventeen, he was ſent by his father to the univerſity of Oxford, and entered of Lincoln college there, under the tuition of the Rev. Mr Hutchins, Doctor, and Rector of that college. He reſided in the univerſity ſeven years, and took the degree of Bachelor of Arts. The firſt two or three years were ſpent by him with ſome degree of indolence, or rather leſs application to his ſtudies than he afterwards uſed. But in 1733, about his nineteenth year, becoming acquainted with ſome perſons, who began to diſtinguiſh themſelves by their ſerious impreſſions of religion, and their zeal for the promotion of it, he was engaged, by their influence, in a ſtricter attachment both to piety and learning. He made himſelf maſter of Dr James Keill's Anatomy, Dr Derham's Phyſico-theology and Aſtro-theology, the *Spectacle de la Nature* [Nature Diſplayed] as tranſlated by Mr Humphreys; which laſt work he read with a peculiar ſatisfaction. Nor was he leſs delighted by the *Eſſay on Pope's Odyſſey*, written by the Rev. Mr Spence, Prebendary of Durham; to which elegant and judicious diſcourſe Mr Hervey often acknowledged that he owed more of his improvement in ſtyle and compoſition, than to any other which he had ever read.

In 1734, at the perſuaſion of a much valued friend, he began to learn the Hebrew language without any teacher, by the Weſtminſter grammar itſelf; but ſoon found that grammar too conciſe and difficult for the inſtruction of a learner; and therefore then deſpaired of ever attaining a competent knowledge in the Hebrew, though he afterwards made himſelf ſo thorough a maſter of that ſacred language.

It appears from his letters to his ſiſter in 1733 and 1734, that though he then ſhewed a pious and ſerious turn; yet theſe letters either ſpeak a language different from free grace, for which we find he was afterwards ſo powerful an advocate, or at leaſt they treat very confuſedly of it. The truth is, he was then a ſtranger to, and had ſtrong prepoſſeſſions againſt the doctrine of juſtification by faith in imputed righteouſneſs. And he acknowledges, in a note on his Deſcant upon Creation, that Mr Jenks's excellent treatiſe, entitled, *Submiſſion to the righeouſneſs of God*, was the inſtrument of removing his prejudices, and reducing him to a better judgment.

He entered into holy orders, as ſoon as his age, and the canons of the church, would allow. And though the preciſe time of his taking orders cannot be aſcertained, yet it appears to have been in the end of 1736 or the beginning of 1737; at leaſt, it appears from one of his letters, that he had a curacy in the beginning of the latter year. Whilſt he was at Oxford, he had a ſmall exhibition of about 20l. a-year; and when he was ordained, his father preſſed him very much to take ſome curacy, in or near Oxford, and to hold his exhibition: but this he would by no means comply with, thinking it an injuſtice to detain it, after he was in orders, from another perſon, who might more want the benefit of that proviſion. On his leaving Oxford in 1736, he went to his father, and became his curate. He afterwards went to London; and after ſtaying ſome time there, became curate at Dummer. Here he continued about twelve months; and, upon his leaving that curacy, in the year 1738, he was invited and went to Stoke-Abbey, in Devonſhire, the ſeat of his worthy friend, the late Paul Orchard, Eſq. Here he lived upwards of two years, in great eſteem and friendſhip with that worthy gentleman, who valued him very much for his piety. A remarkable proof of the great regard he had for him on that account, he ſhewed on the following occaſion.——When his eldeſt ſon, Paul Orchard, Eſq; to whom the ſecond volume of his Meditations is dedicated, was to be baptized, he inſiſted that Mr Hervey ſhould be one of his godfathers, that he might have an eye to his Chriſtian education; and this he did in preference to many gentlemen of large eſtates in that neighbourhood, who would have thought themſelves honoured to have ſtood ſponſors for Mr Orchard's ſon.

In the year 1740, he undertook the curacy of Biddeford, fourteen miles from Stoke-Abbey, where he lived greatly beloved by his people. His congregation was large, though his ſtipend was ſmall: his friends, therefore,

fore, made a collection yearly for him, which raised his income to 60l. *per annum*, so highly did they esteem him. At Biddeford he was curate about two years and a half, and remained so until there was a new rector of that church, who dismissed Mr Hervey from his curacy, against the united requests of his parishioners, who offered to maintain him at their own expence. During the time that Mr Hervey lived in the west, viz. from 1738, till the latter end of 1743, his family heard very little of him, by reason of the great distance he was from them; though he laboured diligently in the service of his Master. Here it was that he planned his *Meditations*, and probably wrote some part of them. He says in his first volume of *Meditations*, that it was on a ride to Kilkhampton, in Cornwall, that he went into the church, where he lays the scene of his *Meditations among the Tombs*.

In August 1743, or thereabouts, he returned from Biddeford to Weston-Favell, leaving behind him many disconsolate friends, and officiated as curate to his father. Here he paid the greatest attention to his duty, and faithfully preached the gospel of Christ.

The first of his writings which raised the attention of the public, was his *Meditations among the Tombs, Reflections on a Flower-Garden*, and, *a Descant on Creation*, published in February 1745-6. Of this kind of writing we had before an example from no less a man than the great philosopher Mr Boyle *, in his *Occasional Reflections on several subjects*, written in his younger years.

Mr Hervey's performance was so well received by the public, that it has already passed through about twenty editions in London, besides many surreptitious ones in Ireland. A second volume, containing *Contemplations on the Night and Starry Heavens*, and, *A Winter-piece*, was published in December 1747 †.

In June 1750, his health being much impaired by his great attention to duty, and his family and friends judging that the change of air might be of benefit to him, they formed a design, which they executed, of conveying him to London, under a pretence of his riding a few miles in a friend's post-chaise, who was going thither, and of which he pleasantly complains in a letter, dated June 28, 1750, to a friend upon his arrival there.

He staid in London until April or May 1752, during which time he was visited with a severe sickness, which had well nigh put a period to his painful life. But he recovered; and, upon his father's death in 1752, he returned to Weston, where he constantly resided till his death.

Mr Hervey took his degree of Master of Arts, at Cambridge, in 1752, when he entered at Clare-hall; and as he was of sufficient standing at Oxford, he staid only the few days required by the statutes to perform the university-exercise.

It may be thought strange, that he who had refused to hold his exhibition at Oxford, along with a curacy, should, upon his father's death, accept of the two livings of Weston-Favell and Collingtree, and hold them during his life. It was very far from being his choice, and it was what he had for a long time refused to do. He was determined against being a pluralist; and notwithstanding his father kept him at Oxford, with a design that he should take his degree of Master of Arts, and constantly urged him to do it; yet he could not be persuaded to yield to such a request, though he was of a sufficient standing to have taken the same, looking upon that step as a qualification intended for his future holding both his father's livings. When his father died, he remained determined to have Weston-Favell only and this he frequently declared to his family and friends, and refused to accept of Collingtree, or to qualify himself for the same; insomuch that it was in danger of lapsing to the Bishop. But at length, through the earnest and constant entreaties of his family, and of his friends, who, unknown to him, had sent to, and procured from Oxford, the necessary certificates of his being a Batchelor of Arts, in order to his taking his Master's degree at Cambridge, he was, after much importunity, prevailed on to comply with their requests, hoping that he might be thereby enabled to do so much the more good. And when he waited upon Dr Thomas, the then Bishop of Peterborough, for institution to Collingtree, which was near six months after he had been inducted into Weston, he said to him, "I suppose your Lordship will be surprised "to see James Hervey come to desire your Lordship to "permit him to be a pluralist; but I assure you, I do it to "satisfy the repeated solicitations of my mother and my "sister, and not to please myself." In November 1752, he published his *Remarks on Lord Bolingbroke's Letters on the study and use of history, so far as they relate to the history of the Old Testament, and especially to the case of Noah, denouncing a curse upon Canaan: In a letter to a lady of quality* *.

The year following, having been called upon to preach, on the 10th of May, the sermon at the visitation of the Rev. Dr John Browne, Archdeacon of Northampton, at All-Saints church in that town; he permitted it, the same year, for the benefit of a poor diseased child, to be printed, under the title of *The Cross of Christ the Christian's glory*. He had preached before this another sermon at the same church, which he had been solicited to print; but could not then be prevailed upon to do it: but since his death it has been published under the title of *The ministry of reconciliation*, &c. †

The same year he wrote a recommendatory preface to *Burnham's Pious Memorials; or, The power of religion on the mind in sickness, and at death; exemplified by the experience of many eminent persons at those important seasons*.

His *Theron and Aspasio*, published in January 1755, in three volumes octavo, met with the same approbation from the public as his *Meditations*; and the demand for this work likewise was very uncommon; it having passed through three editions in one year ‡.

In 1756, Mr Hervey being informed of the design of reprinting *The gospel-mystery of sanctification*, by the Rev. Mr Walter Marshall, and of prefixing to it, by way of recommendation, what he had said in its favour in Theron and Aspasio, he wrote a letter, dated Nov. 5, 1756, to his bookseller, giving his consent, and enlarging on that recommendation. This he did the more readily, as Mr Marshall's book might (for so he has declared) be looked upon as no improper supplement to the dialogues and letters contained in Theron and Aspasio.

His Theron and Aspasio was attacked by several writers, particularly by Mr Robert Sandeman, a congregational preacher at Edinburgh, in a book, entitled, *Letters on Theron and Aspasio*; wherein the doctrine of the gospel, under the title of the popular doctrine, is most abominably misrepresented, and its tendency aspersed. The Arminians too objected to that work; and Mr John Wesley in

* See Boyle's Life, by the late Dr Birch.

† There are few books in the English language, which in so short a time have ever passed through such numerous and very large editions, as Mr Hervey's Meditations; which not only please, but improve us; and were written with a view of familiarizing to our minds those sublime objects, which will be the *Study* and *Delight* of a glorious *Eternity*. How many have they transportingly entertained in their retirements and lonely walks, and how often elevated them to those lofty heights, from whence they could look down on all things below (the delights of good men's friendship excepted) with an easy indifference! A strain of the most serious piety and ardent devotion runs through them, and they tend to inculcate some of the most distinguished doctrines of the gospel, such as the necessity of regeneration, the utter impotency of fallen man to help himself, the efficacy of the grace of God for that purpose, and the justification of a guilty sinner through faith in the blood of Christ.

* The Rev. Mr Peter Whalley, Vicar of St Sepulchre's in Northampton, has published, by way of supplement to this piece of Mr Hervey's, a vindication of the evidences and authenticity of the gospel, from the objections of the late Lord Bolingbroke.

† A defence of this sermon, from the groundless objections raised against it by some inconsiderate readers, will be found among Mr Hervey's tracts in this edition.

‡ This is the most valuable book, written in any language, on that grand and distinguishing doctrine of Christianity, the justification of a sinner before God by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; which spreads itself through the whole system of divinity; and which Luther justly calls *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*. In Mr Hervey's own words, "the beauty and excellency of the *scriptures*,—the ruin and *depravity* of human nature,—its happy *recovery*, founded on the atonement, and effected by the Spirit of Christ, are some of the chief points vindicated, illustrated, and applied in this work. "—But the *grand* article, that which makes the principal figure, is the *imputed righteousness* of our divine Lord; from whence arises our justification before God, and our title to every heavenly blessing: An article, which, though eminent for its importance, seems to be little understood, and less regarded; if not much mistaken, and almost forgotten."

particular

ticular wrote against it. Mr Cudworth wrote a defence Theron and Aspasio; and Mr David Wilson, minister the Scots congregation in Bow-lane, London, published ook, entitled, *Palæmon's creed reviewed*, &c. in which he dicates Mr Hervey's doctrine, and exposes that of Mr ndeman.

Mr Hervey's own defence of Theron and Aspasio against objections of Mr John Wesley, was transcribed fair for press from his short-hand copy, within a few pages; l would have been published in a volume of the same with Theron and Aspasio, had he lived a few weeks ger. The manuscript was left in the possession of his other, Mr William Hervey, wine-merchant in Miles's-e, London; who published it in 1766, for the reasons en by him in a preface prefixed to it *.

In August 1757, Mr Hervey obliged the public with ree sermons preached by him on the late public fast-days. which, in the third edition, in 1759, were added his itation-sermon preached in 1753; his posthumous ser-on on the ministry of reconciliation; and his considera-ns on the prevailing custom of visiting on Sundays. In posterior edition of these were given his Remarks on rd Bolingbroke's letters, and a treatise on the religious ucation of daughters †.

In the same year likewise, he published a new edition his favourite author, Mr Jenks's Meditations, in two lumes octavo; to which he wrote a very strong re-mmendatory preface, shewing the use of those medita-ns, and the reason for such republication ‡.

He intended to have wrote a treatise on gospel-holiness, a supplement to Theron and Aspasio; and actually rote a very excellent and judicious plan of it, which he mmunicated in letters to some of his correspondents; but e did not live to finish it, to the very great loss of the blic.

His labours, both in his ministerial office, and in his udy, were pursued by him as long as possible, under the disadvantage of a very weak constitution of body; which, gether with the severity of his last illness, he supported ot only with incredible patience, but without a single ex-ression of peevishness. That illness had long been coming n him; but greatly increased in the beginning of October 758, and grew very formidable in the December follow-ng. For on Sabbath the 3d of that month, in the even-ng, after prayer in his family, he seemed to be arrested with the messenger of death; so that the united assistance f his sister and servant, with difficulty, enabled him to et up stairs into his room, from whence he never came own. His illness gaining ground every day, he soon be-ame sensible that his end was approaching. He had fre-quent and violent returns of the cramp, which gave him most acute pain. He had likewise a hectic cough, which afflicted him so grievously in the night, that he could sel-dom lie in bed till four‖ in the morning; and was often obliged to rise at two, especially as opium (how much so-ever guarded by other medicines) would not agree with him. On the 15th of that month, he complained of a pain in his side; for which, at his own desire, he was blooded, though his physician, Dr Stonhouse, in whom he placed the greatest confidence, had objected to it, apprehending him too weak to bear any evacuation of that kind. When the surgeon came, he could scarcely perceive any pulsa-tion, and therefore took away no more than four ounces of blood; intimating to his relations and friends, that the case was desperate, and that he had blooded him very un-willingly, and merely to satisfy Mr Hervey's desire, who had some hope that the pain might possibly be relieved by it. His curate, the Rev. Mr Abraham Maddock, being much with him in the afternoon of that day, Mr Hervey spoke to him in strong and pathetic terms of his assurance of faith, and of the great love of God in Christ. "O!" said he, "what has Christ, how much has Christ done for "me; and how little have I done for so loving a Saviour! "If I preached even once a-week, it was at last a burden to "me. I have not visited the people of my parish, as I "ought to have done; and thus have preached, as it were, "from house to house. I have not taken every opportu-"nity of speaking for Christ."

These expressions being accompanied with tears, which were too visible not to be observed; and lest his tears should be misinterpreted, as they had been conversing about his expected end, and of his assurance of happiness, he proceeded thus: "Do not think, that I am afraid to "die. I assure you I am not. I know what my Saviour "hath done for me, and I want to be gone. But I won-"der and lament to think of the love of Christ in doing so "much for me; and how little I have done for him." And in another conversation, discoursing also of his approaching dissolution, which he did with the utmost calmness and se-renity; and of the little which we know of God's word; he said, "How many precious texts are there big with the "most rich truths of Christ, which we cannot compre-"hend, which we know nothing of; and of those we do "know, how few do we remember? *Bonus textuarius est "bonus theologus.* "A good textuary is a good divine;" "and that is the armour; the word of God is the sword. "Those texts are the weapons which I must use, when "that subtile spirit, that arch-adversary of mankind, comes "to tempt and sift me in my last conflict. Surely I had "need be well provided with these weapons; I had need "have my quiver full of them, to answer Satan with texts "out of the word of God, when he assaults me. Thus did "Christ when he was tempted in the wilderness."

On the 19th the pains of his body abated, and he grew drowsy and lethargic; but in the night following his im-mediate death was apprehended.

The next day, the 20th, he was visited by Dr Ston-house, who declared, that, in his opinion, Mr Hervey could not live above three or four days; and happening to speak of the many consolations through Christ, which a good man enjoys in the prospect of death, and discour-sing on the emptiness of worldly honour to an immortal, and on the unprofitableness of riches to the irreligious; Mr Hervey replied, "True, Doctor, true; the only valu-"able treasures are in heaven. What would it avail me "now to be Archbishop of Canterbury? Disease would "shew no respect to my mitre. That prelate * is not "only very great, but, I am told, he has religion really "at heart. Yet it is godliness, and not grandeur, that "will avail him hereafter. The gospel is offered to me a "poor country parson, the same as to his Grace. Christ "makes no difference between us. Oh! why then do "ministers thus neglect the charge of so kind a Saviour; "fawn upon the great, and hunt worldly preferments "with so much eagerness, to the disgrace of our order? "These, these are the things, Doctor, and not our po-"verty, or obscurity, which render the clergy so justly "contemptible to the worldlings. No wonder the service "of our church, grieved I am to say it, is become such a "formal, lifeless thing, since it is, alas! too generally exe-"cuted by persons dead to godliness in all their conversa-"tion; whose indifference to religion, and worldly-mind-"ed behaviour, proclaim the little regard they pay to the "doctrines of the Lord, who bought them."

When the Doctor was going away, Mr Hervey, with great tenderness, observed to him, that as not long ago he had a dangerous fall from his horse, by which he was much bruised; and as he had been lately ill, and then looked very pale, he hoped he would think on these nar-

* This treatise contains the best, the most evangelical, and the most elaborate account of that righteousness, which is imputed to a sinner for his justification; and will be read with the highest delight, by every one that adores the Son of God as the *Lord our righteousness*.

† These sermons and tracts are so valuable and excellent, that every one who reads them, will lament that he did not enrich the library of Christianity with more of those precious treasures; which shew the accomplished gentle-man, the learned scholar, the orthodox divine, the pious Christian, the cham-pion for the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity, and the foe to self-depen-dence, and every species of vice and infidelity.

‡ This preface, with that to Burnham's pious memorials, his letter to the publisher of Marshall on sanctification, one to the publisher of Mr Traill's works, &c. are annexed to his tracts in this edition.

‖ When Mr Hervey was in tolerable health, he rarely lay in bed after six, even in the winter; and rose still earlier in the summer.

* The late Dr Thomas Secker, who died Aug. 3, 1768.

row escapes, so often fatal to others, as a kind of warning from God to him, and remember them as such; adding, "How careful ought we to be to improve those years "which remain, at a time of life, when but few can re-"main for us *?"

The day before his death, Mr Hervey went a few steps across his room; but immediately finding his strength failing him, he sunk rather than fell down; his fall being broken by his sister, who observing his weakness, ran and caught him; but he fainted away, and was in all appearance dead, it being a considerable time before any pulse could be perceived. When he came to himself, his brother Mr William Hervey, who was come from London to visit him, said, "We were afraid you were gone."—He answered, "I wish I had." And well he might wish so, for his strength was quite exhausted, his body extremely emaciated, and his bones so sore, that he could not bear any one to touch him, when it was necessary to move him about. Yet, under all this calamity, he was ever praising God for his mercies †, and for enduing him with patience ‡.

On the 25th, (Christmas-day) on which he died, Mr Maddock paying him his morning visit, Mr Hervey lifted up his head, and opening his eyes, as he sat in his easy chair, (for he could not lie in bed) to see who it was, and said, "Sir, I cannot talk with you." He complained much all this day of a great inward conflict which he had, laying his hand upon his breast, and saying, "O! you "know not how great a conflict I have." During this time, he almost constantly lifted up his eyes towards heaven, with his hands clasped together in a praying form, and said, two or three times, "When this great conflict is over, then—" but said no more; though it was understood he meant that then he should go to rest.

Dr Stonhouse came to him about three hours before he expired. Mr Hervey urged strongly and affectionately to the Doctor the importance and care of his everlasting concerns, as here is no abiding place; and entreated him not to be overcharged with the cares of this life ‖, but to attend, amidst the multiplicity of his business, to the "one "thing needful §:"

Which done, the poorest can no wants endure,
And which not done, the richest must be poor ¶.

The Doctor seeing the great difficulty and pain with which he spoke, (for he was almost suffocated with phlegm and frequent vomitings) and finding, by his pulse, that the pangs of death were then coming on, desired that he would spare himself. "No," said he, "Doc-"tor, no; you tell me I have but a few moments to live. "O! let me spend them in adoring our great Redeemer." He then repeated the 26th verse of Psal. lxxiii. *Though my flesh and my heart fail me, yet God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever*; and he expatiated in a most striking manner on these words of Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 22. 23. *All things are yours; life and death; for ye are Christ's* **. "Here," says he, "is the treasure of a Christian. Death "is reckoned among this inventory; and a noble treasure "it is. How thankful am I for death, as it is the passage "through which I pass to the Lord and Giver of eternal "life; and as it frees me from all this misery you now see "me endure, and which I am willing to endure, as lo "as God thinks fit; for I know he will, by and by, in h "own good time, dismiss me from the body. Th "light afflictions are but for a moment, and then com "an eternal weight of glory. O! welcome, welcom "death!—Thou mayst well be reckoned among the tre "sures of the Christian. To live is Christ, but to die "gain." After which, as the Doctor was taking his fi leave of him, Mr Hervey expressed great gratitude for h visits, though it had been long out of the power of me cines to cure him. He then paused a little, and wi great serenity and sweetness in his countenance, thou the pangs of death were upon him, being raised a little his chair, repeated those words, *Lord now lettest thou servant depart in peace, according to thy most* holy and co fortable *word, for mine eyes have seen thy* precious *salvati* "Here, Doctor, is my cordial! What are all the cordi "given to support the dying, in comparison of that whi "arises from the promises of salvation by Christ? Th "this supports me." About three o'clock he said, "T "great conflict is over.—Now all is done."——Af which he scarce spoke any other words intelligibly, exce now and then *precious salvation*.

During the last hour he said nothing, but leaned h head against the side of an easy chair, and without a sig groan, struggle, or the least emotion in the world, he shu his eyes and died, between four and five in the afternoo on Christmas-day 1758, in the forty-fifth year of his ag God grant, that we may all live the life, and die the dea of the righteous;—and that our last end may be like his.

When his body was conveyed to church, it was cove ed, by his express desire, with the poor's pall, and he wa buried under the middle of the communion-table in th chancel of Weston-Favell church, on Friday Dec. 28, i the presence of a numerous congregation, full of regre for the loss of so excellent a pastor. His funeral was in deed a most awful and very affecting sight.—Mr Mad dock his curate, who buried him, was himself in tears.— Some were wringing their hands, others sobbing, many were silently weeping, but all were inwardly and sincere ly grieved, as their looks sufficiently testified;—and h attendants then bore a visible witness, that he had no been altogether unserviceable in his generation.—Th poor thankfully acknowledged; and, as they looked int his grave, seemed to say within themselves, "There lie "the man whose unwearied kindness was the constan "relief of my various distresses; who tenderly visited my "languishing bed, and readily supplied my indigent cir-"cumstances."—Others, once ignorant and ungodly, look-at his grave, and seemed by their expressive sighs to say, "Here are the last remains of that sincere friend who "*watched for my soul.*——I tremble to think into what irre-"trievable ruin I might quickly have been plunged, had "not his faithful admonitions and his repeated exhorta-"tions arrested me in the wild career. I was then unac-"quainted with the gospel of peace; but now enlightened "by his instructions, I see the all-sufficiency of my Sa-"viour. His discourses are still warm on my heart, "and I trust will be more and more operative on my "life *."

It may truly be said of Mr Hervey, that few lives have ever been more heavenly, and few deaths more triumphant. ——He died in the Lord, and is now at rest; where even the wicked cease from troubling. His name is recorded in the annals of eternity; and the honours conferred on him by Christ, will for ever continue blooming and incorruptible in the world of glory.

His character, both in his public and private capacity, was of the most exemplary kind.

As a minister, he performed all the duties of that office with the greatest strictness. In the pulpit he was earnest and fervent, and shewed that he felt the efficacy of what he preached. Nor did he think it sufficient to preach on the Lord's day only, but set up a weekly lecture every

* See Meditations among the tombs.

Wednesday

* Dr Stonhouse and Mr Hervey being then between forty and fifty years old. The Doctor lately entered into holy orders in the church of England, and got a good living in the country.

† He never received a bit of lemon to moisten his mouth, without thanking God for his bounty and goodness, in creating so many helps and refreshments to a sick and decaying body.

‡ A few years ago Mr Hervey had a terrible fever at his brother William's house, in which he had several blisters.——On this occasion Mr William Hervey wrote as follows to one of his intimate friends: "My brother is indeed an "example of patience.—He has not spoke (during the whole of his severe ill-"ness) one single word of peevishness.—I am persuaded he prays for you, and "remembers you, now he lies sick upon his bed. I hope this will find you "and yours well, walking in the fear of the Lord, and the comforts of his Holy "Spirit."

‖ See Luke xxi. 34. § Luke x. 42.

¶ Mr Hervey used frequently to repeat these lines with such an emphasis, and significant look, as conveyed their important meaning in a manner not easily to be forgot.

** This passage is illustrated in a very instructive manner by Dr Doddridge, in his *Family-Expositor*, and contains the substance of what Mr Hervey said, and to which he referred.

Wednesday evening *, at Weston-Favell church, which was very well attended. His zeal for the performance of his duty, was however, for some time before he died, much interrupted by the ill state of his health, which would not permit him personally to take due care even of the parish of Weston, where he resided. A circumstance that gave him inexpressible concern.——The last two or three years of his life he could scarce do any thing more than preach once on the Lord's day, when people from many miles around flocked to hear him. His Wednesday evening-lecture at seven he discontinued for the last year. He had not been able for some time to preach at Collingtree †, or to visit his parishioners at their own houses, as his custom had been: but he encouraged them to come to him, and to converse freely on the subjects relating to their eternal interests; and on such occasions he would speak with a force and propriety peculiar to himself. He would frequently lament his inability to serve his people, comparing himself to a bleeding, disabled soldier, and *only not slain.*

He always preached without notes, except on some very particular occasions; but his method was judicious, clear, and not encumbered with too many subdivisions. His weakness rendered him for several months before his death incapable of speaking to his congregation as usual, he shortened his discourses, and took a most useful method of inculcating his instructions: for after he had expounded his text, and divided his sermon into two heads, (rarely into more, and never exceeding three) he would speak briefly, and at the conclusion of each head enforce what he had said, by a pertinent text of scripture, desiring his congregation (which was generally very numerous) to turn to their Bibles, and double down that text. "Now," added he, "my dear brethren, if you forget my sermon, "you cannot forget God's word in this text, unless you "wilfully throw your Bibles aside. Shew these to your "children, or the absent part of your family; when you "return home." Then he gave a striking exhortation, and at the end of it another text for them to double down; so that they had always three texts: in order to their finding of which, he paused in the pulpit two or three minutes. This method was attended with another good effect:—it obliged the generality of his hearers to bring their Bibles along with them; for those who were without a Bible lost the benefit of the texts, and were unemployed, while the majority who had one were busy in looking for the passages referred to in his sermon.

He endeavoured as much as possible to divest himself in his public discourses of his usual elegancy of style, and to adapt his language to the lowest capacity. In this he followed the example of Luther, who in his *Table-talk* says, "If in my preaching I were to pay a regard to Philip Me-"lanchthon and other learned divines, then I should do "little good. I preach in the plainest manner to the illi-"terate, and that gives content to all. Hebrew, Greek, "and Latin, I spare, till we learned ones come together." Mr Hervey thought perspicuous language and evangelical doctrine of much more importance to his parishioners, than elaborate or ornamented discourses; though few men living, perhaps, were more capable of satisfying a polite or learned audience.

His method of catechising children in church, and of speaking to them in private, was very engaging and useful. He would put little questions to them, after they had repeated the words of the catechism: as for instance, "Well, my little maid, let me hear if you understand "what you said. If you do understand the meaning of "these words, you will then be able to answer the ques-"tions I shall put to you ‡." He would at these times ask not only such questions as were suitable to the words of the catechism, but also such as would strike at the capital vices of his parishioners, yet without giving personal offence *.

He did not forget that he was a minister in his house; for he worshipped God with his family twice a-day. He supped at eight every night, and at nine he expounded a text of scripture for about a quarter of an hour, and seldom longer, except when some friend was present, to whom he thought his discourse might be useful, or when particularly requested to enlarge. After this he concluded with prayer.

He breakfasted at nine, and about eight he called his family together, and required each of his servants to repeat by heart the text which he had explained the preceding evening, and then he would recapitulate his exposition: by which method, both his text and commentary were imprinted on their memories. After this he had prayers.

In the afternoon, when he was called down to tea, he used to bring his Hebrew Bible or Greek Testament with him, and would speak (as he was ever studious how he might promote the glory of God, and improve time) either upon one or more verses, as occasion offered, in the most instructive and entertaining manner imaginable. And in the summer-season he would now and then drink tea, when his health would permit him, with some of his most serious parishioners; and then five or six of the neighbours were invited, and Mr Hervey's conversation was remarkable affecting, as he had a happy talent at spiritualizing almost every incident, and was naturally of a most obliging and chearful disposition.

He was a member of an assembly formed for Christian improvement, which was established in his neighbourhood on the 7th of July, 1747, and constantly attended it so long as he was able to ride to the place of meeting. A short account of the rules of this assembly is given at the end of his tracts, together with two prayers composed by him for the use of the members thereof.

In the exercise of his charity, Mr Hervey chose to clothe the poor rather than to give them money; and he would get some judicious person to buy linen, coarse cloth, stockings, shoes, &c. for them at the best hand; alledging that the poor could not purchase on such good terms what they wanted at the little shops, and with small sums of money. "I am, said he, God's steward for the "poor, and I must husband the little pittance I have to "bestow upon them, and make it go as far as possible." But when money would be really serviceable to a family, as to a prudent housekeeper, distressed by sickness or misfortunes, he would give five or more guineas at a time; taking care that it should not be known whence the money came. Pope's compliment to Mr Allen of Bath, might be justly applied to him, who would

Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame.

He was particularly desirous of getting the advice of a physician (or at least of some judicious apothecary) for the sick poor; and was ever ready to procure them the very best medicines.—A most beneficial sort of charity to mankind; and in which it were to be wished he had many imitators.—He would frequently petition such physicians of his acquaintance in different parts of the kingdom, as he apprehended thus charitably disposed, to give their advice occasionally, when they rode through a town, to such

* This lecture was held during the winter half-year at seven, as it did not then interfere with the work of the labouring people; and he illuminated the church out of his own pocket, not chusing to put the parish to any additional expence.

† Weston-Favell, and Collingtree, the two family-livings, are within five measured miles of each other; which Mr Hervey and his curate used to attend alternately, till his ill health confined him entirely to Weston-Favell.

‡ See some farther account of his manner of catechising, in one of his letters.

* Some of his parishioners having lain in bed on a Sunday morning longer than he approved,—and others having been busy in foddering their cattle when he was coming to church, and several having frequented the alehouse, he thus catechised one of the children before the congregation:

Repeat me the fourth commandment—Now, little man, do you understand the meaning of this commandment?—Yes, Sir.—Then, if you do, you will be able to answer me these questions.—Do those keep holy the Sabbath-day, who lie in bed till eight or nine o'clock in the morning, instead of rising to say their prayers and read the Bible? No, Sir.—Do those keep the Sabbath who fodder their cattle, when other people are going to church? No, Sir.—Does God Almighty bless such people as go to alehouses, and don't mind the instructions of their minister? No, Sir.—Don't those who love God read their Bible to their families, particularly on Sunday evenings, and have prayers every morning and night in their houses? Yes, Sir.—A great variety of such pertinent and familiar questions he would frequently ask in the most engaging manner, on every part of the catechism, as he thought most conducive to the improvement and reformation of his parish.

ſuch poor creatures as the clergyman of the place, or ſome ſubſtantial inhabitant, ſhould recommend as real objects of compaſſion.—Mr Hervey would then with great pleaſure, and with as much gratitude to the phyſician, as if done to himſelf, defray the expence of what medicines were wanted. He greatly diſapproved indeed of the clergy's attempting to give medicines to their pariſhioners; as he judiciouſly inferred, that it was impoſſible for them to do it with the requiſite judgment. "Let my brethren," he would ſay, "give them wine, bread, or beer, and get "good ſpoon-meats made for them; but medicines are of "too important a nature to be given indiſcriminately."—He obſerved, that by his own method the ſick poor had the very beſt medicines, as the phyſician ſaw them himſelf, and bought them very cheap, becauſe the apothecary, knowing they were for charitable uſes, charged the phyſician for them no more than prime coſt *, with ſome little allowance merely for his trouble in compounding them; and as the phyſician knew what diſeaſes were curable, there was no waſte of medicines in fruitleſs attempts to cure caſes, which, though actually incurable, perſons of leſs judgment could not pronounce to be ſo.

He gave away a great number of good books with ſuitable inſtructions for their uſe; and eſpecially Bibles. In the blank leaf he frequently wrote ſomething capable of making an impreſſion, or elſe ſtuck in a printed paper relating to the promiſes of God, in and through Jeſus Chriſt, or to creation, preſervation, and redemption †.

All the future profits of his works he has left to ſome of the charitable uſes above ſpecified, except his Meditations; the copy of which he had ſold, after it had paſſed through ſeveral editions; which ſale of the copy, and the profits of the former impreſſions, amounted to about 700l. all of which he gave away in charity. He ſaid that it was devoted to God, and that he would on no account apply it to worldly uſes; that he wrote not for profit or fame, but to ſerve the cauſe of God; and as Providence had bleſſed his attempt, he thought himſelf bound to relieve the diſtreſſes of his fellow-creatures with it.

In any expences relating to himſelf, he was extremely frugal, that he might be liberal to others; and it was always his deſire to die juſt even with the world. "I will "be my own executor," ſaid he. And as he died on Chriſtmas-day, his fund expired almoſt with his life.—What little remained, he deſired might be given in warm cloathing to the poor in that ſevere ſeaſon.

To theſe inſtances of his charity, we may properly add an incident, which, how trifling ſoever in itſelf, yet affords a very ſtrong proof, not only of the benevolence of his heart, but of his regard to practical religion, and to the doing of every good work within his power.

A day or two before his death, when he was reduced to ſuch extreme weakneſs as to be unable to read, and could with difficulty ſpeak, a little account being ſettled with him by a friend, on the balance of which he received 18s. looking on the money with great indifference, he expreſſed himſelf to this effect: "I would gladly diſpoſe of this ſmall "ſum, in ſuch a manner as may do the moſt good. It is "the only act which I now am, and probably the laſt that "I ſhall be able to perform. Give yourſelf the trouble "of looking amongſt theſe books, and you will find Mr "Richards's pamphlet ‡: at the latter end of which are, I "remember, ſome hints concerning the means of promoting religion in ourſelves or others, which (even with "ſome additions and improvements, which you might "eaſily make) will not fill more than a ſheet of paper ‖, "and, if ſtuck up or framed, might be particularly uſeful "in that form.—Let then ſuch a number of them be printed and given away, as this money will admit of."—His orders were properly executed; and the evidences of ſuch an angelic temper were equally matter of edification and comfort to his friend, as this charitable legacy, if we may ſo call it, will be to all who receive it and rightly uſe it.

This incident affords a ſtriking evidence of the happy fruits and effects of his favourite doctrine and ſtrong expreſſions of the all-ſufficient righteouſneſs of Chriſt as the ſole requiſite to juſtification before God, and acceptance with him, and ſhews that indeed his faith wrought by love. No man had ever a greater diſregard for money; which he eſteemed unworthy of his notice on any other account, than as it furniſhed him with the means of doing good. Surely we may here borrow the ſentiment and expreſſion of the celebrated Mr Pope, and juſtly conclude, that

He felt his ruling paſſion ſtrong in death.

Mr Hervey was indeed too negligent of his dreſs, which, though it could not in the leaſt leſſen the reſpect paid to him in his own pariſh, and neighbourhood, where he was ſo well known, yet he would unqueſtionably have avoided it, if he had lived in a more public ſcene, where the decency and propriety of appearance are of much greater importance.

In learning he was inferior to few. Greek was almoſt as familiar to him as his native language. He was a great maſter of the claſſics; and in the younger part of his life had written ſome copies of verſes, which ſhewed no contemptible genius for poetry. He had a critical knowledge of the Hebrew tongue, and delighted in it.

With reſpect to his private capacity, he was never known to be in a paſſion. He lived as in heaven. No worldly concerns (though he ſometimes met with very trying ones) ever affected him. His humility rendered him invulnerable.——When he was miſrepreſented and calumniated, he would ſay, "Our enemies are ſometimes our beſt "friends, and tell us truths; and then we ſhould amend "our faults, and be thankful for ſuch information: and "if what they ſay be not true, and only ſpoke through "malice, then ſuch perſons are to be conſidered as diſeaſed "in their minds, and that he would pray for them. They "are to be pitied," ſays he, "and I might be as juſtly angry with a man, who is diſeaſed in his body."

All this he ſpoke with humility, ſerioufneſs, and ſweetneſs; for it was the language of his heart, and not of affectation. In his ordinary tranſactions with others, he was ever chearful, punctual, juſt, and candid, to perſons of every denomination.

He frequently wrote religious letters to his acquaintance according to their different circumſtances, in the moſt amiable and convincing manner; and he ſeemed to make it almoſt an invariable rule, not to write a letter on any occaſion, without at leaſt one pious ſentence* in it; and that not introduced in a forced and awkward manner, but interwoven ſo as to appear naturally to ariſe from the ſubject. Of this kind ſome ſpecimens may be ſeen in the note at the bottom of the page †.

Notwithſtanding Mr Hervey lived a very holy and exemplary life, preaching Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified,

and

* Whenever he ſolicited the aſſiſtance of apothecaries on theſe charitable occaſions, he deſired the favour of them to relinquiſh their uſual profits; promiſing, on that condition, to repay what they might be out of pocket.

† See a copy of this printed paper among his tracts.

‡ This pamphlet (wrote by the Rev. Mr Richards of Northampton, and formerly of Trinity College, Oxford) is entitled, *Hints for religious converſation, with the afflicted in mind, body and eſtate, and with ſuch others as ſtand in need of ſpiritual aſſiſtance, eſpecially at the times when they are confined by ſickneſs.*

‖ The *Hints*, &c. which were printed in the ſingle ſheet of paper, are ſubjoined to Mr Hervey's tracts in this edition.

* *Nulla dies ſine linea, Nulla epiſtola ſine Chriſto*, were Mr Hervey's maxims.

† Theſe ſpecimens are taken from haſty meſſage-cards, or billets, to ſome of his intimate friends.

"When I ſee my dear friend, we will talk about the contents of his laſt. "My money is Chriſt's, and I only deſire that he will give me benevolence to "diſpoſe of it willingly; diſcretion to beſtow it prudently. I hope you have "quite recovered, and adapted the Pſalmiſt's reſolution, *Pſal.* cxvi. 8, 9. What "do you think is the meaning of that remarkable expreſſion, *I will walk before the Lord?*

In another billet to a perſon about retiring from buſineſs, he writes,

"Thanks for your *Witſius de œconomia fœderum*. The time, I hope, is coming, when you will have leiſure to read, a heart to reliſh, and a tongue to "diſplay ſuch precious doctrines."

In another he writes,

"Let us all remember, my dear friend, that time is upon the wing;—eternity is at our door; therefore what we do for our bleſſed Maſter, we muſt do "quickly."

Mr Hervey's letters were collected, and publiſhed, in two volumes octavo, in 1760. A full and particular account of them is given in the preface prefixed to them in this edition. They exhibit, in their purport, compoſition, and tendency, a ſtriking and amiable picture of the ingenuity, learning, candour, and piety of the excellent author.

and inculcating the practice of real religion and holiness in heart and life, yet his enemies (for, strange as it is, even Mr. Hervey himself, the most inoffensive of men, had enemies) have not scrupled to assert, that "his tenets "were dishonourable to God, subversive of all gospel-"holiness, destructive even of common morality, and "very injurious to society itself, by making men melan-"choly, and regardless of business." These were the very words of an abusive and anonymous letter sent to him by the post; on which, that meek and most excellent man observed to an intimate friend, with all his usual mildness, "Indeed this gentleman may be said, I think, "to write at random. Surely he has never read my "works. If I knew where to direct to him, I should de-"sire him to turn to what I have advanced in the ninth "paragraph of my *Contemplations on the starry heavens* *, "and such a reply I would hope might convince him of "his mistake."

Some of Mr Hervey's friends thought he carried the Calvinistical tenets so far, that consequences disadvantageous to religion might be deduced from them, and which he himself, instead of assenting to them, would have startled at and rejected with abhorrence. The fact is, the doctrine he delivered in his writings, is purely scriptural, and agreeable to that contained in all the confessions of the reformed churches; and is so far from having a tendency to weaken the obligations to purity and holiness of life, that it promotes them in the most effectual manner, and has the most happy influence on morality. When persons of judgment have pointed out to him some expressions that were liable to be misunderstood in that respect, he always disavowed any such meaning; and affirmed, that the fault was not in the evangelical doctrines so much insisted on by him, but in the misapprehension, ignorance, or inattention of those who abused them to licentiousness. He would then add, he was ready to alter or retract any sentiment or expression which he apprehended to be truly objectionable; but that to make things equally clear to every one's apprehension, or to have the same effect upon every one's mind, was an impracticable attempt; that he professed himself a Calvinist, and that consequently the Arminians would not relish some things he advanced, though what he wrote was exactly conformable to the church-articles, which are Calvinistical; yet he hoped they would not reject the whole, because they could not in every point concur with him; and that his writings in general might be useful, how much soever some of his particular (though truly scriptural) opinions might be doubted or censured. And on this head let us hear Mr Hervey himself. He, in a letter written by him a very little before his happy death, thus expresses himself: "Do they who deny faith, and extol their good works, "distinguish themselves by the practice of them?—I will "be bold to say, that, on an impartial examination, the "majority will be found on the side of those who embrace "the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, "and who expect salvation by him alone."

Of the compliments publicly paid to his piety and genius, it will be sufficient to insert a paragraph from the Northampton Mercury, which may be seen at the bottom of the page †; and the following eulogium extracted from the Rev. Mr Dodd's poem on the Epiphany.

——Thou, HERVEY, too,
Whose page and soul alike breathe humblest love
To thy ador'd Redeemer; thou hast shewn
That piety and polish'd elegance
May well together suit; and while remains
Or piety, or elegance, thy works,
Like genuine gold, the *touchstone* will abide,
And grateful to thy countrymen remain!
Oh! may I to my lowly strains derive
Some merit from the friendship of thy name;
Strains, whose exalted subject fills my heart
So constant with delight; and from thy tongue
In CONVERSE pours such streams of eloquence,
That the wrapt hearer wonders at his fears
Of death 'ere while, and glowing with the love
Of JESU, caught from thee, longs to behold
His Saviour in the clouds: for who can dwell
Amidst the sweetness of *Arabian* groves,
And not bear thence some fragrance?—Valu'd friend,
Proceed: and (thy too feeble strength renew'd)
May to hoar age thy journey be prolong'd,
And strew'd each step with blessings to mankind!

We shall close this account of Mr Hervey's life, with the following elegy on him †:

URANIA speak! in pensive numbers tell
How ZION trembled when great HERVEY fell!
When fail'd his strength, and when his pulse beat low,
Tell how she mourn'd to see th' impending blow!
O thou, to whom all sacred themes belong,
Pour forth the sweetly-melancholy song!
"Alas! grim death hath shot the fatal dart,
Which long seem'd pointed at his languid heart.
Th' insatiate tyrant, crown'd with sun'ral gloom,
In triumph drags him to the hollow tomb:
Who now so well can paint the blooming bow'r,
Or preach from *Sepulchres* at midnight hour?
Who now so well the starry heavens scan,
And read the lectures Nature meant for man?
No more his voice a careless world can move,
Or tell the wonders of redeeming love;
No more shall thousands round his pulpit throng,
To hear the heavenly precepts of his tongue:
For lo! above this gross, impurer air,
Releas'd from ev'ry pain, and every care,
He soars aloft (angelic hosts his guide)
On wings new plum'd, which ne'er before he try'd.
With rapid speed his golden pinions rise
Thro' starry plains, and skim th' empyrean skies.
And now where sparkling portals wide display
The blissful regions of eternal day;
His Lord receives him 'midst celestial choirs,
Who crown his head, and strike their golden lyres!
Thro' heav'n's glad courts the greeting anthems roll,
And joys new-blooming feast his ravish'd soul;
Joys which to tell all eloquence is faint,
And which the loftiest muse can never paint."

* Some, I believe, are apt to imagine, that they must renounce society, if they devote themselves to Christ; and abandon all the satisfaction of this world, if they once become zealous candidates for the felicity of another.—But this is a very mistaken notion, or else a very injurious representation of the doctrine, which is according to godliness. It was never intended to drive men into deserts, but to lead them through the peaceful and pleasant paths of wisdom, into the blissful regions of life eternal. It was never intended to strike off the wheels of *business*, or cut in sunder the sinews of *industry*; but rather to make men industrious from a principle of *conscience*, not from the instigations of *avarice*; that they may promote their immortal happiness, even while they provide for their temporal maintenance.—It has no design to extripate our passions, but only to restrain their irregularities; neither would it damp the delights of *sense*, but prevent them from evaporating into vanity, and subsiding into gall. A person may be chearful amongst his friends, yet joyful in God.—He may taste the sweets of his earthly estate, and at the same time cherish his hopes of a nobler inheritance in heaven.

The *trader* may prosecute the demands of commerce, without neglecting to negociate the affairs of his salvation:—The *warrior* may wear his sword; may draw, in a just cause, that murderous weapon; and yet be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and obtain the crown that fadeth not away.—The parent may lay up a competent portion for his children, and not forfeit his title to the treasures either of grace or glory. So far is Christianity from obstructing any valuable interests, or with-holding any real pleasure, that it evidently advances the one and improves the other.

† On Christmas day, 1758, in the afternoon, died, in the 45th year of his age, the Rev. Mr James Hervey, Rector of Weston-Favell, near Northampton, and the author of the *Meditations on the tomb, flowery garden*, &c.—He was one of the most eminent instances of the power of Christianity upon the human mind.—In his ministerial province, he was pious, fervent, and indefatigable.—In his ordinary connections with the community, he was ever chearful, conscientiously punctual in all his dealings, and amiably candid to persons of every denomination.—To his charities he set not bounds, scarcely leaving himself the mere requisites of his station.—Under the severest trials of infirmity for several years, he displayed the highest example of fortitude, serenity, patience, and an entire resignation to the divine will.—His writings most abundantly evidence his learning and ingenuity.—But, reader, it is not the acquisitions of his understanding, but the improvements of his heart, and his confidence in the great Redeemer, which will now avail this most excellent man.

† The reader may be assured, that these verses were wrote by a very serious and well-disposed young man, apprentice to a Jersey comber, in the town of Northampton, in a low station of life, and of no liberal education; whose mind, by Mr James Hervey's preaching and writings, had been very early impressed with the sacred ardor of piety and poetry. The original copy is now in the hands of the Rev. Mr Richard Oseley, of Clipston, A. M. master of the free school there, to whom it was lately transmitted by a friend of the author, for his inspection and correction: the alterations he has made are not many; and, upon the whole, it may be considered as a kind of Christian epitaph; or, at least, a neat elegiac garland, not altogether unworthy of being hung over that great and good man's tomb.

Verses to Mr Hervey, on his Meditations, &c.

IN these lov'd scenes, what rapt'rous graces shine,
Live in each leaf, and breathe in ev'ry line!
What sacred beauties beam throughout the whole,
To charm the sense, and heal upon the soul!
In classic elegance, and thought—his own,
We see our faults, as in a mirror, shown:
Each truth in glaring characters express'd,
All own the twin-resemblance in their breast:
His easy periods, and persuasive page,
At once amend, and entertain the age:
Nature's wide fields all open to his view,
He charms the mind with something ever new:
On fancy's pinions, his advent'rous soul
Wantons unbounded, and pervades the whole;
From death's dark caverns in the earth below,
To spheres, where planets roll, or comets glow.

See him explore, with more than human eyes,
The dreary sepulchre, where GRANVILLE lies!
Converse with stones, or monumental brass,
The rude inscription, or the painted glass:
To gloomy vaults descend with awful tread,
And view the silent mansions of the dead.

To gayer scenes he next adapts his lines,
Where lavish nature in embroid'ry shines;
The jes'mine groves, the woodbine's fragrant bow'rs,
With all the painted family of flow'rs;
There, SACHARISSA! in each fleeting grace,
Read all the transient honours of thy face.

With equal dignity, how see him rise
To paint the sable horrors of the skies.
When all the wide horizon lies in shade,
And midnight-phantoms sweep along the glade;
All nature hush'd—a solemn silence reigns,
And scarce a breeze disturbs the sleeping plains.

Still, yet not less, in majesty of phrase,
He draws the full-orb'd moon's expansive blaze;
The waving meteors, trembling from on high,
With all the mute artill'ry of the sky:
Systems on systems, which in order roll,
And dart their lambent beams from pole to pole.

Hail, mighty genius! whose excursive soul
No bounds confine, no limits can controul;
Whose eye expatiates, and whose mind can rove,
Thro' earth, thro' æther, and the realms above!
From things inanimate can direct* the rod
In just gradation, to ascend to GOD.
Taught by thy lines, see hoary age grows wise,
And all the rebel in his bosom dies:
E'en thoughtless youth, in luxury of blood,
Fly the infectious world, and dare—be good;
Thy sacred truths shall reach th' impervious heart;
Discord shall cease, disease forget to smart:
E'en malice love, and calumny commend;
Pride beg an alms, and av'rice turn a friend.

Center'd in CHRIST, who fires the soul within,
The flesh shall know no pain; the soul, no sin;
E'en in the terrors of expiring breath,
We bless the friendly stroke, and live—in death.

Oxford, April 28, 1748.

BY A PHYSICIAN.

CELESTIAL meditant! whose ardours rise
Deep from the tombs, and kindle to the skies;
How shall an earthly bard's profaner string
Resound the flights of thy seraphic wing?
When great ELIJAH, in the fiery car,
Flam'd visible to heav'n, a living star,
A seer remain'd to *thunder* what he knew,
And with his mantle caught his spirit too.
Wit, fancy, fire, and eloquence have long
Been lost in vicious or ignoble song:
Sunk from the chastely grand, the pure sublime,
They flatter'd wealth and power, or murder'd time.
'Tis thine their devious lustre to reduce,
To prove their noblest power, their genuine use;
From earth-born fumes to clear their tainted flame,
And point their flight to heav'n—from whence they came.

O more than bard in prose! to whom belong
Harmonious style and thought, in rhymeless song:
Oft, by thy friendly conduct, let me tread
The lofty-whisp'ring mansions of the dead:
Where the grim tyrant, calcining kings and lords,
Grins at each fond distinction pride records,
Dumb, with immortal energy they teach:
Lifeless, they threaten, moulder'ring as they preach
To each succeeding age, through every clime,
The span of life, and endless round of time:
Hence may propitious melancholy flow,
And safety find me in the vaults of woe.

While ev'ry virtue forms thy mental feast,
I glow with fair sincerity at least;
I feel (*my first attention*) thy heart refin'd,
And taste, with bliss, the beauties of thy mind;
Collecting clearly, through thy sacred plan,
What reverence of GOD! what love to man!
—O! when at last our deathless forms shall rise,
And stow'rs and stars desist to entertise;
Shall then my soul, by thine inform'd, survey,
And bear the splendors of essential day!
But while my thoughts indulge the glorious scope,
(My utmost worth beneath my humblest hope)
Conscience, or some exhorting angel, cries,
"No lazy wishes reach above the skies.
"Would you indeed the perfect scenes survey,
"And share the triumphs of unbounded day;
"His love-diffusive life with ardor live;
"And die like this divine contemplative."

London, July 9, 1748.

BY A PHYSICIAN.

TO form the taste, and raise the nobler part,
To mend the morals, and to warm the heart;
To trace the genial source, we nature call,
And prove the GOD of nature friend of all;
HERVEY for *this* his mental landscape drew,
And sketch'd the whole creation out to view.
Th' enamell'd bloom, and variegated flow'r,
Whose crimson changes with the changing hour;
The humble shrub, whose fragrance scents the morn,
With buds disclosing to the early dawn;
The oaks that grace *Britannia*'s mountains side,
And spicy *Lebanon*'s superior pride†;
All loudly SOV'REIGN EXCELLENCE proclaim,
And animated worlds confess the same.
The azure fields that form th' extended sky,
The planetary globes that roll on high,
And solar orbs, of proudest blaze, combine,
To act subservient to the great design.
Men, angels, seraphs, join the general voice;
And in the Lord of Nature ALL rejoice.
HIS, the grey *Winter's* venerable guise,
Its shrouded glories, and instructive skies‡;
HIS, the snow's plumes, that brood the sick'ning blade;
HIS, the bright pendant, that impearls the glade;
The waving forest, or the whisp'ring brake,
The surging billow, or the sleeping lake.
The SAME, who pours the beauties of the spring,
Or mounts the whirlwind's desolating wing;
The SAME, who smiles in nature's peaceful form,
Frowns in the tempest, and directs the storm.
'Tis thine, bright teacher, to improve the age;
'Tis thine, whose life's a comment on thy page,
Thy happy page; whose periods sweetly flow,
Whose figures charm us, and whose colours glow;
Where *artless* piety pervades the whole,
Refines the genius, and exalts the soul.
For let the [illegible]
It is Religion still that makes the man.
'Tis *this*, my friend, that streaks our morning bright;
'Tis *this* that gilds the horrors of our night.
When wealth forsakes us, and when friends are few;
When friends are faithless, or when foes pursue;
'Tis *this* that wards the blow, or stills the smart;
Disarms affliction, or repels its dart;
Within the breast bids purest rapture rise;
Bids smiling conscience spread her cloudless skies,
When the storm thickens, and the thunder rolls,
When the earth trembles to th' affrighted poles;
The virtuous mind, nor doubts nor fears assail;
For storms are zephyrs, or a gentler gale.
And when disease obstructs the lab'ring breath,
When the heart sickens, and each pulse is death;
E'en then religion shall sustain the just,
Grace their last moments, nor desert their dust.

August 4, 1748.

AS some *new star* attracts th' admiring sight,
His splendours pouring through the fields of light;
Whole nights, delighted with th' unusual rays,
On the fair heav'nly *stranger* we gaze:
So thy fam'd *volumes* sweet surprise impart;
Mark'd by all eyes, and felt in ev'ry heart.
Nature, inform'd by thee, new paths has trod,
And rises, *here*, a preacher for her GOD;
By fancy's aids, mysterious heights she tries,
And lures us, by our senses, to the skies.
To deck thy *style* collected graces throng,
Bold as the pencil's *tints*, yet soft as *song*.
In themes, how rich thy vein! how pure thy choice!
Transcripts of truths, own'd clear from scripture's voice:
Thy judgment these, and piety attest,
Transcripts—read easily fairer in thy breast,
There, what thy works would shew, we best may see,
And all they *teach* in doctrine, *live* in thee.
Oh!—might they live!—Our pray'rs their fate engage;
But thy fix'd languors yield us sad presage.
In vain skill'd *art* practises her healing art:
Disease, long foe, entrenches at thy heart.
Yet on new labours still thy mind is prone,
For a world's good too thoughtless of thy own.
Active, like day's kind orb, life's course you run,
Its sphere still glorious, tho' a *setting sun*.
Redemption opes thee wide her healing plan,
Health's *only* balm, her sov'reign'st gift to man.
Themes sweet like these thy ardors, fresh, excite:
Warm at the soul, they nerve thy hand to write;
Make thy try'd virtues in their charms appear,
Patience, rais'd *hope*, firm *faith*, and *love* sincere;
Like a big constellation, bright they glow,
And beam out lovelier by thy *night* of woe.
Known were thy merits to the public long,
'Ere own'd this feebly in my humble song.
Damp'd are my fires; my heart dark cares depress;
A heart, too feeling from its own distress.
Proud on thy friendship, yet to build my fame,
I gain'd my page ‖ a sanction from *thy name*.
Weak these returns (by gratitude tho' led)
Where *mine* shall in thy fav'rite leaves be read.
Yet o'er my conscious meanness hope prevails;
Love gives me merit, where my genius fails.
On *its* strong base my small desert I raise,
Averse to flatt'ry, as unskill'd to praise.

Mile-End Green, MOSES BROWNE.
Feb. 23. 1749.

WHENCE flow these solemn sounds? this rapt'rous strain?
Cherubic notes my wond'ring ear detain!
Yet 'tis a mortal's voice: 'tis HERVEY sings!
Sublime he soars on contemplation's wings:
In ev'ry period breathes extatic thought.
HERVEY, 'twas heav'n thy sacred lessons taught.
Celestial visions bless thy studious hours,
Thy lonely walks, and thy sequester'd bow'rs.
What fav'ring pow'r, dispensing secret aids,
Thy cavern'd cell, thy curtain'd couch, pervades?
Still hov'ring near, observant of thy themes,
In whispers prompts thee, or inspires thy dreams?
JESUS! effulgence of paternal light!
Ineffably divine! supremely bright!
Whose energy according worlds attest,
Kindled these ardors in thy glowing breast.
We catch thy flame as we thy page peruse;
And faith in ev'ry object JESUS views.
We in the bloomy breathing garden trace
Somewhat—like emanations of his grace:
Yet must all sweetness and all beauty yield,
Hume's grove, and *Thomson*'s flow'ry field,
Compar'd with JESUS: meanly, meanly shows
The brightest lily, faint the loveliest rose.
Divine Instructor! lead thro' midnight-glooms,
To moralizing stars, and preaching tombs:
Thro' the still void a Saviour's voice shall break,
A ray from JACOB's star the darkness streak:
To him the fairest scenes their lustre owe;
His cov'nant brightens the celestial bow;
His vast benevolence profusely spreads
The yellow harvests, and the verdant meads.
Thy pupil, HERVEY, a Redeemer finds
In boundless oceans, and in viewless winds:
He reins at will the furious blasts, and guides
The rending tempests, and the roaring tides.
O give, my soul, thy welfare to his trust;
Who rais'd the world, can raise thy sleeping dust!
He will, he will, when nature's course is run,
'Mid falling stars, and an extinguish'd sun;
He will with myriads of his saints appear.
O may I join them, tho' the meanest there!
Tho' nearer to the throne my HERVEY sings;
Tho' at humbler distance strike the strings;
Yet both shall mingle in the same employ,
Both drink the fulness of eternal joy.

Clerkenwell Green, JOHN DUNCH.
Feb. 24, 1749-50.

WHAT numbers of our race survey
The monarch of the golden day,
Night's ample canopy unfurl'd,
In gloomy grandeur round the world,
The earth in spring's embroid'ry dress'd,
And ocean's ever-working breast!

* *An allusion to the custom of shewing curious objects, and particularizing their respective delicacies, by the* pointing *of a rod.* † *The cedar.* ‡ *Referring to the* Winter-piece. ‖ *Sunday Thoughts.*

And

And ſtill no grateful honours riſe
To him who ſpread the ſpacious ſkies,
Who hung this air-ſuſpended ball,
And lives, and reigns, and ſhines, in all!
To chaſe our ſenſual fogs away,
And bright to pour th' eternal ray
Of Deity inſcrib'd around
Wide nature to her utmoſt bound,
Is HERVEY's taſk; and well his ſkill
Celeſtial can the taſk fulfil:
Aſcending from theſe ſcenes below,
Ardent the Maker's praiſe to ſhow,
His ſacred contemplations ſoar,
And teach our wonder to adore.
Now he ſurveys the realms beneath,
The realms of horror, and of death;
Now entertains his vernal hours
In flow'ry walks, and blooming bow'rs;
Now hails the black-brow'd night, that brings
Æthereal dews upon her wings;
Now marks the planets, as they roll
On burning axles round the pole;
While *tardy*, and *ſlow'ry*, and *ſtable*, and *ſtern*,
Unveil their ſacred characters
Of juſtice, wiſdom, pow'r, and love;
And lift the ſoul to realms above,
Where dwells the GOD, in glory crown'd,
Who ſends his boundleſs influence round.
So JACOB, in his bliſsful dreams,
Array'd in heav'n's reſulgent beams,
Saw from the ground a ſcale ariſe,
Whoſe ſummit mingled with the ſkies;
Angels were pleas'd to paſs the road,
The ſtage to earth, and path to GOD.
HERVEY, proceed: for nature yields
Freſh treaſure in her ample fields;
And in ſeraphic extaſy
Still bear us to the throne on high.
Ocean's wild wonders next explore,
His changing ſcenes, and ſecret ſtore;
Or let dire EARTHQUAKE claim thy toil,
EARTHQUAKE, that ſhakes a guilty iſle.
So, if ſmall things may ſhadow forth,
Dear man, thy labours, and thy worth,
The bee upon the flow'ry lawn
Imbibes the lucid drops of dawn,
Works them in his myſterious mould,
And turns the common dew to gold.

London,
May 26, 1750. THOMAS GIBBONS.

DELIGHTFUL author! whom the ſaints inſpire!
And whiſp'ring angels with their ardors fire!
From *youth* like mine, wilt thou accept of praiſe?
Or ſmile with candour on a ſtripling's lays?
My little laurel (but a ſhoot at moſt)
Has hardly more than one ſmall wreath to boaſt
Such as it is—oh! might it farther be!
Its ſcanty foliage all is due to THEE.
Oh! if, amongſt the honours of thy brow,
This ſlender circlet may but humbly grow;
If its faint verdure haply may find place—
A foil to others; though its own diſgrace;
Accept it, HERVEY, from a heart ſmote;
And, for the giver's ſake,—the tribute wear.
Thy ſoul-improving works peruſ'd, what tongue
Can hold from praiſe, or check th' applauſive ſong?
But, ah! from whence ſhall gratitude obtain
Language that may its glowing zeal explain?
How to ſuch wondrous worth adapt a ſtrain?
Deſcrib'd by thee, cold ſepulchres can charm;
Storms calm the ſoul; and freezing winter warm.
Clear'd from her gloomy ſhades, we view pale night
Surrounded with a blaze of *mental* light.
Lo! where ſhe comes! all ſilent! penſive! ſlow!
On her dark robe unnumber'd meteors glow!
High on her head a ſtarry crown ſhe wears!
Bright in her hand the lamp of reaſon bears!
Smiling,—behold! ſhe points the ſoul to heav'n,
And bids the weeping ſinner be forgiv'n!
But when thy fancy ſhifts this ſolemn ſcene,
And ruddy morning gilds the chearful green;
With ſudden joy we view the proſpect chang'd,
And bluſhing ſweets in beauteous order rang'd,
We ſee the violets; ſmell the dewy roſe,
And each perfume that from the woodbine flows;
A boundleſs perſpective there greets our eyes;
Rich vales deſcend, and verdant mountains riſe.
The ſhepherds' cottages, and rural folds;
All, that thy art deſcribes, the eye beholds.
Amazing limner! whence this matchleſs pow'r?
Thy work's a garden!—ev'ry word a flow'r!
Thy lovely tints almoſt the bloom excell,
And none but nature's ſelf can paint ſo well!
Hail, holy man!—henceforth thy work ſhall ſtand
(Like ſome fair column by a maſter-hand,
Which, whilſt it props, adorns the tow'ring pile)
At once to grace, and elevate our iſle.
Though ſimple, lofty; though majeſtic, plain;
Whoſe bold deſign the rules of art reſtrain.
In which the niceſt eye ſees nothing wrong;
Though poliſh'd, juſt; and elegant, though ſtrong.
June 24, 1750. ST GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

IN Pleaſure's lap the muſes long have lain,
And hung, attentive, on her *Syren* ſtrain:
Still toils the bard beneath ſome weak deſign,
And puny thought but halts along the line!
Or tuneful *nothings*, ſtealing on the mind,
Melt into air, nor leave a trace behind.
While to thy rapt'rous proſe, we feel, belong
The ſtrength of wiſdom, and the voice of ſong;
This lifts the torch of ſacred truth on high,
And points the captive to their native ſky.
How falſe the joys, which earth or ſenſe inſpires,
That clog the ſoul, and damp her purer fires!
Truths, which thy ſolemn ſcenes, my friend, declare,
Whoſe glowing colours paint as as we are.
Yet not moroſely ſtern, nor idly gay,
Dull melancholy reigns, or trifles ſway;
If wou'd the ſtrains of levity befit,
And ſullies gloom but ſadden all thy wit:
Truth, judgment, ſenſe, imagination, join;
And ev'ry muſe, and ev'ry grace is thine.
Religion prompting the true end of man,
Conſpiring genius executes the plan;
Strong to convince, and elegant to charm,
Plaintive to melt, or paſſionate to warm.
Rais'd by degrees, we elevate our aim,
And grow immortal as we catch thy flame:
True piety informs our languid hearts,
And all the vicious, and the vain departs.
So, when foul ſpreading fogs creep ſlowly on,
Blot the fair morn, and hide the golden ſun;
Ardent he pours the boundleſs blaze of day,
Rides through the ſky, and ſhines the miſt away.
O, had it been th' Almighty's gracious will,
That I had ſhar'd a portion of thy ſkill!
Had this poor breaſt receiv'd the heav'nly beam,
Which ſpreads its luſtre thro' thy various theme;
That ſpeaks deep leſſons from the ſilent tomb,
And crowns thy *garden* with freſh-forming bloom;
Or, piercing thro' *creation*'s ample whole,
Now ſoothes the *night*, or gilds the *ſtarry pole*;
Or marks how *Winter* calls her howling train,
Her ſhows and ſtorms, that deſolate the plain;
With thee the muſe ſhall trace the paſſing ſcene,
That leads from nature up to nature's GOD;
Humble to learn, and, as ſhe knows the more,
Glad to obey, and happy to adore.

Northampton, PETER WHALLEY.
Aug. 25, 1750.

On the Rev. Mr JAMES HERVEY's *Picture, by the Rev. Mr* JOHN NIXON, A. M. *Reſter of* Cold Higham, *in* Northamptonſhire.

WILLIAMS! 'tis yours to bid the canvas wear,
By arts illuſive, *Hervey*'s form and air.
Oh! with like happy labour could I trace
Each virtue, each exalted Chriſtian grace,
Each heav'nly gift, with which his ſoul was bleſt,
And fix the bright aſſemblage in my breaſt:
Then how tranſcendent far would be my plan:
You paint his mimic SHADE;—*I draw* the Man.

ADDRESS

Advertisement to the Third Edition.

I MUST entreat the purchasers of the former *editions, to excuse the freedom I have taken, in making several considerable additions to* this. *It has been done at the persuasion of some judicious friends, who apprehended the piece might be more useful, and less unworthy of the public patronage, if it touched upon some very interesting subjects, hitherto omitted. As I had no* views, *but to render the performance more pleasing and serviceable; no reader, I hope, will be offended at my* practice, *or complain of it as* injurious. *Nevertheless, as I would willingly avoid whatever might seem to stand in need of* APOLOGY, *I desire leave to declare, That no* future *enlargements, or alterations, shall be suffered to depreciate what, with the deepest gratitude for their past encouragement, I* now *commit to the candour of the public.*

To Miss R—— T——.

MADAM,

THESE Reflections, the ONE on the *deepest*, the OTHER on the *gayest* scenes of nature, when they proceeded privately from the *pen*, were addressed to a lady of the most valuable endowments: who crowned all her other endearing qualities, by a fervent love of Christ, and an exemplary conformity to his divine pattern. She, alas! lives no longer on earth; unless it be in the honours of a distinguished character, and in the bleeding remembrance of her acquaintance.

It is impossible, Madam, to wish you a richer blessing, or a more substantial happiness, than that the same spirit of unfeigned *faith*, the same course of undefiled *religion*, which have enabled her to triumph over death, may both animate and adorn your life. And you will permit me to declare, that my chief inducement in requesting your acceptance of the following Meditations, now they make a public appearance from the *press*, is, that they are designed to cultivate the same sacred *principle*, and to promote the same excellent *practice*.

Long, Madam, may you *bloom* in all the vivacity and amiableness of youth, like the charming subject of one of these contemplations. But at the same time remember, that, with regard to such inferior accomplishments, you must one day *fade*, (may it prove some very remote period!) like the mournful objects of the other. This consideration will prompt you to go on as you have begun, in adding the *meekness* of *wisdom*, and all the *beauties* of *holiness*, to the graces of an engaging person, and the refinements of a polite education.

And might—O! might the ensuing hints furnish you with the least assistance, in prosecuting so desirable an end; might they contribute, in any degree, to establish your faith, or elevate your devotion; they would, then, administer to the author such a satisfaction, as applause cannot give, nor censure take away: A satisfaction, which I should be able to enjoy, even in those awful moments, when all that captivates the eye is sinking in darkness, and every glory of this lower world disappearing for ever.

These wishes, Madam, as they are a most agreeable employ of my thoughts, so they come attended with this additional circumstance of pleasure, that they are also the sincerest expression of that very great esteem, with which I am,

MADAM,

Your most obedient,

Most humble servant,

JAMES HERVEY.

Weston-Favell, near Northampton,
May 20, 1746.

PREFACE.

THE first of these occasional Meditations begs leave to remind my readers of their latter end; *and would invite them to set, not their houses only, but, which is inexpressibly more needful, their souls, in order: that they may be able, through all the intermediate stages, to look forward upon their approaching exit, without any* anxious apprehensions; *and, when the great change commences, may bid adieu to terrestrial things, with all the* calmness *of a chearful resignation, with all the* comforts *of a well-grounded faith.*

The other attempts to sketch out some little traces of the all-sufficiency *of our* Redeemer, *for the grand and gracious purposes of everlasting salvation: that a sense of his unutterable dignity, and infinite perfections, may incite us to regard him with sentiments of the most profound* veneration; *to long for an assured interest in his merits, with all the ardency of* desire; *and to trust in his powerful mediation, with an* affiance *not to be shaken by any temptations, not to be shared with any performances of our own.*

I flatter myself, that the thoughts conceived among the tombs, *may be welcome to the* serious *and* humane *mind: Because, as there are few who have not consigned the remains of some dear* relations, *or honoured* friends, *to those silent repositories; so there are none but must be sensible, that this is the* house appointed for all living; *and that they themselves are shortly to remove into the same solemn mansions.—And who would not turn aside for a while, from the most favourite amusements, to view the* place *where his once loved* companions *lie? Who would not sometimes survey those* apartments, *where he* himself *is to take up an* abode, *till time shall be no more?*

As to the other little essay, may I not humbly presume, that the very subject itself will recommend the remarks? For who is not delighted with the prospect of the blooming creation, and even charmed with the delicate attractions *of flowers? Who does not covet to assemble them in the garden, or wear them in a nosegay? Since this is a passion so universal, who would not be willing to render it productive of the sublimest improvement?——This piece of* holy frugality *I have ventured to suggest, and endeavoured to exemplify, in the second letter; that, while the hand is cropping the transient beauties of a flower, the attentive mind may be enriching itself with solid and lasting good. And I cannot but entertain some pleasing hopes, that the nicest taste may receive and relish* religious impressions, *when they are conveyed by such* lovely monitors; *when the instructive lessons are found, not on the leaves of some formidable* folio, *but stand legible on the fine* sarcenet *of a* narcissus; *when they savour not of the* lamp *and* recluse, *but come breathing from the fragrant bosom of a* jonquil.

BRITISH MUSEUM 6 AU 89

MEDI-

MEDITATIONS
AMONG THE
TOMBS.

IN A LETTER TO A LADY.

EVERY STONE THAT WE LOOK UPON IN THIS REPOSITORY OF PAST AGES, IS BOTH AN *ENTERTAINMENT*, AND A *MONITOR*.

PLAIN DEALER, Vol. I. N° 42.

MADAM,

TRAVELLING lately into *Cornwall*, I happened to alight at a conſiderable village in that county; where finding myſelf under an unexpected neceſſity of ſtaying a little, I took a walk to the *church* *. The doors, like the heaven to which they lead, were wide open, and readily admitted an unworthy ſtranger. Pleaſed with the opportunity, I reſolved to ſpend a few minutes under the ſacred roof.

IN a ſituation ſo retired and awful, I could not avoid falling into a train of meditations, *ſerious* and *mournfully pleaſing*: which, I truſt, were in ſome degree profitable to *me*, while they poſſeſſed and warmed my thoughts; and if they adminiſter any ſatisfaction to *you*, Madam, now they are recollected, and committed to writing, I ſhall juſt receive a freſh pleaſure from them.

IT was an ancient pile; reared by hands, that, ages ago, were mouldered into duſt.——Situate in the centre of a large *burial-ground*; remote from all the noiſe and hurry of tumultuous life.——The body ſpacious; the ſtructure lofty; the whole magnificently plain. A row of regular pillars extended themſelves through the midſt; ſupporting the roof with ſimplicity, and with dignity.—The light, that paſſed through the windows, ſeemed to ſhed a kind of *luminous obſcurity*; which gave every object a grave and venerable air.—The deep *ſilence* added to the gloomy aſpect, and both heightened by the lonelineſs of the place, greatly increaſed the ſolemnity of the ſcene.—A ſort of *religious dread* ſtole inſenſibly on my mind, while I advanced, all penſive and thoughtful, along the inmoſt iſle; ſuch a dread, as huſhed every ruder paſſion, and diſſipated all the gay images of an alluring world.

HAVING adored that eternal Majeſty, who, far from being confined to temples made with hands, has heaven for his throne, and the earth for his footſtool,—I took particular notice of a handſome *altar-piece*; preſented, as I was afterwards informed, by the maſter-builders of *Stow* *; out of gratitude, I preſume, to that gracious GOD, who carried them thro' their work, and enabled them to "bring forth their top-ſtone with joy."

O! HOW amiable is *gratitude!* eſpecially when it has the ſupreme Benefactor for its object. I have always looked upon gratitude, as the moſt exalted principle that can actuate the heart of man. It has ſomething noble, diſintereſted, and (if I may be allowed the term) generouſly devout. *Repentance* indicates our nature fallen, and *prayer* turns chiefly upon a regard to one's ſelf. But the exerciſes of gratitude ſubſiſted in paradiſe, when there was no fault to deplore; and will be perpetuated in heaven, when "GOD ſhall be all in all."

The language of this ſweet temper is, "I am unſpeakably obliged: what return ſhall I make?"—— And, ſurely, it is no improper expreſſion of an unfeigned thankfulneſs, to decorate our Creator's courts, and *beautify* "the *place* where his honour dwelleth." Of old, the habitation of his feet was glorious: let it not, now, be ſordid or contemptible. It muſt grieve an ingenuous mind, and be a reproach to any people, to have their own houſes wainſcotted with cedar, and painted with vermilion; while the temple of the LORD of hoſts is deſtitute of every decent ornament.

HERE I recollected, and was charmed with, *Solomon's* fine addreſs to the Almighty, at the *dedication* of his famous temple. With immenſe charge, and exquiſite ſkill, he had erected the moſt rich and finiſhed ſtructure that the ſun ever ſaw. Yet, upon a review of

* I had named, in ſome former editions, a particular church, viz. KILKHAMPTON; where ſeveral of the monuments, deſcribed in the following pages, really exiſt. But as I thought it convenient to mention ſome caſes *here*, which are not, according to the beſt of my remembrance, referred to in any inſcriptions *there*; I have now omitted the name; that imagination might operate more freely, and the improvement of the reader be conſulted, without any thing that ſhould look like a variation from truth and fact.

* The name of a grand ſeat, belonging to the late earl of *Bath*; remarkable formerly for its excellent workmanſhip, and elegant furniture; once the principal reſort of the quality and gentry of the weſt; but now demoliſhed, laid even with the ground, and ſcarce one ſtone left upon another.—So that corn may grow, or nettles ſpring, where *Stow* lately ſtood.

his work, and a reflection on the tranſcendent perfections of the Godhead, how he exalts the one, and abaſes the other!—The building was too *glorious* for the mightieſt monarch to inhabit; too *ſacred* for unhallowed feet even to enter; yet infinitely too *mean* for the Deity to reſide in. It was, and the royal worſhipper acknowledged it to be, a moſt marvellous vouchſafement in uncreated Excellency, to "put his name "there."—The whole paſſage breathes ſuch a delicacy, and is animated with ſuch a ſublimity of ſentiment, that I cannot perſuade myſelf to paſs on, without repeating it. * *But will God indeed dwell on earth? Behold! the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee; how much leſs this houſe that I have builded!*—Incomparable ſaying! worthy the wiſeſt of men. Who would not chuſe to poſſeſs ſuch an elevated devotion, rather than to own all the glittering materials of that ſumptuous edifice?

WE are apt to be ſtruck with admiration at the ſtatelineſs and grandeur of a maſterly performance in architecture; and perhaps, on a ſight of the ancient ſanctuary, ſhould have made the *ſuperficial* obſervation of the diſciples: "What manner of ſtones, and what "buildings, are here!"—But what a *nobler* turn of thought, and *juſter* taſte of things, does it diſcover, to join with *Iſrael*'s king, in celebrating the condeſcenſion of the divine inhabitant! That the high and lofty One, who fills immenſity with his glory, ſhould in a peculiar manner, fix his abode there! ſhould *there* manifeſt an extraordinary degree of his benedictive preſence; permit ſinful mortals to approach his Majeſty, and promiſe "to make them joyful in his houſe "of prayer!"—*this* ſhould more ſenſibly affect our hearts, than the moſt curious arrangement of ſtones can delight our eyes.

NAY, the everlaſting GOD does not diſdain to dwell in our *ſouls* by his Holy Spirit; and to make even our *bodies* his temple.——Tell me, ye that frame critical judgments, and balance nicely the diſtinction of things, "Is this moſt aſtoniſhing, or moſt rejoicing?"—He humbleth himſelf, the ſcripture aſſures us, even to behold the things that are in heaven †.——'Tis a moſt condeſcending favour, if HE pleaſes to take the leaſt approving notice of angels and archangels, when they bow down in homage from their celeſtial thrones.——Will he then graciouſly regard, will he be united, moſt *intimately united* to poor, polluted, breathing duſt?——Unparalleled honour! invaluable privilege! Be this my portion, and I ſhall not covet crowns, nor envy conquerors.

BUT let me remember, what a *ſanctity* of diſpoſition, and *uprightneſs* of converſation, ſo exalted a relation demands: Remember this, "and rejoice with trembling."—Durſt I commit any iniquity, while I tread theſe hallowed courts? Could the *Jewiſh* high prieſt allow himſelf in any known tranſgreſſion, while he made that ſolemn yearly entrance * into the holy of holies, and ſtood before the immediate preſence of JEHOVAH? No, truly. In *ſuch* circumſtances, a thinking perſon muſt ſhudder at the moſt remote ſolicitation to any wilful offence. I ſhould *now* be ſhocked at the leaſt indecency of behaviour, and am apprehenſive of every appearance of evil.——And why do we not carry this holy jealouſy into all our *ordinary* life?—Why do we not, in every place ‡, reverence ourſelves; as perſons dedicated to the Divinity, as *living temples* of the Godhead? For, if we are real, and not merely nominal Chriſtians, the GOD of glory, according to his own promiſe, ‡ *dwells in us, and walks in us.*——O! that this *one* doctrine of our religion might operate with an abiding efficacy upon our conſciences!——It would be inſtead of a *thouſand* laws, to regulate our conduct; inſtead of a *thouſand* motives, to quicken us in holineſs.——Under the influence of *ſuch* a conviction, we ſhould ſtudy to maintain a purity of intention; a dignity of action; and to walk worthy of that tranſcendently majeſtic Being, who admits us to a fellowſhip with himſelf, and with his Son JESUS CHRIST.

THE next thing which engaged my attention, was the *lettered floor*. The pavement, ſomewhat like *Ezekiel*'s roll, was written over from one end to the other. I ſoon perceived the compariſon to hold good in another reſpect; and the inſcriptions to be matter of "*mourning, lamentation, and woe* ‖." They ſeemed to court my obſervation; ſilently inviting me to read them. And what would theſe dumb monitors inform me of?—"That, beneath their little circumferences, "were depoſited ſuch and ſuch pieces of clay, which "once *lived*, and *moved*, and *talked*: that they had "received a charge to preſerve their names, and were "the remaining truſtees of their memory."

AH! ſaid I, is ſuch my ſituation! the adorable Creator around me, and the bones of my fellow-creatures under me! Surely, then, I have great reaſon to cry out, with the revering patriarch, *How dreadful is this place* §! Seriouſneſs and devotion become this houſe for ever. May I never enter it lightly or irreverently; but with a profound awe, and godly fear!

O! that they were wiſe ¶! ſaid the inſpired penman. It was his laſt wiſh for his dear people. He breathed it out, and gave up the ghoſt.—But what is wiſdom? It conſiſts not in refined ſpeculations, accurate reſearches into nature, or an univerſal acquaintance with hiſtory. The divine lawgiver ſettles this important point, in his next aſpiration: *O! that they underſtood this!* that they had right apprehenſions of their ſpiritual intereſts, and eternal concerns! that they had eyes to diſcern, and inclinations to purſue, the things which belong to their peace!—But how ſhall they attain this valuable knowledge? I ſend them not, adds the illuſtrious teacher, to turn over all the volumes of literature: they may acquire, and much more expeditiouſly, this ſcience of life

* 1 Kings viii. 27. *But will.*—A fine abrupt beginning, moſt ſignificantly deſcribing the amazement and rapture of the royal prophet's mind!—*GOD*: He uſes no epithet, where writers of inferior diſcernment would have been fond to multiply them; but ſpeaks of the Deity, as an incomprehenſible Being, whoſe perfections and glories are exalted above all praiſe.—*Dwell*: To beſtow on ſinful creatures a propitious look, to favour them with a tranſient viſit of kindneſs; even this were an unutterable obligation. Will he then vouchſafe to fix his abode among them, and take up his ſtated reſidence with them?—*Indeed*: A word, in this connection, peculiarly emphatical; expreſſive of a condeſcenſion, wonderful and extraordinary almoſt beyond all credibility.—*Behold*: intimating the continued, or rather the increaſing ſurpriſe of the ſpeaker, and awakening the attention of the hearer.—*Behold; the heaven*: The ſpacious concave of the firmament; that wide extended azure circumference, in which worlds unnumbered perform their revolutions, is too ſcanty an apartment for the Godhead.—Nay, *the heaven of heavens*: thoſe vaſtly higher tracts, which lie far beyond the limits of human ſurvey, to which our very thoughts can hardly ſoar; even theſe, (unbounded as they are) cannot afford an adequate habitation for JEHOVAH; even theſe dwindle into a point, when compared with the infinitude of his eſſence; even theſe "are as nothing before him."—*How much leſs* proportionate is this poor diminutive ſpeck (which I have been erecting and embelliſhing) to ſo auguſt a Preſence, ſo immenſe a Majeſty!

† Pſal. cxiii. 6.

† ——————χαριν τε θεοις' απεχεσθαι θ' απαντων, was the favourite maxim of *Pythagoras*, and ſuppoſed to be one of the beſt moral precepts ever given to the Heathen world. With what ſuperior force, and very ſingular advantage, does the argument take place in the Chriſtian ſcheme! where we are taught to regard ourſelves, not merely as *intellectual beings*, who have *reaſon* for our monitor; but as *conſecrated creatures*, who have a GOD of the moſt conſummate perfection ever *with* us, ever *in* us.

‡ 2 Cor. vi. 16.

‖ Ezek. ii. 10. § Gen. xxviii. 17. ¶ Deut. xxxii. 29.

by

by considering their latter end. This spark of heaven is often lost under the glitter of pompous erudition, but shines clearly in the gloomy mansions of the tomb. Drowned is this gentle whisper amidst the *noise* of secular affairs, but speaks distinctly in the *retirements* of serious contemplation—Behold! how providentially I am brought to the school of wisdom *! The grave is the most faithful † master; and these instances of mortality, the most instructive lessons.—Come then, *calm attention*, and compose my thoughts; come, thou *celestial Spirit*, and enlighten my mind; that I may so peruse these awful pages, as to become "wise unto salvation."

EXAMINING the records of mortality, I found the memorials of a ‡ *promiscuous* multitude. They were huddled, at least they rested together, without any regard to rank or seniority. None were ambitious of the uppermost rooms, or chief seats, in this house of mourning. None entertained fond and eager expectations of being honourably greeted in their darksome cells. The man of years and experience, reputed as an oracle in his generation, was content to lie down at the feet of a babe. In this house appointed for all living, the servant was equally accommodated, and lodged in the same story, with his master. The *poor indigent* lay as softly, and slept as soundly, as the most *opulent possessor*. All the distinction that subsisted, was a grassy hillock, bound with osiers; or a sepulchral stone, ornamented with imagery.

WHY then, said my working thoughts, O! why should we raise such a mighty stir about *superiority* and *precedence*, when the next remove will reduce us all to a state of equal meanness? Why should we exalt ourselves, or debase others; since we must all, one day, be upon a common level, and blended together in the same undistinguished dust? O! that this consideration might humble my own, and others pride; and sink our imaginations as low, as our habitation will shortly be!

AMONG these confused relics of humanity, there are, without doubt, persons of *contrary* interests, and *contradicting* sentiments. But death, like some able days-man, has laid his hand on the contending parties, and brought all their differences to an ‖ amicable conclusion. Here enemies, sworn enemies, dwell together in unity. They drop every embittered thought, and forget that they once were foes. Perhaps, their crumbling bones *mix*, as they *moulder*; and those who, while they lived, stood aloof in irreconcileable variance, here fall into mutual embraces, and even incorporate with each other in the grave.—O! that we might learn from these friendly ashes, not to perpetuate the memory of *injuries*; not to foment the fever of *resentment*; nor cherish the turbulence of *passion*; that there may be as little animosity and disagreement in the land of the living, as there is in the congregation of the dead!—But I suspend for a while such *general* observations, and address myself to a more *particular* inquiry.

YONDER *white stone*, emblem of the innocence it covers, informs the beholder of one who breathed out its tender soul almost in the instant of receiving it.—There, the peaceful *infant*, without so much as knowing what labour and vexation mean, * "lies still and is "quiet; it sleeps and is at rest." Staying only to wash away its native impurity in the laver of regeneration, it bid a speedy adieu to time, and terrestrial things.—What did the little hasty sojourner find so forbidding and disgustful in our upper world, to occasion its precipitant exit? 'Tis written, indeed, of its suffering Saviour, that when he had tasted the vinegar mingled with gall, he would not drink †. And did our newcome stranger begin to *sip* the cup of life; but, perceiving the bitterness, turn away its head, and refuse the *draught*? Was this the cause why the wary babe only opened its eyes; just looked on the light, and then withdrew into the more inviting regions of undisturbed repose!

Happy voyager! no sooner launched, than *arrived* at the haven ‡!—But more eminently happy *they*, who have passed the waves, and weathered all the storms, of a troublesome and dangerous world! who "through "many tribulations, have entered into the kingdom "of heaven;" and thereby brought *honour* to their divine convoy, administered *comfort* to the companions of their toil, and left an instructive *example* to succeeding pilgrims.

Highly favoured probationer! accepted, without being exercised!—It was thy peculiar privilege, not to *feel* the slightest of those evils, which *oppress* thy surviving kindred; which frequently fetch groans from the most manly fortitude, or most elevated faith. The arrows of calamity, barbed with anguish, are *often* fixed deep in our choicest comforts. The fiery darts of temptation, shot from the hand of hell, are *always* flying in showers around our integrity. To thee, sweet babe, both these distresses and dangers were alike unknown.

Consider this, ye *mourning parents*, and dry up your tears. Why should you lament, that your little ones are crowned with victory, before the sword was drawn, or the conflict begun?—Perhaps, the supreme Disposer of events foresaw some inevitable snare of temptation forming, or some dreadful storm of adversity impending. And why should you be so dissatisfied with that *kind precaution*, which housed your pleasant plant, and removed into shelter a tender flower, before the thunders roared; before the lightnings flew; before the tempest poured its rage?—O remember! they are not lost, but *taken away from the evil to come* ‖.

At the same time, let *survivors*, doomed to *bear the heat and burden of the day*, for their encouragement reflect,—that it is more honourable to have entered the lists, and to have fought the good fight, before they come off conquerors. They who have bore the cross, and submitted to afflictive providences, with a cheerful resignation, have girded up the loins of their mind, and performed their master's will with an honest and persevering fidelity;—these, having glorified their Redeemer on earth, will, probably, be as stars of the *first magnitude* in heaven. They will shine with brighter beams, be replenished with stronger joys, in their LORD's everlasting kingdom.

HERE lies the grief of a fond mother, and the blasted expectation of an indulgent father.—The *youth* grew up, like a well-watered plant; he shot deep, rose high, and bid fair for manhood. But just as the *cedar* began to tower, and promised 'ere long to be the pride of the wood, and prince among the neighbouring trees;—behold! the *axe* is laid unto the root; the fatal blow struck; and all its branching honours tumbled to the dust.—And did he fall alone? No: the hopes of his

* The man how wise, who, sick of gaudy scenes,
Is led by choice to take his fav'rite walk
Beneath death's gloomy, silent, cypress shades,
Unpierc'd by vanity's fantastic ray!
To read his monuments, to weigh his dust,
Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs!
Night Thoughts.

† Wait the great teacher Death. POPE.

‡ *Missa senum ac juvenum densantur funera.* HOR.

‖ *His motus animorum, atque hæc certamina tanta,*
Pulveris exigui jactu compressa quiescent. VIRG.

* Job iii. 13. † Matth. xxvii. 34.

‡ Happy the babe, who privileg'd by fate,
To shorter labour, and a lighter weight,
Receiv'd but yesterday the gift of breath,
Order'd to-morrow to return to death. PRIOR's *Sol.*

‖ Is. lvii. 1.

father that begat him, and the pleaſing proſpects of her that bare him, fell, and were cruſhed together with him.

Doubtleſs it would have pierced one's heart, to have beheld the tender parents following the breathleſs youth to his long home. Perhaps drowned in tears, and all overwhelmed with ſorrows, they ſtood, like weeping ſtatues, on this very ſpot.—Methinks, I ſee the deeply diſtreſſed mourners attending the ſad ſolemnity. How they wring their hands, and pour floods from their eyes!—Is it fancy? or do I really hear the paſſionate *mother*, in an agony of affliction, taking her final leave of the darling of her ſoul? Dumb ſhe remained, while the awful obſequies were performing; dumb with grief, and leaning upon the partner of her woes. But now the inward anguiſh ſtruggles for vent; it grows too big to be repreſſed. She advances to the brink of the grave. All her ſoul is in her eyes. She faſtens one more look upon the *dear doleful* object, before the pit ſhuts its mouth upon him. And as ſhe looks, ſhe cries;—in broken accents, interrupted by many a riſing ſob, ſhe cries,—"Farewell, my ſon! my "ſon! my only beloved! would to GOD I had died for "thee!—Farewell, my child! and farewell all my "earthly happineſs!—I ſhall never more ſee good in "the land of the living.—Attempt not to comfort "me.—I will go mourning all my days, till my grey "hairs come down, with ſorrow, to the grave."

From this affecting repreſentation, let parents be convinced, how highly it concerns them to cultivate the *morals*, and ſecure the *immortal* intereſts of their children.—If you really love the offſpring of your own bodies; if your bowels yearn over thoſe amiable pledges of conjugal endearment; ſpare no pains; give all diligence, I entreat you, "to bring them up in the nur-"ture and admonition of the LORD." Then may you have joy in their life, or conſolation in their death. If their ſpan is *prolonged*, their unblameable and uſeful conduct will be the ſtaff of your age, and a balm for declining nature. Or, if the number of their years be cut off in the *midſt*, you may commit their remains to the duſt, with much the ſame comfortable expectations, as you ſend the ſurvivors to places of genteel education. You may commit them to the duſt, with chearing hopes of receiving them again to your arms, *inexpreſſibly improved* in every noble and endearing accompliſhment.

'Tis certainly a *ſevere trial*, and much more afflictive than I am able to imagine, to reſign a lovely blooming creature, ſprung from your own loins, to the gloomy receſſes of corruption. *Thus* to reſign him, after having being long dandled upon your knees, united to your affections by a thouſand ties of tenderneſs; and now become both the delight of your eyes, and the ſupport of your family!—to have ſuch a one torn from your boſom, and thrown into darkneſs, doubtleſs, it muſt be like a dagger in your hearts.—But O! how much more cutting to you, and confounding to the child, to have the ſoul ſeparated from GOD; and, for *ſhameful ignorance*, or *early impiety*, tranſmitted to places of eternal torment! How would it aggravate your diſtreſs, and add a diſtracting *emphaſis* to all your ſighs, if you ſhould know the pale corpſe with theſe bitter reflections!—"His dear creature, though long ago ca-"pable of knowing good from evil, is gone *out* of the "world, before it had learned the great deſign of "coming *into* it. A ſhort-lived, momentary exiſtence it "received from me; but no good inſtructions, no holy "admonitions, nothing to further its well-being in "that everlaſting ſtate, upon which it is now entered. "The *poor body* is conſigned to the coffin, and carried "out to conſume away, in the cold and ſilent grave. "And what reaſon have I to ſuppoſe, that the *precious* "*ſoul* is in a better condition? May I not juſtly fear, "that, ſentenced by the righteous Judge, it is going, "or gone away, into the pains of endleſs puniſhment?

"—Perhaps, while I am *bewailing* its untimely depar-"ture, it may be *curſing*, in outer darkneſs, that "ever to be deplored, that moſt calamitous day, when "it was born of ſuch a careleſs, ungodly parent, as I "have been."

Nothing, I think, but the gnawings of that worm which never dies, can equal the anguiſh of theſe ſelf-condemning thoughts. The tortures of a rack muſt be an eaſy ſuffering, compared with the ſtings and horror of ſuch a remorſe.—How earneſtly do I wiſh, that as many as are entruſted with the management of children, would take timely care to prevent theſe ſcourges of conſcience, by endeavouring to conduct their minds into an early *knowledge* of Chriſt, and a cordial *love* of his truth!

ON this hand is lodged one, whoſe ſepulchral ſtone tells a moſt pitiable tale indeed! Well may the *little images*, reclined over the ſleeping aſhes, hang down their heads with that penſive air! None can conſider ſo mournful a ſtory, without feeling ſome touches of ſympathizing concern.—His *age* twenty-eight; his death *ſudden*; himſelf cut down in the prime of life, amidſt all the vivacity and vigour of manhood; while "his "breaſts were full of milk, and his bones moiſtened "with marrow."—Probably, he entertained no apprehenſions of the evil hour. And indeed, who could have ſuſpected, that ſo bright a ſun ſhould go down at noon? To human appearance, his hill ſtood ſtrong. Length of days ſeemed written in his ſanguine countenance. He ſolaced himſelf with the proſpect of a long, long ſeries of earthly ſatisfactions.—When lo! an unexpected ſtroke deſcends! deſcends from that mighty arm, which "overturneth the mountains by their roots; "and cruſhes the imaginary hero, * *before the moth*;" as quickly, and more eaſily, than our fingers preſs ſuch a feeble fluttering inſect to death.

Perhaps, the *nuptial joys* were all he thought on.—Were not ſuch the breathings of his enamoured ſoul? "Yet a very little while, and I ſhall poſſeſs the utmoſt "of my wiſhes. I ſhall call my charmer mine; and, "in *her*, enjoy whatever my heart can crave."—In the midſt of ſuch enchanting views, had ſome faithful friend but ſoftly reminded him of an opening grave, and the end of all things; how *unſeaſonable* would he have reckoned the admonition! Yet, though all warm with life, and rich in viſionary bliſs, he was even then tottering upon the brink of both.—Dreadful viciſſitude! to have the *bridal* † feſtivity turned into the *funeral* ſolemnity! Deplorable misfortune! to be ſhipwrecked in the very haven! and to periſh even in ſight of happineſs!—What a memorable proof is here of the frailty of man, in his beſt eſtate! Look, O, look! on his monument, ye *gay* and *careleſs!* attend to this date; and boaſt no more of to-morrow!

* *Job* iv. 18. לפני עש—*Ad inſtar, ad modum, tineæ.*—I retain this interpretation, both as it is moſt ſuitable to my purpoſe, and as it is patronized by ſome eminent commentators, eſpecially the celebrated *Schultens*. Though I cannot but give the preference to the opinion of a judicious friend, who would render the paſſage more literally, *Before the face of a moth*, making it to repreſent a creature ſo exceedingly frail, that even a moth, flying againſt it, may daſh it to pieces.—Which, beſides its cloſer correſpondence with the exact import of the *Hebrew*, preſents us with a much finer image of the moſt extreme imbecillity. For it certainly implies a far greater degree of weakneſs, to be cruſhed by the feeble flutter of the feebleſt creature, than only to be cruſhed as eaſily as that creature, by the hand of man.—The *French* verſion is very expreſſive and beautiful; *à la rencontre d'un vermiſſeau.*

† A diſtreſs of this kind is painted in very affecting colours by *Pliny*, in an epiſtle to *Marcellinus*; *O triſte planè acerbumque funus! O morte ipſa mortis tempus indignius! Jam deſignata gener ejus juveni; jam electus nuptiarum dies; jam nos advocati. Quod gaudium quo mœrore mutatum eſt! Non poſſum exprimere verbis, quantum animo vulnus acceperim, quum audivi Fundanum ipſum (ut multa luctuoſa dolor invenit) præcipientem, quod in veſtes, margaritas, gemmas, fuerat erogaturus, hoc in thura, et unguenta, et odores, impenderetur.* PLIN. lib. v. epiſt. 16.

Who

Who can tell, but the *bride-maids*, girded with gladneſs, had prepared the marriage-bed? had decked it with the richeſt covers, and dreſſed it in pillows of down? When,—oh! truſt not in youth or ſtrength, or in any thing mortal; for there is nothing certain, nothing to be depended on, beneath the unchangeable GOD;—Death, relentleſs death, is making him another kind of bed in the duſt of the earth. Unto this he muſt be conveyed, not with a ſplendid proceſſion of *joyous attendants*; but ſtretched in the *gloomy hearſe*, and followed by a train of mourners. On this he muſt take up a lonely lodging, nor ever be releaſed, "till the "heavens are no more."—In vain does the conſenting *fair-one* put on her ornaments, and expect her ſpouſe. Did ſhe not, like *Siſera*'s mother, look out of the lattice, chide the delays of her beloved; and wonder "why his chariot was ſo long in coming?" little thinking, that the *intended* bridegroom had for ever done with tranſitory things! that now everlaſting cares employ his mind, without one ſingle remembrance of his lovely *Lucinda!*—Go, diſappointed virgin! go, mourn the uncertainty of all created bliſs! Teach thy ſoul to aſpire after a ſure and *immutable felicity!* for the once gay and gallant *Fidelio* ſleeps in other embraces; even in the icy arms of death! forgetful, eternally forgetful, of the world—and *thee*.

HITHERTO, one is tempted to exclaim againſt the king of terrors, and call him *capriciouſly cruel*. He ſeems, by beginning at the wrong end of the regiſter, to have inverted the laws of nature. Paſſing over the couch of decrepit age, he has nipped infancy in its *bud*, blaſted youth in its *bloom*, and torn up manhood in its full *maturity*.—Terrible indeed are theſe providences, yet not unſearchable the counſels:

——For us they ſicken, and for us thay die *.

Such ſtrokes muſt not only grieve the relatives, but *ſurpriſe* the whole neighbourhood. They ſound a powerful alarm to heedleſs, dreaming mortals, and are intended as a remedy for our carnal ſecurity. Such paſſing-bells inculcate loudly our LORD's admonition; "Take ye heed, watch, and pray: for ye know not "when the time is."—We nod, like intoxicated creatures, upon the very verge of a tremendous precipice. Theſe aſtoniſhing diſpenſations are the kind meſſengers of heaven, to *rouſe* us from our *ſupineneſs*, and quicken us into timely circumſpection. I need not, ſurely, accommodate them with language, nor act as their interpreter. Let every one's conſcience be awake, and this will appear their awful meaning:—"O! ye ſons of "men, in the midſt of life you are in death. No ſtate, "no circumſtances, can aſcertain your preſervation a "ſingle moment. So *ſtrong* is the tyrant's arm, that "nothing can reſiſt its force; ſo *true* his aim, that no"thing can elude the blow. *Sudden* as lightning, "ſometimes, is his arrow launched; and wounds, and "kills, in the twinkling of an eye. Never promiſe "yourſelves ſafety in any expedient, but conſtant pre"paration. The fatal ſhafts fly ſo promiſcuouſly, that "none can gueſs the next victim. Therefore *be ye al*"*ways ready; for, in ſuch an hour as ye think not*, the "final ſummons cometh."

Be ye always ready: for in ſuch an hour as ye think not—Important admonition! Methinks, it reverberates from ſepulchre to ſepulchre; and addreſſes me with line upon line, precept upon precept.—The reiterated warning, I acknowledge, is too needful; may co-operating grace render it effectual! The momentous truth, though worthy to be *engraved* on the tables of a moſt tenacious memory, is but ſlightly *ſketched* on the tranſient flow of paſſion. We ſee our neighbours fall; we turn pale at the ſhock; and feel, perhaps, a trembling dread. No ſooner are they removed from our ſight, but, driven in the whirl of buſineſs, or lulled in the languors of pleaſure, we forget the providence, and neglect its errand. The impreſſion made on our unſtable minds, is like the trace of an arrow through the penetrated air, or the path of a keel in the furrowed wave.—Strange ſtupidity! To cure it, another monitor beſpeaks me, from a neighbouring ſtone. It contains the narrative of an unhappy mortal, ſnatched from his friends, and hurried to the awful bar; without leiſure, either to take a *laſt farewell* of the one, or to put up ſo much as a *ſingle prayer* preparatory for the other; killed, according to the uſual expreſſion, by a ſudden ſtroke of caſuality.

Was it then a random ſtroke? Doubtleſs, the blow came from an *aiming*, though inviſible hand. GOD preſideth over the armies of heaven; GOD ruleth among the inhabitants of the earth; and GOD conducteth what men call *chance*. Nothing, nothing comes to paſs through a blind and undiſcerning fatality. If accidents happen, they happen according to the exact foreknowledge; and conformably to the determinate counſels, of eternal wiſdom. The LORD, with whom are the iſſues of death, ſigns the *warrant*, and gives the high commiſſion. The ſeemingly fortuitous diſaſter is only the *agent*, or the *inſtrument* appointed to execute the ſupreme decree. When the king of *Iſrael* was mortally wounded, it ſeemed to be a caſual ſhot. *A certain man drew a bow at a venture* *.—*At a venture*, as he thought. But his hand was ſtrengthened by an omnipotent aid, and the ſhaft levelled by an unerring eye. So that what we term *caſuality*, is really *providence*, accompliſhing deliberate deſigns, but concealing its own interpoſition.—How comforting this reflection! Admirably adapted, to ſoothe the throbbing anguiſh of the mourners, and compoſe their ſpirits into a quiet ſubmiſſion! Excellently ſuited, to diſſipate the fears of godly ſurvivors, and create a calm intrepidity even amidſt innumerable perils!

How *thin* is the partition between this world and another! How *ſhort* the tranſition from time to eternity! The partition, nothing more than the breath in our noſtrils; and the tranſition may be made in the twinkling of an eye.—Poor *Chremylus*, I remember, aroſe from the diverſion of a card-table, and dropt into the dwellings of darkneſs.—One night, *Corinna* was all gaiety in her ſpirits, all finery in her apparel, at a magnificent ball. The next night, ſhe lay pale and ſtiff, an extended corpſe, and ready to be mingled with the mouldering dead.—Young *Atticus* lived to ſee his ample and commodious ſeat completed; but not to ſpend one joyous hour under the ſtately roof. The ſaſhes were hung to admit the day; but the maſter's eyes were cloſed in endleſs night. The apartments were furniſhed, to invite ſociety, or adminiſter repoſe; but their lord reſts in the lower parts of the earth, in the ſolitary, ſilent chambers of the tomb. The gardens were planned, and a thouſand elegant decorations deſigned; but alas! their intended poſſeſſor is gone down to "the "place of ſkulls;" is gone down to the valley of the ſhadow of death.

While I am recollecting, many, I queſtion not, are experiencing the ſame tragical viciſſitude. The eyes of that ſublime Being,—who ſits upon the circle of the earth, and views all its inhabitants with one comprehenſive glance, even now behold many tents in affliction; ſuch affliction, as overwhelmed the *Egyptians* in that fatal night, when the deſtroying angel ſheathed his arrows in all the pride of their ſtrength.—Some, ſinking to the floor from their *eaſy chair*; and deaf even amidſt the piercing ſhrieks of their diſtracted relations.—Some, giving up the ghoſt, as they ſit retired, or lie reclined, under the *ſhady arbour*, to taſte the ſweets of the flowery ſcene.—Some, as they ſail, aſſo-

* Night Thoughts.

* 1 Kings xxii. 34.

ciated with a *party* of *pleasure*, along the dancing ſtream, and through the laughing meads. Nor is the grim intruder mollified, though wine and muſic flow around.—Some *intercepted*, as they are returning home; and ſome *interrupted*, as they enter upon an important negociation.—Some arreſted, with the gain of *injuſtice* in their hands; and ſome ſurpriſed in the very act of *lewdneſs*, or the attempt of *cruelty*.

Legions, legions of diſaſters, ſuch as no prudence can foreſee, and no care prevent, lie in wait to accompliſh our doom. A *ſtarting-horſe* may throw his rider; may at once daſh his body againſt the ſtones, and fling his ſoul into the inviſible world. A *ſtack* of *chimneys* may tumble into the ſtreet, and cruſh the unwary paſſenger under the ruins. Even a ſingle *tile*, dropping from the roof, may be as fatal as the fall of the whole ſtructure.—So frail, ſo very attenuated is the thread of life, that it not only burſts before the *ſtorm*, but breaks even at a *breeze*. The moſt common occurrences, thoſe from which we ſuſpect not the leaſt harm, may prove the weapons of our deſtruction. A grape-ſtone, a deſpicable fly, may be more mortal than *Goliath*, with all his formidable armour.——Nay, if GOD give command, our very *comforts* become *killing*. The air we breathe, is our bane; and the food we eat, the vehicle of death.—That laſt enemy has unnumbered avenues for his approach; yea, lies entrenched in our very boſom, and holds his fortreſs in the ſeat of our life. The crimſon fluid, which *diſtributes health*, is impregnated with the ſeeds of death. Heat may inflame it, or toil oppreſs it, and make it deſtroy the parts it was deſigned to cheriſh. Some unſeen impediment may obſtruct its paſſage, or ſome unknown violence may divert its courſe; in either of which caſes, it acts the part of a poiſonous draught, or a deadly ſtab.

Ah! in what perils is vain life engag'd!
What ſlight neglects, what trivial faults deſtroy
The hardieſt frame! Of indolence, of toil,
We die; of want, of ſuperfluity.
The all-ſurrounding heav'n, the vital air,
Is big with death.

Since then we are ſo liable to be diſpoſſeſſed of this earthly tabernacle, let us look upon ourſelves only as *tenants at will*; and hold ourſelves in perpetual readineſs, to depart at a moment's warning. Without ſuch an *habitual* readineſs, we are like wretches, that ſleep on the top of a maſt, while a horrid gulf yawns, or furious waves rage, below. And where can be the peace, what the ſatisfaction, of ſuch a ſtate?—Whereas, a prepared condition will inſpire a chearfulneſs of temper, not to be diſmayed by any alarming accident; and create a firmneſs of mind, not to be overthrown by the moſt threatening dangers. When the city is fortified with walls, furniſhed with proviſion, guarded by able and reſolute troops; what have the inhabitants to fear? what may they not enjoy? So, juſt ſo, or rather by a much ſurer band, are connected the *real* taſte of life, and the *conſtant* thought of death.

I SAID, *Our very comforts may become killing*.—And ſee the truth inſcribed by the hand, ſealed with the ſignet of fate. The marble, which graces yonder pillar, informs me, that, near it, are depoſited the remains of *Sophronia*; the much-lamented *Sophronia*, who died in *child-bed*.—How often does this calamity happen! The branch ſhoots; but the ſtem withers. The babe ſprings to light; but ſhe that bare him, breathes her laſt. She gives life, but gives it (O pitiable conſideration!) at the expence of her own; and becomes, at once, a *mother*, and a *carpſe*.—Or elſe, perhaps, ſhe expires in ſevere pangs, and is herſelf a tomb for her infant; while the melancholy complaint of a monarch's woe is the epitaph for them both: *The children are come to the birth, and there is not ſtrength to bring forth**.—Leſs to be lamented, in my opinion, *this* misfortune than the *other*. Better for the tender ſtranger to be ſtopped in the porch, than to enter only to converſe with affliction. Better to find a grave in the womb, than to be expoſed on a hazardous world, without the guardian of its infantile years, without the faithful guide of its youth.

* Iſ. xxxvii. 3.

This monument is diſtinguiſhed by its finer materials, and more delicate appendages. It ſeems to have taken its model from an affluent hand, directed by a generous heart, which thought it could never do enough for the deceaſed.—It ſeems, alſo, to exhibit an *emblematical* picture of *Sophronia*'s perſon and accompliſhments. Is her beauty, or, what is more than beauty, her white-robed innocence, repreſented by the ſnowy *colour*? The *ſurface*, ſmoothly poliſhed, like her amiable temper, and engaging manners. The *whole* adorned, in a well-judged medium between extravagant pomp and ſordid negligence; like her undiſſembled goodneſs, remote from the leaſt oſtentation, yet in all points exemplary.—But ah! how vain were all theſe endearing charms! How vain the luſtre of thy ſprightly eye! how vain the bloom of thy bridal youth! how vain the honours of thy ſuperior birth! how unable to ſecure the lovely poſſeſſor from the *ſavage violence* of death!—How ineffectual the univerſal eſteem of thy acquaintance; the fondneſs of thy tranſported huſband; or even the ſpotleſs integrity of thy character; to prolong thy ſpan, or procure thee a ſhort reprieve!—The concurrence of all theſe circumſtances reminds me of thoſe beautiful and tender lines:

How lov'd, how *valu'd* once, avails thee not;
To whom related, or by whom begot.
A heap of duſt alone remains of thee:
'Tis all *THOU* art! and all the *PROUD* ſhall be*!

POPE's *Miſcell.*

* Theſe verſes are inſcribed on a ſmall, but elegant monument, lately erected in the great church at *Northampton*; which, in the *hieroglyphical* decorations, correſponds with the deſcriptions introduced above: In this circumſtance particularly, that it is dedicated to the memory of an amiable woman, Mrs ANN STONHOUSE, the excellent wife of my worthy friend Dr STONHOUSE; who has ſeen all the powers of that healing art, to which I, and ſo many others, have been *greatly* indebted, failing in their attempts to preſerve a life *dearer* to him than his own.

Nec proſunt domino, quæ proſunt omnibus, artes. OVID.

No longer his all-healing art avails;
But ev'ry remedy its maſter fails.

In the midſt of this tender diſtreſs, he has ſought ſome kind of conſolation, even from the ſepulchral marble; by teaching it to ſpeak, at once, his eſteem for *her memory*; and his veneration for *that religion*, which ſhe ſo eminently adorned. Nor could this be more ſignificantly done, than by ſumming up her character, in that conciſe, but comprehenſive ſentence, A SINCERE CHRISTIAN. *Conciſe* enough, to be the motto for a mourning ring; yet as *comprehenſive*, as the moſt enlarged ſphere of perſonal, ſocial, and religious worth. For whatſoever things are pure, whatſoever things are lovely, whatſoever things are of good report, are they not all included in that grand and noble aggregate,——*A ſincere Chriſtian?*

The firſt lines, conſidered in ſuch a connection, are wonderfully plaintive and pathetic:

How lov'd, how *valu'd once*, avails thee not;
To whom related, or by whom begot.

They ſound, at leaſt in *my* ears, like the voice of ſorrow mingled with admiration. The ſpeaker ſeems to have been loſt, for a while, in melancholy contemplation; ſuddenly breaks out into this abrupt encomium; then melts into tears, and can proceed no farther. Yet, in this caſe, how eloquent is ſilence! While it hints the univerſal eſteem which attended, and the ſuperiority of birth which diſtinguiſhed, the deceaſed *wife*; it expreſſes, beyond all the pomp of words, the yearning affection, and heart-felt affliction, of the ſurviving *huſband*.——Amidſt the group of monumental marbles, which are laviſh of their panegyric, *this*, I think, reſembles the incomparable addreſs of the painter; who, having placed round a beautiful expiring virgin, her friends in all the

agonies

Yet, though unable to divert the ſtroke, Chriſtianity is ſovereign to pluck out the ſting, of death. Is not this the ſilent language of thoſe *lamps* which burn, and of that *heart* which flames; of thoſe *palms* which flouriſh, and of that *crown* which glitters, in the well-imitated and gilded marble? Do they not, to the diſcerning eye, deſcribe the viligance of her faith; the fervency of her devotion; her victory over the world; and the celeſtial diadem, which the LORD, the righteous Judge, ſhall give her at that day *?

How happy the huſband, in ſuch a ſharer of his bed, and partner of his fortunes! Their inclinations were nicely-tuned *uniſons*, and all their converſation was *harmony*. How ſilken the yoke to ſuch a pair, and what bleſſings were twiſted with ſuch bands! Every joy was heightened, and every care alleviated. Nothing ſeemed wanting to conſummate their bliſs, but a hopeful progeny riſing around them.—That they might ſee themſelves multiplied in their little ones; ſee their mingled graces tranſfuſed into their offspring; and feel the glow of their affection *augmented*, by being *reflected* from their children: "Grant us this gift," ſaid their united prayers, "and our ſatisfactions are crowned; "we requeſt no more."

Alas! how blind are mortals to future events! how unable to diſcern what is really good †! *Give me children*, ſaid *Rachael, or elſe I die* ‡. An ardor of impatience altogether unbecoming, and as miſtaken as it was unbecoming. She dies, not by the *diſappointment*, but by the *accompliſhment*, of her deſire.—If children are, to parents, like a flowery chaplet, whoſe beauties bloſſom with ornament, and whoſe odours breathe delight; death, or ſome fell misfortune, may find means to entwine themſelves with the lovely wreath. Whenever our ſouls are poured out, with paſſionate importunity, after any inferior acquiſition; it may be truly ſaid, in the words of our divine Maſter, *Ye know not what ye aſk*.—Does Providence with-hold the thing that we long for? It denies in mercy; and only with-holds the occaſion of our miſery, perhaps the inſtrument of our ruin. With a ſickly appetite, we often loathe what is wholeſome, and hanker after our bane. Where *imagination* dreams of unmingled ſweets, there *experience* frequently finds the bitterneſs of woe.

Therefore, may we covet immoderately, neither this nor that form of earthly felicity; but refer the whole of our condition, to the choice of unerring wiſdom. May we learn to renounce our own will; and be ready to make a ſacrifice of our warmeſt wiſhes, whenever they run counter to the good pleaſure of GOD. For, indeed, as to obey his laws, is to be perfectly free; ſo to *reſign* ourſelves to his diſpoſal, is to *eſtabliſh* our own happineſs, and to be ſecure from fear of evil.

HERE a ſmall and plain ſtone is placed upon the ground; purchaſed, one would imagine, from the little fund, and formed by the hand, of frugality itſelf. Nothing coſtly; not one decoration added; only a very ſhort inſcription; and that ſo effaced, as to be ſcarcely intelligible.—Was the depoſitary unfaithful to its truſt? Or were the letters worn, by the frequent reſort of the ſurviving family, to mourn over the grave of a moſt valuable and beloved relative?—For I perceive upon a cloſer inſpection, that it covers the remains of a father; a *religious father*; ſnatched from his growing offspring, before they were ſettled in the world, or ſo much as their principles fixed by a thorough education.

THIS, ſure, is the moſt complicated diſtreſs, that has hitherto come under our conſideration. The *ſolemnities* of ſuch a *dying chamber*, are ſome of the moſt melting and melancholy ſcenes imaginable.—There lies the affectionate huſband; the indulgent parent; the faithful friend; and the generous maſter. He lies in the laſt extremities, and on the very point of diſſolution. Art has done its all. The raging diſeaſe mocks the power of medicine. It haſtens with reſiſtleſs impetuoſity, to execute its dreadful errand; to rend aſunder the ſilver cord of life, and the more delicate tie of ſocial attachment, and conjugal affection.

A *ſervant* or two, from a revering diſtance, caſt many a wiſhful look, and condole their honoured maſter in the language of ſighs. The condeſcending mildneſs of his commands was wont to produce an alacrity of obedience, and render their ſervice a pleaſure. The remembrance of both embitters their grief, and makes it trickle plentifully down their honeſt cheeks.—His *friends*, who have ſo often ſhared his joys, and gladdened his mind with their enlivening converſe, now are miſerable comforters. A ſympathizing and mournful pity is all the relief they are able to contribute; unleſs it be augmented by their ſilent prayers for the divine ſuccour, and a word of conſolation ſuggeſted from the ſcriptures *.—Thoſe poor innocents, the *children*, croud around the bed; drowned in tears, and almoſt frantic with grief, they ſob out their little ſouls, and paſſionately cry, "Will he leave us? leave us in a help-"leſs condition! leave us to an injurious world!"

Theſe ſeparate ſtreams are all united in the diſtreſſed *ſpouſe*, and overwhelm her breaſt with an impetuous tide of ſorrows. In her, the lover weeps, the wife mourns, and all the mother yearns. To her, the loſs is beyond meaſure aggravated, by months and years of delightful ſociety, and exalted friendſhip.—

agonies of grief, repreſented the *unequalled* anguiſh of the *father*, with far greater livelineſs and ſtrength, or rather with an inexpreſſible emphaſis, by drawing a veil over *his* face.

If the laſt lines are a wide departure from the beaten track of our modern epitaphs, and the very reverſe of their high-flown compliments,

A heap of duſt alone remains of thee!
'Tis all *THOU* art!——and all the *PROUD* ſhall be!

they are not without a precedent, and one of the moſt conſummate kind. Since they breathe the very ſpirit of that ſacred elegy, in which all the heart of the hero and the friend ſeems to be diſſolved; *How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war periſhed!* 2 Sam. i. 27.——They remind the reader of that awful leſſon, which was originally dictated by the ſupreme wiſdom; *Duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return*, Gen. iii. 19.——They inculcate, with all the force of the moſt convincing evidence, that ſolemn admonition delivered by the prophet; *Ceaſe ye from man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Iſ. ii. 22.

That no reader, however inattentive, might miſtake the ſenſe and deſign of *this* part of the *fourth* line,

'Tis *ALL* thou art!

it is guarded above and beneath.—*Above*, is an expanded book, that ſeems to be waved, with an air of triumph, over the emblem of death: which we cannot but ſuppoſe to be the volume of inſpiration, as it exhibits a ſort of *abridgement* of its whole contents, in thoſe animated words; BE YE NOT SLOTHFUL, BUT FOLLOWERS OF THEM, WHO THROUGH FAITH AND PATIENCE INHERIT THE PROMISES, Heb. vi. 12.—*Beneath*, that every part might be pregnant with inſtruction, are thoſe ſtriking reflections; worthy the conſideration of *higheſt* proficient in knowledge and piety, yet obvious to the underſtanding of the moſt *untaught* reader; LIFE, HOW SHORT! ETERNITY, HOW LONG!——May my ſoul learn the forcible purport of this ſhort leſſon, in her contracted ſpan of time! and all eternity will not be too long, to rejoice in having learned it.

* 2 Tim. iv. 8.

† *Neſcia mens hominum fati, ſortiſque futuræ!*
Turno tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum,
Intactum Pallanta; et cum ſpolia iſta diemque
Oderit!— VIRG.

‡ Gen. xxx. 1.

* Texts of ſcriptures, proper for ſuch an occaſion; containing promiſes—of ſupport under affliction, Lam. iii. 32. Heb. xii. 6. 2 Cor. iv. 17.—of pardon, Iſ. liii. 5. Iſ. i. 18. 1 John ii. 1. 2. Acts x. 43.—of juſtification, Rom. v. 9. Rom. viii. 33. 34. 2 Cor. v. 21.—of victory over death, Pſal. xxiii. 4. Pſal. lxxiii. 26. 1 Cor. xv. 56. 57.—of a happy reſurrection, John vi. 40. 2 Cor. v. 1. Rev. vii. 16, 17.

Where

Where, alas! can ſhe meet with ſuch unſuſpected fidelity, or repoſe ſuch unreſerved confidence? where find ſo diſcreet a counſellor; ſo improving an example; and a guardian ſo ſedulouſly attentive to the intereſts of herſelf, and her children?—See! how ſhe hangs over the languiſhing bed; moſt tenderly ſolicitous to prolong a life, important and deſirable far beyond her own; or, if that be impracticable, no leſs tenderly officious to ſoothe the laſt agonies of her *dearer ſelf*.—Her hands, trembling under direful apprehenſions, wipe the cold dews from the livid cheeks; and ſometimes ſtay the ſinking head on her gentle arms, ſometimes reſt it on her compaſſionate boſom.—See! how ſhe gazes, with a ſpeechleſs ardor, on the pale countenance, and meagre features. Speechleſs her tongue: but ſhe looks unutterable things. While all her ſoft paſſions throb with unavailing fondneſs, and her very ſoul bleeds with exquiſite anguiſh.

The *ſufferer*, all patient and adoring, ſubmits to the divine will: and, by ſubmiſſion, becomes ſuperior to his affliction. He is ſenſibly touched with the diſconſolate ſtate of his attendants; and pierced with an anxious concern for his wife and his children; his wife, who will ſoon be a *deſtitute widow*; his children, who will ſoon be *helpleſs orphans*. "Yet, though "caſt down, not in deſpair." He is greatly refreſhed by his truſt in the everlaſting covenant, and his hope of approaching glory. Religion gives a dignity to diſtreſs. At each interval of eaſe, he comforts his very comforters; and ſuffers with all the majeſty of woe.

The ſoul, juſt going to abandon the tottering clay, collects all her force, and exerts her *laſt* efforts. The good man raiſes himſelf on his pillow; extends a kind hand to his ſervants, which is bathed in tears; takes an affecting farewell of his friends; claſps his wife in a feeble embrace; kiſſes the dear pledges of their mutual love; and then pours all that remains of life and of ſtrength in the following words:—"I die, "*my* dear *children*: but GOD, the everlaſting GOD, "will be with you.—Though you loſe an earthly pa"rent, you have a Father in heaven, who lives "for evermore.—Nothing, nothing but an unbeliev"ing heart, and irreligious life, can ever ſeparate "you from the regards of his providence,—from the "endearments of his love."

He could proceed no farther. His heart was full; but utterance failed. After a ſhort pauſe, with difficulty, great difficulty, he added,—"You the dear *partner* of my "ſoul, you are now the only protector of our orphans. "—I leave you under a weight of cares.—But GOD, "who defendeth the cauſe of the widow,—GOD, "whoſe promiſe is faithfulneſs and truth,—GOD hath "ſaid, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake theee* *.—This "revives my drooping ſpirits,—let this ſupport the "wife of my boſom;—and now, O Father of com"paſſions into thy hands I commend my ſpirit.—En"couraged by thy promiſed goodneſs, *I leave my fa"therleſs*"———

Here he fainted; fell back upon the bed; and lay, for ſome minutes, bereft of his ſenſes. As a *taper*, upon the very point of extinction, is ſometimes ſuddenly rekindled, and leaps into a quivering flame; ſo *life*, before it totally expired, gave a parting ſtruggle, and once more looked abroad from the opening eye-lids.——He would fain have ſpoke, fain have uttered the ſentence he began. More than once he eſſayed: but the organs of ſpeech were become like a broken veſſel, and nothing but the obſtructing phlegm rattled in his throat. His *aſpect*, however, *ſpoke* affection inexpreſſible. With all the father, all the huſband ſtill living in his looks, he takes one more view of thoſe *dear children*, whom he had often beheld with a parental triumph. He turns his dying eyes on that *beloved woman*, whom he never beheld but with a glow of delight. Fixed in this poſture, amidſt ſmiles of love, and under a gleam of heaven, they ſhine out their laſt.

Upon this, the ſilent ſorrow burſts into loud lamenta. They weep, and refuſe to be comforted. Till ſome length of time had given vent to the exceſs of paſſion; and the conſolations of religion had ſtaunched their bleeding woes. Then the afflicted family ſearch for the ſentence, which fell *unfiniſhed* from thoſe loved, thoſe venerable, and pious lips. They find it recorded by the prophet *Jeremiah*, containing the direction of infinite wiſdom, and the promiſe of unbounded goodneſs; *Leave thy fatherleſs children; I will preſerve them alive; and let thy widows truſt in me* *.—This, now, is the comfort of their life, and the joy of their heart. They treaſure it up in their memories. It is the beſt of *legacies*, and an *inexhauſtible* fund: A fund which will ſupply all their wants, by entailing the bleſſing of heaven on all their honeſt labours.—They are rich, they are happy, in this ſacred pledge of the divine favour. They fear no evil; they want no good; becauſe GOD is their portion, and their guardian GOD.

No ſooner turned from one *memento* of my own, and memorials of another's deceaſe, but a ſecond, a third, a long ſucceſſion of theſe melancholy monitors, croud upon my ſight †.—That which has fixed my obſervation, is one of a more *grave* and ſable *aſpect* than the former. I ſuppoſe, it preſerves the relics of a more aged perſon. One would conjecture, that he made ſomewhat of a figure in his ſtation among the living, as his monument does among the funeral marbles. Let me draw near, and inquire of the ſtone, "*Who*, or *what*, is beneath its ſurface?"—I am informed, he was once the owner of a conſiderable eſtate; which was much improved, by his own application and management: that he left the world in the buſy period of life, advanced a little beyond the meridian.

Probably, replied my muſing mind, one of thoſe *indefatigable drudges*, who riſe early; late take reſt; and eat the bread of carefulneſs; not to ſecure the loving-kindneſs of the LORD, not to make proviſion for any reaſonable neceſſity, but only to *amaſs* together ten thouſand times more than they can poſſibly *uſe*.—Did he not lay ſchemes for enlarging his fortune, and aggrandizing his family? Did he not purpoſe to join field to field, and add houſe to houſe, till his poſſeſſions were almoſt as vaſt as his deſires? that, then he would ‡ ſit down, and enjoy what he had acquired; breathe a while from his toilſome purſuit of things temporal, and, perhaps, think a little of things eternal.

But ſee the folly of *worldly wiſdom!* How ſilly, how childiſh, is the ſagacity of (what is called) manly and maſterly prudence, when it contrives more ſolicitouſly for TIME, than it provides for ETERNITY! How ſtrangely infatuated are thoſe ſubtile heads, which weary themſelves in concerting meaſures for *phantoms* of a *day*, and ſcarce beſtow a thought on *everlaſting realities!*—When every wheel moves on ſmoothly; when all the well-diſpoſed deſigns are ripening apace for execution; and the long-expected criſis of enjoyment ſeems to approach; behold! GOD from on high laughs at the *Babel-builder*. Death touches the bubble, and it breaks; it drops into nothing. The cobweb, moſt finely ſpun indeed, but more eaſily diſlodged, is ſwept away in an inſtant; and all the abortive projects are buried in the ſame grave with their projector.——

* Heb. xiii. 5.

* Jer. xlix. 11.

† ——*Plurima mortis imago.* VIRG.

‡ ——*Hac mente laborem*
Seſe ferre, ſenes ut in otia tuta recedant,
Aiunt, cum ſibi ſint congeſta cibaria.—

So

So true is that verdict, which the wiſdom from above paſſes on theſe *ſucceſsful unfortunates*; "They walk "in a vain ſhadow, and diſquiet themſelves in vain*."

Speak, ye that attended ſuch a one in his laſt minutes; ye that heard his *expiring ſentiments*; did he not cry out, in the language of diſappointed ſenſuality?—"O death! how terrible is thy approach, to a man im-"merſed in ſecular cares, and void of all concern for "the never-ending *hereafter!* Where, alas! is the pro-"fit, where the comfort, of entering deep into the "knowledge, and of being dexterous in the diſpatch, "of earthly affairs; ſince I have, all the while, neglect-"ed *the one thing needful!* Deſtructive miſtake! I "have been attentive to every inferior intereſt; I have "laid myſelf out on the trifles of a moment; but have "diſregarded *heaven*; have forgot *eternal ages!* O! that "my days"——Here he was going on to breathe ſome fruitleſs wiſhes, or to form I know not what ineffectual reſolutions: But a ſudden convulſion ſhook his nerves; diſabled his tongue; and, in leſs than an hour, diſſolved his frame.

May the children of this world be warned, by the dying words of an unhappy brother, and gather advantage from his misfortune.—Why ſhould they pant, with ſuch impatient ardor, after *white* and *yellow* earth, as if the univerſe did not afford ſufficient for every one to take a little? Why ſhould they *lade* themſelves with thick clay, when they are to "*run* for an incor-"ruptible crown, and preſs towards the prize of their "high calling?" Why ſhould they overload the veſſel, in which their everlaſting ALL is embarked; or fill their arms with *ſuperfluities*, when they are to ſwim for their *lives?*—Yet ſo prepoſterous is the conduct of thoſe perſons, who are *all induſtry*, to heap up an abundance of the wealth which periſheth; but are ſcarce ſo much as *faintly deſirous*, of being rich towards GOD.

O! that we may walk, through all theſe glittering toys, at leaſt with a wiſe indifference, if not with a ſuperior diſdain! Having enough for the conveniencies of life, let us only *accommodate* ourſelves with things below, and lay up our *treaſures* in the regions above.—Whereas, if we indulge an anxious concern, or laviſh an inordinate care, on any tranſitory poſſeſſions; we ſhall rivet them to our affections with ſo firm an union, that the utmoſt ſeverity of pain muſt attend the ſeparating ſtroke. By ſuch an eager attachment to what will certainly be raviſhed from us, we ſhall only inſure to ourſelves *accumulated anguiſh*, againſt the agonizing hour: we ſhall plant, aforehand, our dying pillow with thorns†.

SOME, I perceive, arrived at threeſcore years and ten, before they made their exit; nay, ſome few reſigned not their breath, till they had numbered fourſcore revolving harveſts. Theſe, I would hope, "remember-"ed their Creator in the days of their youth;" before their ſtrength became labour and ſorrow; before that low ebb of languiſhing nature, when *the keepers of the houſe tremble, and thoſe that look out of the windows are darkened* ‡; when even the lighting down of *the graſshopper is a burden* on the bending ſhoulders, *and deſire* itſelf *fails* in the liſtleſs, lethargic ſoul;—before thoſe heavy hours come, and thoſe tireſome moments draw nigh, in which, there is too much reaſon to ſay, "We "*have no pleaſure in them*; no improvement from "them."

If their lamps were unfurniſhed with oil, how unfit muſt they be, in ſuch decrepit circumſtances, to go to the market, and buy*! For, beſides a variety of diſorders, ariſing from the enfeebled conſtitution, their corruptions muſt be ſurpriſingly ſtrengthened, by ſuch a long courſe of irreligion. *Evil habits* muſt have ſtruck the deepeſt root; muſt have twiſted themſelves with every fibre of the heart; and be as thoroughly ingrained in the diſpoſition, as the ſoot in the *Æthiopian*'s complexion, or the ſpots in the leopard's ſkin. If ſuch a one, under ſuch diſadvantages, ſurmounts all the difficulties which lie in his way to glory, it muſt be a great and mighty ſalvation indeed. If ſuch a one eſcapes deſtruction, and is ſaved at the laſt, it muſt, without all peradventure, be—*ſo as by fire*†.

This is the ſeaſon which ſtands in need of *comfort*, and is very improper to enter upon the *conflict*. The huſbandman ſhould now be putting in his ſickle, or eating the fruit of his labours; not beginning to break up the ground, or ſcatter the ſeed.—Nothing, 'tis true, is impoſſible with GOD. He ſaid, *Let there be light, and there was light*; inſtantaneous light diffuſed, as quick as thought, through all the diſmal dominion of primeval darkneſs. At his command, a leproſy of the longeſt continuance, and of the utmoſt inveteracy, departs in a moment. He can, in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, quicken the wretch, who has lain dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, not four days only, but fourſcore years.——Yet truſt not, O truſt not, a point of ſuch *inexpreſſible* importance to ſo dreadful an *uncertainty*. GOD may ſuſpend his power; may withdraw his help; may ſwear in his wrath, that ſuch abuſers of his long-ſuffering ſhall "never enter into his reſt."

Ye, therefore, that are *vigorous* in health, and *blooming* in years, improve the precious opportunity. Improve your golden hours to the nobleſt of all purpoſes; ſuch as may render you meet for the inheritance of ſaints in light; and aſcertain your title to a ſtate of immortal youth, to a crown of eternal glory ‡.——Stand not, all the prime of your day, idle; trifle no longer with the offers of this immenſe felicity; but make haſte, and delay not the time, to keep GOD's commandments. While you are loitering in a *gay inſenſibility*, death may be bending his bow, and marking you out for ſpeedy victims.—Not long ago, I happened to 'ſpy a thoughtleſs *jay*. The poor bird was idly buſied in dreſſing his pretty plumes, or hopping careleſsly from ſpray to ſpray. A ſportſman, coming by, obſerves the feathered rover. Immediately he lifts the tube, and levels his blow. Swifter than whirlwind, flies the leaden death; and, in a moment, lays the ſilly creature breathleſs on the ground.—Such, *ſuch* may be the fate of the man, who has a fair occaſion of obtaining grace to-day, and wantonly poſtpones the improvement of it till to-morrow. He may be cut off in the midſt of his folly; and ruined *for ever*, while he is dreaming of being *wiſe hereafter*.

* Pſal. xxxix. 6.

† Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;
A broken reed at beſt, but oft a ſpear;
On its ſharp point peace bleeds, and hope expires.
Night-Thoughts, No. III.

‡ *Eccl.* xii. 3. 5. I need not remind my reader, that, by the former of theſe figurative expreſſions, is ſignified the *enervated* ſtate of the *hands* and *arms*; by the latter, the *dimneſs* of the eyes, or the total *loſs* of *ſight*: that, taken in connection with other parts of the chapter, they exhibit, in a ſeries of bold and lively metaphors, a deſcription of the *various infirmities* attendant on old age.

* Matth. xxxv. 9. † 1 Cor. iii. 15.

‡ May I be permitted to recommend, as a treaſure of fine ſentiments, and a treatiſe particularly appoſite to my ſubject, DR LUCAS's INQUIRY AFTER HAPPINESS? that part eſpecially, which diſplays the method, and enumerates the advantages, of *improving life, or living much in a little time*, chap. III. p. 158. of the 6th edit.—An *author*, in whom the gentleman, the ſcholar, and the Chriſtian, are moſt happily united. A *performance*, which, in point of ſolid argument, unaffected piety, and a vein of thought amazingly fertile, has perhaps, no ſuperior.—Nor can I wiſh my reader a more refined pleaſure, or a more ſubſtantial happineſs, than that of having the ſentiments of this entertaining and pathetic writer, wove into the very texture of his heart. Unleſs I might be allowed to wiſh, that the writer himſelf had interſperſed the glorious peculiarities of the *goſpel* (on which our happineſs abſolutely depends) a little more liberally through all his works.

SOME, no doubt, came to this their laſt retreat, *full of piety* and *full of days*, "as a ſhock of corn, ripe "with age, and laden with plenty, cometh in, in his "ſeaſon*."—Theſe were children of light, and *wiſe* in their generation; wiſe with that exalted wiſdom which cometh from above, and with that enduring wiſdom which laſts to eternity.——*Rich* alſo they were, more honourably and permanently rich, than all the votaries of mammon. The wealth of the *one* has made itſelf wings, and is irrecoverably gone; while the wretched acquirers are tranſmitted to that place of penury and pain, where not ſo much as one drop of water is allowed to cool their ſcorched tongues. The ſtores of the *other* ſtill abide with them; will never depart from them; but make them glad, for ever and ever, in the city of their GOD. Their treaſures were ſuch, as no created power could *take away*; ſuch as none but infinite beneficence can *beſtow*; and (comfortable to conſider!) ſuch as I, and every indigent longing ſinner, may *obtain*; treaſures of heavenly knowledge, and ſaving faith; treaſures of atoning blood, and imputed righteouſneſs.

Here † lie their bodies in "peaceable habitations, "and quiet reſting-places." Here they have thrown off every *burden*, and are eſcaped from every *ſnare*.

* Job v. 26.

† Some, I know, are offended at our burying corpſes within the church; and exclaim againſt it, as a very great *impropriety* and *indecency*. But this, I imagine, proceeds from an exceſſive and miſtaken delicacy. If proper care be taken to ſecure from injury, the *foundations* of the *building*; and to prevent the exhalation of any *noxious effluvia*, from the putrefying fleſh; I cannot diſcover any inconveniencies attending this practice.

The notion, that noiſome carcaſes (as they are called) are very unbecoming a place conſecrated to religious purpoſes, ſeems to be derived from the *antiquated Jewiſh* canon; whereby it was declared, that a dead body imparted defilement to the perſon who touched it, and polluted the ſpot where it was lodged. On which account, the *Jews* were ſcrupulouſly careful to have their ſepulchres built at a diſtance from their houſes; and made it a point of conſcience, not to ſuffer burial-places to ſubſiſt in the city. But as this was a rite purely *ceremonial*, it ſeems to be entirely ſuperſeded by the *goſpel*-diſpenſation.

I cannot forbear thinking, that, under the Chriſtian œconomy, there is a propriety and uſefulneſs in the cuſtom—*Uſefulneſs*, becauſe it muſt render our ſolemn aſſemblies more venerable and awful. For, when we walk over the duſt of our friends, or kneel upon the aſhes of our relations, this awakening circumſtance muſt ſtrike a lively impreſſion of our own mortality. And what conſideration can be more effectual, to make us ſerious and attentive in hearing, earneſt and importunate in praying?

As for the *fitneſs* of the uſage, it ſeems perfectly ſuitable to the deſign of thoſe ſacred edifices. They are ſet apart for GOD; not only to receive his worſhippers, but to preſerve the furniture for holy miniſtrations, and what is, in a peculiar manner, appropriated to the Divine Majeſty. Are not the bodies of the ſaints the Almighty's property? Were they not once the objects of his *tender love*? Are they not ſtill the ſubjects of his *ſpecial care*? Has he not given commandment concerning the bones of his elect; and charged the ocean, and enjoined the grave, to keep them until *that day*? When rocks bright with gems, or mountains rich with mines, are abandoned to the devouring flames; will not *theſe* be reſcued from the fiery ruin? Will not *theſe* be tranſlated into JEHOVAH's kingdom, and, conjointly with the ſoul, made "his jewels;" made his peculiar "treaſure;" made to ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament, and as the ſtars for ever and ever?

Is not CHRIST *the LORD of our bodies*? Are they not bought with a price? bought, not with corruptible things, ſilver and gold, but with his divinely precious blood. And if the bleſſed JESUS obtained the redemption of our bodies, at ſo infinitely dear a rate; can it enter into our hearts to conceive, that he ſhould diſlike to have them repoſed under his own habitation?—Once more; Are not the bodies of the faithful, *temples of the Holy Ghoſt*? and is there not, upon this ſuppoſition, an apparent *propriety*, rather than the leaſt *indecorum*, in remitting theſe temples of fleſh to the temples made with hands? They are veſſels of honour; inſtruments of righteouſneſs; and, even when broken by death, like the fragments of a golden bowl, are valuable; are worthy to be laid up in the ſafeſt, moſt honourable repoſitories.

The head aches no more; the eye forgets to weep; the fleſh is no longer racked with acute, nor waſted with lingering diſtempers. Here they receive a final releaſe from pain, and an everlaſting diſcharge from ſorrow. Here danger never threatens them with her terrifying alarms; but *tranquillity* ſoftens their couch, and *ſafety* guards their repoſe.—Reſt then, ye precious relics, within this hoſpitable gloom. Reſt in gentle ſlumbers, till the laſt trumpet ſhall give the welcome ſignal, and ſound aloud, through all your ſilent manſions, "Ariſe; ſhine; for your light is come, and the "glory of the LORD is riſen upon you*."

To theſe, how *calm* was the *evening* of life! In what a ſmiling ſerenity did their ſun go down! When their fleſh and their heart failed, how reviving was the remembrance of an all-ſufficient Redeemer, once dying for *their* ſins, now riſen again for *their* juſtification! How chearing the well-grounded hope of pardon for their tranſgreſſions, and peace with GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD! How did this *aſſuage* the agonies, and *ſweeten* the bitterneſs of death?—Where now is wealth, with all her golden mountains?—Where is honour, with her proud trophies of renown?—Where are all the vain pomps of a deluded world? Can they inſpire *ſuch* comfort, can they adminiſter *any* ſupport, in this laſt extremity? Can *they* compoſe the affrighted thoughts, or buoy up the departing ſoul, amidſt all the pangs of diſſolution?—The followers of the Lamb ſeemed pleaſed and triumphant even at their laſt gaſp. "GOD's everlaſting arms are un-"derneath†" their fainting-heads. His Spirit whiſpers peace and conſolation to their conſciences. In the ſtrength of theſe heavenly ſuccours, they quit the field, not *captives*, but *conquerors*; with "hopes full of immortality."

And now they are gone.—The ſtruggles of reluctant nature are over. The body ſleeps in death: the ſoul launches into the inviſible ſtate.—But who can imagine the delightful ſurpriſe, when they find themſelves ſurrounded by *guardian angels*, inſtead of *weeping friends*? How ſecurely do they wing their way, and paſs through unknown worlds, under the conduct of thoſe celeſtial guides!—The vale of tears is quite loſt.——Farewell, for ever, the realms of wo, and range of malignant beings! They arrive on the *frontiers* of inexpreſſible *felicity*. They "are come to the city of the living "GOD:" while a voice, ſweeter than muſic in her ſofteſt ſtrains, ſweet as the harmony of hymning ſeraphim, congratulates their arrival, and beſpeaks their admiſſion: *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlaſting doors*; that the heirs of glory may enter in.

Here, then, let us leave the ſpirits and ſouls of the righteous, eſcaped from an entangling *wilderneſs*, and received into a *paradiſe* of delights! eſcaped from the territories of diſquietude, and ſettled in regions of unmoleſted ſecurity! Here they ſit down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, in the kingdom of their Father. Here they mingle with an innumerable company of angels, and rejoice around the throne of the Lamb; rejoice in the *fruition* of *preſent* felicity, and in the *aſſured expectation* of an inconceivable addition to their bliſs; when GOD *ſhall call the heavens from above, and the earth, that he may judge his people*‡.

Upon the whole, ſince the LORD JESUS has purchaſed them at the expence of his blood, and the bleſſed Spirit has honoured them with his indwelling preſence; ſince they are right dear in the ſight of the adorable Trinity, and undoubted heirs of a glorious immortality: why ſhould it be thought a thing improper, to admit them to a tranſient reſt in their heavenly Father's houſe? Why may they not lie down and ſleep in the *outer courts*, ſince they are ſoon to be introduced into the *innermoſt manſions* of everlaſting honour and joy?

* Iſ. lx. 1. † Deut. xxxiii. 27.

‡ *Seneca*'s reflections upon the ſtate of holy ſouls, delivered from the burden of the fleſh, are ſparkling and fine; yet very *indiſtinct* and *empty*, compared with the particulars mentioned above,

Fools accounted their life madneſs, and their end to be without honour; but they are numbered among the children of GOD, and their lot, their diſtinguiſhed and eternal lot, *is among the ſaints*!* However, therefore, an undiſcerning world may *deſpiſe*, and a profane world *vilify* the truly religious; be this the ſupreme, the invariable deſire of my heart! "Let me live the life, and die "the death, of the righteous. O! let my latter end, "and future ſtate, be like theirs!"

WHAT figure is that which ſtrikes my eye from an eminent part of the wall? It is not only placed in a more *elevated ſituation* than the reſt, but carries a more ſplendid and *ſumptuous air* than ordinary. Swords and ſpears, murdering engines, and inſtruments of ſlaughter, adorn the ſtone with a formidable magnificence.—It proves to be the monument of a noble warrior.

Is ſuch reſpect, thought I, paid to the memory of this brave ſoldier, for ſacrificing his life to the *public good?*—Then, what honours, what immortal honours, are due to the great Captain of our ſalvation? who, though Lord of the angelic legions, and ſupreme Commander of all the heavenly hoſts, willingly offered himſelf a *bleeding* propitiation for *ſinners!*

The one died, being a *mortal;* and only yielded up a life, which was long before forfeited to divine juſtice; which muſt ſoon have been ſurrendered as a debt to nature, if it had not fallen as a prey to war.—But CHRIST took fleſh, and gave up the ghoſt, though he was the great I AM; the Fountain of exiſtence; who calls happineſs and immortality all his own. He, who thought it no robbery to be *equal with God;* he, whoſe outgoings were *from everlaſting;* even he was made in the likeneſs of man, and cut off out of the land of the living. Wonder, O heavens! be aſtoniſhed, O earth! HE died the death, of whom it is witneſſed, that he is "the true GOD, and eternal life †."

The one *expoſed* himſelf to peril, in the ſervice of his *ſovereign* and his *country;* which, though it was glorious to do, yet would have been ignominious, in ſuch circumſtances, to have declined.—But CHRIST took the field, though he was the *bleſſed* and *only potentate;* the KING of kings, and LORD of lords. CHRIST took the field, though he was *ſure* to *drop* in the engagement; and put on the harneſs, though he knew beforehand, that it muſt reek with his blood. That Prince of heaven reſigned his royal perſon, not barely to the hazard, but to the inevitable ſtroke; to death, certain in its approach, and armed with all its horrors.—And for *whom?* Not for thoſe who were in any degree deſerving; but for his own *diſobedient creatures;* for the pardon of condemned malefactors; for a band of rebels, a race of traitors, the moſt obnoxious and inexcuſable of all criminals; whom he might have left to periſh in their iniquities, without the leaſt impeachment of his goodneſs, and to the diſplay of his avenging juſtice.

The one, it is probable, died *expeditiouſly;* was ſuddenly wounded, and ſoon ſlain. A bullet lodged in his heart, a ſword ſheathed in his breaſt, or a battle-axe cleaving the brain, might put a ſpeedy end to his miſery, diſpatch him "as in a moment."—Whereas the divine Redeemer expired in tedious and protracted torments. His pangs were as *lingering*, as they were *exquiſite.* Even in the prelude to his laſt ſuffering, what a load of ſorrows overwhelmed his ſacred humanity! till the intolerable preſſure wrung blood, inſtead of ſweat, from every pore; till the crimſon flood ſtained all his raiment, and tinged the very ſtones.—But when the laſt ſcene of the tragedy commenced, when the executioner's hammer had nailed him to the croſs; O! how many *diſmal hours* did that illuſtrious ſufferer hang; a ſpectacle of *wo* to GOD, to angels, and to men! His temples mangled with the thorny crown! his hands and feet cleft with the rugged irons! his whole body covered with wounds and bruiſes! and his ſoul, his very ſoul, pierced with pangs of unutterable diſtreſs!

So long he hung, that nature, through all her dominions, was thrown into ſympathizing commotions. The *earth* could no longer ſuſtain ſuch barbarous indignities, without trembling; nor the *ſun* behold them, without horror. Nay, ſo long did he hang in this extremity of agony and torture, that the alarm reached even the remote *regions* of the *dead.*—Never, O my ſoul, never forget the amazing truth. The Lamb of GOD was ſeized; was bound; was ſlaughtered with the utmoſt inhumanity; and endured death in all its bitterneſs, for thee. His murderers ſtudiouſly cruel, ſo guided the fatal cup, that he taſted *every drop* of its gall, before he drank it off to the *very dregs.*

Once again: The warrior died like a *hero*, and fell gallantly in the field of battle.—But died not CHRIST *as a fool dieth*?* Not on the bed of honour, with ſcars of glory in his breaſt; but, like ſome execrable miſcreant, on a *gibbet;* with laſhes of the vile ſcourge on his back. Yes, the bleſſed JESUS bowed his expiring head on the accurſed tree; ſuſpended between heaven and earth, as an outcaſt from both, and unworthy of either.

What ſuitable returns of inflamed and adoring devotion can we make to the Holy One of GOD; thus dying, that we might live? dying in ignominy and anguiſh, that we might live for ever in the heights of joy, and fit for ever on thrones of glory.—Alas! it is not in *us*, impotent, inſenſible mortals, to be duly thankful. *He* only, who confers ſuch inconceivably rich favours, can enkindle a proper warmth of grateful affection. Then build thyſelf a *monument*, moſt gracious IMMANUEL, build thyſelf an everlaſting monument of *gratitude* in our ſouls. Inſcribe the memory of thy matchleſs beneficence, not with ink and pen, but with that precious *blood*, which guſhed from thy wounded veins. Engrave it not, with the hammer and chizel, but with that ſharpened *ſpear*, which pierced thy ſacred ſide. Let it ſtand conſpicuous and indelible, not on outward tables of ſtone, but on the very inmoſt *tables* of our *hearts.*

ONE thing more let me obſerve, before I bid adieu to this intombed warrior, and his garniſhed ſepulchre. How mean are theſe oſtentatious methods of *bribing* the *vote* of fame, and purchaſing a little poſthumous renown! What a poor ſubſtitute for a ſet of memorable actions, is poliſhed alubaſter, or the mimicry of ſculptured marble! The real excellency of this † bleeding patriot, is written on the minds of his

above, and with many others that might be collected from ſcripture. *In hoc tam procelloſo, et in omnes tempeſtates expoſito navigantibus mari, nullus portus, niſi mortis eſt. Ne itaque invideris fratri tuo, quieſcit. Tandem liber, tandem tutus, tandem æternus eſt. Fruitur nunc aperto et libero cœlo; ex humili & depreſſo, in eum emicuit locum, qui ſolutas vinculis animas beato recipit ſinu; et nunc omnia rerum natura bona cum ſumma voluptate percipit.* SEN. ad Polyb.

† Wiſdom v. 4. 5. 1 John v. 20.

* 2 *Sam.* iii. 33. Of this indignity our LORD complains; *Are ye come out as againſt a thief?* Matt. xxvi. 55.

† Sir *Bevil Granville*, ſlain in the civil wars, at an engagement with the rebels.—It may poſſibly be ſome entertainment to the reader, if I ſubjoin Sir *Bevil's* character, as it is drawn by that celebrated pen, which wrote the hiſtory of thoſe calamitous times.—"That which would have clouded any victo-"ry," ſays the noble hiſtorian, "and made the loſs of others "leſs ſpoken of, was the death of Sir *Bevil Granville.* He "was indeed an excellent perſon, whoſe activity, intereſt, "and reputation, were the foundation of what had been "done in *Cornwall:* his temper and affections ſo public, that "no accident which happened, could make any impreſſion "upon him; and his example kept others from taking any "thing ill, or at leaſt ſeeming to do ſo. In a word, a brighter "courage, and a gentler diſpoſition, were never married to-"gether, to make the moſt cheerful and innocent converſa-"tion." CLAR. *Hiſt. Reb.* vol. II.

countrymen. It would be remembered with applause, so long as the nation ſubſiſts, without this artificial expedient to perpetuate it. And ſuch, ſuch is the monument I would wiſh for myſelf. Let me leave a memorial in the breaſts of my fellow-creatures. Let ſurviving friends bear witneſs, that I have not lived to myſelf alone, nor been altogether unſerviceable in my generation. O! let an uninterrupted ſeries of beneficent offices be the *inſcription*; and the beſt intereſts of my acquaintance, the *plate* that exhibits it.

Let the *poor*, as they paſs by my grave, point at the little ſpot, and thankfully acknowledge,—"There lies "the man, whoſe unwearied kindneſs was the conſtant "relief of my various diſtreſſes; who tenderly viſited "my languiſhing bed, and readily ſupplied my indi"gent circumſtances. How often were his counſels a "guide to my perplexed thoughts, and a cordial to "my dejected ſpirit! 'Tis owing to GOD's bleſſing "on his ſeaſonable charities, and prudent conſolations, "that I now live, and live in comfort."—Let a perſon, once *ignorant* and *ungodly*, lift up his eyes to heaven, and ſay within himſelf, as he walks over my bones, "Here are the laſt remains of that ſincere friend, who "*watched for my ſoul*. I can never forget, with what heed"leſs ſociety I was poſting on in the paths of perdition; "and I tremble to think, into what irretrievable ruin "I might quickly have been plunged, had not his "faithful admonitions arreſted me in the wild career. "I was unacquainted with the goſpel of peace, and "had no concern for its unſearchable treaſures; but "now enlightened by his *inſtructive converſation*, I ſee "the all-ſufficiency of my Saviour; and, animated by "his *repeated exhortations*, I count all things but loſs, "that I may win CHRIST. Methinks his diſcourſes, "ſeaſoned with religion, and ſet home by the divine "Spirit, ſtill tingle in my ears; are ſtill warm on my "heart; and, I truſt, will be more and more operative, "till we meet each other in the houſe not made with "hands, eternal in the heavens."

The only *infallible* way of immortalizing our characters, a way equally open to the meaneſt and moſt exalted fortune, is, "to make our calling and election "ſure;" to gain ſome ſweet evidence, that our *names are written in heaven*. Then, however they may be diſregarded or forgotten among men, they will not fail to be had in everlaſting remembrance, before the LORD.—This is, of all diſtinctions, far the nobleſt. *Ambition*, be this thy object, and every page of ſcripture will ſanctify thy paſſion; even grace itſelf will fan thy flame.—As to earthly memorials, yet a little while, and they are all obliterated. The tongue of thoſe, whoſe happineſs we have zealouſly promoted, muſt ſoon be ſilent in the coffin. Characters cut with a pen of iron, and committed to the ſolid rock, will ere long ceaſe to be legible. "But as many as are enrolled in the Lamb's book of life," he himſelf declares, ſhall never be blotted out from thoſe annals of eternity †. When a flight of years has mouldered the triumphal column into duſt; when the brazen ſtatue periſhes, under the corroding hand of time; *thoſe honours* ſtill continue; ſtill are blooming and incorruptible, in the world of glory.

Make the extended ſkies your tomb;
Let ſtars record your worth:
Yet know, vain mortals, all muſt die,
As nature's *ſickleſt birth*.
Would bounteous heav'n indulge my prayer,
I frame a nobler choice;
Nor living, wiſh the pompous pile;
Nor, dead, regret the loſs.
In thy fair *book of life* divine,
My GOD, inſcribe my name;

* —*Data ſunt ipſis quoque fata ſepulchris.* JUV.

† Rev. iii. 5.

There let it fill ſome humble place,
Beneath the ſlaughter'd Lamb,
Thy ſaints, while ages roll away,
In endleſs fame ſurvive;
Their glories, o'er the wrongs of time,
Greatly triumphant, live.

YONDER entrance leads, I ſuppoſe, to the *vault*. Let me turn aſide, and take one view of the habitation, and its tenants.—The ſullen *door* grates upon its hinges; not uſed to receive many viſitants, it admits me with reluctance and murmurs.—What meaneth this *ſudden trepidation*, while I deſcend the ſteps, and am viſiting the pale nations of the dead?—Be compoſed, my ſpirits; there is nothing to fear in theſe quiet chambers. "Here, even the wicked ceaſe from trou"bling."

Good heavens! what a ſolemn ſcene!—how diſmal the *gloom!* Here is perpetual darkneſs, and night even at noon-day.—How doleful the *ſolitude!* Not one trace of chearful ſociety; but ſorrow and terror ſeem to have made this their dreaded abode.—Hark! how the hollow dome reſounds at every tread. The *echoes* that long have ſlept, are awakened, and lament, and ſigh, along the walls.

A beam or two finds its way through the grates; and reflects a feeble glimmer, from the nails of the *coffins*. So many of thoſe ſad ſpectacles, half concealed in ſhades, half ſeen dimly by the baleful twilight, add a deeper horror to theſe gloomy manſions.—I pore upon the inſcriptions, and am juſt able to pick out, that theſe are the remains of the rich and renowned. No vulgar dead are depoſited here. The *Moſt Illuſtrious*, and *Right Honourable*, have claimed this for their laſt retreat. And, indeed, they retain ſomewhat of a ſhadowy preeminence. They lie, ranged in mournful order, and in a ſort of ſilent pomp, under the arches of an ample ſepulchre; while meaner corpſes, without much ceremony, "go down to the ſtones of the pit."

My apprehenſions recover from their ſurpriſe. I find here are no phantoms, but ſuch as fear raiſes.—However, it ſtill amazes me, to obſerve the wonders of this nether world. Thoſe who received vaſt revenues, and called whole lordſhips their own, are here reduced to half a dozen feet of earth, or confined in a few *ſheets of lead*. Rooms of ſtate, and ſumptuous furniture, are reſigned, for no other ornament than the *ſhroud*, for no other apartment than the darkſome *niche*.—Where is the ſtar that blazed upon the breaſt, or coronet that glittered round the temples? The only remains of departed dignity are, the weather-beaten hatchment, and the tattered eſcutcheon. I ſee no ſplendid retinue ſurrounding this ſolitary dwelling. The lordly equipage hovers no longer about the lifeleſs maſter. He has no other attendant, than a duſty *ſtatue*; which, while the regardleſs world is as gay as ever, the ſculptor's hand has taught to weep.

Thoſe who gloried in high-born anceſtors, and *noble pedigree*, here drop their lofty pretenſions. They acknowledge kindred with creeping things, and *quarter arms* with the meaneſt reptiles. *They ſay to corruption, Thou art my father; and to the worm, Thou art my mother and my ſiſter.*—Or, ſhould they ſtill aſſume the ſtyle of diſtinction, ah! how impotent were the claim! how apparent the oſtentation! Is it ſaid by their monument? HERE LIES THE GREAT. How eaſily is it replied by the ſpectator!

——False marble! Where?
Nothing but poor and ſordid duſt lies here.

Mortifying truth! Sufficient, one would think, to damp the moſt ſanguine appetite from this tranſitory ſtate of things; from its ſickly ſatisfactions, its fading glories, its vaniſhing treaſures.

For

For, now, ye *lying vanities* of life!
Ye ever-tempting, ever-cheating train!
Where are ye now? and what is your amount?
What is all the world to these poor breathless beings?—What are their *pleasures?* a bubble broke.—What their *honours?* A dream that is forgotten.—What the sum-total of their *enjoyments* below? Once, perhaps, it appeared to inexperienced and fond desire, something considerable. But, now death has measured it with his line, and weighed it in his scale, what is the upshot? Alas! it is shorter than a span; lighter than the dancing spark; and driven away like the dissolving smoke.

Indulge, my soul, a serious pause. Recollect all the *gay things*, that were wont to dazzle thy eyes, and inveigle thy affections. Here examine those baits of sense. Here form an estimate of their *real value*. Suppose thyself first among the favourites of fortune, who revel in the lap of pleasure, who shine in the robes of honour, and swim in tides of inexhausted riches. Yet how soon would the passing-bell proclaim thy exit! And, when once that iron call has summoned thee to thy future reckoning, where would all these gratifications be? At that period, how will all the pageantry of the most affluent, splendid, or luxurious circumstances, vanish into empty air!—And is *this* a happiness so passionately to be coveted?

I thank you, ye relics of sounding titles, and magnificent names. Ye have taught me more of the littleness of the world, than all the volumes of my library. Your nobility arrayed in a winding-sheet, your grandeur mouldering in an urn, are the most indisputable proofs of the *nothingness* of created things. Never, surely, did Providence write this important point in such legible characters, as in the ashes of *My Lord*, or on the corpse of *His Grace**.—Let others, if they please, pay their obsequious court to your wealthy sons; and ignobly fawn, or anxiously sue, for preferments: my thoughts shall often resort, in pensive contemplation, to the sepulchres of their sires; and learn, from their sleeping dust,—to *moderate* my expectations from mortals,—to stand *disengaged* from every undue attachment to the little interests of time;—to get above the delusive amusements of honour, the gaudy tinsels of wealth, and all the empty shadows of a perishing world.

HARK! what *sound* is that!—In such a situation, every noise alarms.—Solemn and slow, it breaks again upon the silent air.—'Tis the striking of the clock. Designed, one would imagine, to ratify all my serious meditations. Methinks, it says *Amen*, and sets a seal to every improving hint. It tells me, that another portion of my appointed time is elapsed. One calls it, "the knell of my departed hours." 'Tis the watch-word to vigilance and activity. It cries in the ear of reason, "Redeem the time. Catch the favourable *gales* "of *opportunity*: O! catch them, while they breathe; "before they are irrecoverably lost. The span of life "shortens continually. Thy minutes are all upon the "wing, and hastening to be gone. Thou art a bor-"derer upon eternity, and making incessant advances "to the state thou art contemplating." May the admonition sink deep into an attentive and obedient mind! May it teach me that *heavenly arithmetic*, of "numbering my days, and applying my heart unto "wisdom!"

I have often walked beneath the impending promontory's craggy cliff; I have sometimes trod the vast spaces of the lonely desert; and penetrated the inmost recesses of the dreary cavern: but never, never beheld nature louring, with so *tremendous* a form; never felt such impressions of awe, striking cold on my heart; as under these black-browed arches, amidst these mouldy walls, and surrounded by such rueful objects, where melancholy, deepest melancholy, for ever spreads her raven wings.—Let me now emerge from the damp and dreadful obscurity.—Farewell, ye seats of desolation, and shades of death! Gladly I revisit the realms of day.

HAVING cast a *superficial* view upon these receptacles of the dead, curiosity prompts my inquiry to a more *intimate* survey. Could we draw back the covering of the tomb; could we discern what those are now, who once were mortals,—O! how would it surprise and grieve us! *Surprise* us, to behold the prodigious transformation which has taken place in every individual; *grieve* us, to observe the dishonour done to our nature in general, within these subterraneous lodgments?

Here, the sweet and winning *aspect*, that wore perpetually an attractive smile, grins horribly a naked, ghastly skull.——The *eye*, that outshone the diamond's brilliancy, and glanced its lovely lightning into the most guarded heart; alas! where is it? Where shall we find the rolling sparkler! How are all its sprightly beams eclipsed, totally eclipsed!—The *tongue*, that once commanded all the power of eloquence, in this strange land, "has forgot its cunning." Where are now those strains of harmony, which ravished our ears? Where is that flow of persuasion, which carried captive our judgments? The great master of language and of song, is become silent as the night that surrounds him.——The pampered flesh, so lately clothed in purple and fine linen, how is it covered rudely with clods of clay! There was a time, when the timorously nice creature would scarce "* adventure to set a foot upon the ground, "for delicateness and tenderness;" but is now enwrapped in clammy earth, and sleeps on no softer a pillow than the ragged gravel stones.—Here "the *strong* "*men* bow themselves." The nervous arm is unstrung; the brawny sinews are relaxed; the limbs, not long ago the seats of vigour and activity, lie down motionless; and the bones, which were as bars of iron, are crumbled into dust.

Here the *man of business* forgets all his favourite schemes, and discontinues the pursuit of gain. Here is a total stand to the circulation of merchandize, and the hurry of trade. In these solitary recesses, as in the building of *Solomon*'s temple, is heard no sound of the hammer and axe. The winding-sheet and the coffin are the utmost bound of all earthly devices. Hither "to may they go, but no farther."—Here the *sons of pleasure* take a final farewell of their dear delights. No more is the sensualist anointed with oil, or crowned with rose-buds. He chants no more to the melody of the viol, nor revels any longer at the banquet of wine. Instead of sumptuous tables, and delicious treats, the poor voluptuary is himself a feast for fattened insects; the reptile riots in his flesh! "the worm feeds "sweetly on him †."—Here also *beauty* fails; bright beauty drops her lustre here. O! how her roses fade, and her lilies languish, in this bleak soil! How does the grand leveller pour contempt upon the charmer of our hearts! how turn to deformity, what captivated the world before!

COULD the *lover* have a sight of his once-enchanting fair one, what a startling astonishment would seize him!—"Is this the object I not long ago so passion-"ately admired? I said, she was divinely fair, and "thought her somewhat more than mortal. Her "form was symmetry itself; every elegance breathed "in her air; and all the graces waited on her motions. "—'Twas music when she spoke; but, when she "spoke encouragement, 'twas little less than rapture. "How my heart danced to those charming accents! "—And can that which some weeks ago was to admi-"ration *lovely*, be now so insufferably *loathsome?*——

* ——————*Mors sola fatetur*
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula.— JUV.

* Deut. xxviii. 56. † Job xxiv. 20.

"Where are those blushing cheeks? where the coral lips? where that ivory neck, on which the curling jet, in such glossy ringlets, flowed? with a thousand other beauties of person, and ten thousand delicacies of action *?—Amazing alteration! delusory bliss!—Fondly I gazed upon the glittering *meteor*. It shone brightly; and I mistook it for a *star*, for a permanent and substantial good. But how is it fallen! fallen from an orb, not its own; and all that I can trace on earth, is but a *putrid mass*."

Lie, poor *Florella!* lie deep, as thou dost, in obscure darkness. Let night, with her impenetrable shades, always conceal thee. May no prying eye be witness to thy disgrace; but let thy *surviving sisters* think upon thy state, when they contemplate the idol in the glass. When the pleasing image rises gracefully to view, surrounded with a world of charms, and flushed with joy at the consciousness of them all;—then, in those minutes of temptation and dangers, when vanity uses to steal into the thoughts,—then let them remember, what a *veil of horror* is drawn over a face, which was once beautiful and brilliant as theirs. Such a seasonable reflection might regulate the labours of the toilet, and create a more earnest solicitude to polish the *jewel*, than to varnish the *casket*. It might then become their highest ambition, to have the mind decked with divine virtues, and dressed after the amiable pattern of their Redeemer's holiness.

And would this prejudice their persons, or depreciate their charms?—Quite the reverse. It would spread a sort of heavenly glory over the finest *set of features*, and heighten the loveliness of every other engaging accomplishment.—What is yet a more inviting consideration, these flowers would not wither with nature, nor be tarnished by time; but would open continually into richer beauties, and *flourish* even in the *winter* of age.—But the most incomparable recommendation of these noble qualities, is, that from their hallowed relics, as from the fragrant ashes of the *phœnix*, will ere long arise an illustrious form, bright as the wings of angels, lasting as the light of the new *Jerusalem*.

For my part, the remembrance of this sad revolution shall make me *ashamed* to pay my devotion to a shrine of perishing flesh, and *afraid* to expect all my happiness from so brittle joy. It shall teach me, not to think too highly of well-proportioned clay, though formed in the most elegant mould, and animated with the sweetest soul. 'Tis heaven's last, best, and crowning gift,—to be received with *gratitude*, and cherished with *love*, as a most valuable blessing; not worshipped with the incense of flattery, and strains of fulsome adoration, as a goddess.—It will cure, I trust, the *dotage* of my *eyes*; and incline me always to prefer the substantial "ornaments of a meek and virtuous spirit," before the transient decorations of white and red on the skin.

HERE I called in my roving meditations from their long excursion on this tender subject. Fancy listened a while to the soliloquy of a lover. Now judgment resumes the reins, and guides my thoughts to more near and self-interesting inquiries.—However, upon a review of the whole scene, crouded with *spectacles* of *mortality* and *trophies* of *death*, I could not forbear smiting my breast, and fetching a sigh, and lamenting over the noblest of all visible beings, laid prostrate under the feet of "the pale horse, and his rider †."—I could not forbear repeating that pathetic exclamation, "*O! thou* ‡ *Adam, what hast thou done!*" What desolation has thy disobedience wrought in the earth!—See the malignity, the ruinous malignity of *sin!* Sin has demolished so many stately structures of flesh; sin has made such havock among the most excellent ranks of GOD's lower creation; and sin (that deadly bane of our nature) would have plunged our better part into the execrable horrors of the nethermost hell, had not our merciful Mediator interposed, and given himself for our ransom.——Therefore, what grateful acknowledgments does the whole world of *penitent* sinners owe; what ardent returns of love will a whole heaven of *glorified* believers pay to such a friend, benefactor, and deliverer!

Musing upon these melancholy objects, a faithful remembrancer suggests from within,—"Must this sad "change succeed in *me* also? Am I to draw my last "gasp, to become a breathless corpse, and *be* what I "*deplore* *? Is there a time approaching, when this "body shall be carried out upon the bier, and consign"ed to its clay-cold bed? while some kind acquaint"ance, perhaps, may drop one parting tear; and cry, "Alas! my brother!—Is the time approaching?"—Nothing is more certain. A decree, much surer than the law of the *Medes* and *Persians*, has irrevocably determined the doom.

Should one of these ghastly figures burst from his confinement, and start up, in frightful deformity, before me;—should the *haggard skeleton* lift a clattering hand, and point it out full in my view; should it open the stiffened jaws, and, with a hoarse, tremendous murmur, break this profound silence;—should it accost *me*, as *Samuel*'s apparition addressed the trembling king,—"*The* LORD *shall deliver* thee *also into the hands of death*; "*yet a little while, and* thou *shalt be with me* †;—*the so*"*lemn warning*, delivered in so striking a manner, must strongly impress my imagination. A message in thunder would scarce sink deeper.—Yet there is abundantly greater reason to be alarmed, by that express declaration of the LORD GOD Almighty, "*Thou shalt surely die.*"—Well then, since sentence is passed; since I am a condemned man, and know not when the dead warrant may arrive; let me die to *sin*, and die to the *world*, before I die beneath the stroke of a righteous GOD. Let me employ the little uncertain interval of respite from execution, in preparing for a happier state, and a better life; that, when the fatal moment comes, and I am commanded to shut my eyes upon all things here below, I may open them again, to see my Saviour in the mansions above.

Since this body, which is so fearfully and wonderfully made, must fall to pieces in the grave; since I must soon resign all my bodily powers to darkness, inactivity, and corruption; let it be my constant care to use them well, while I possess them!—Let my *hands* be stretched forth to relieve the needy; and always be "more rea"dy to give than to receive."—Let my *knees* bend, in deepest humiliation, before the throne of grace; while my *eyes* are cast down to the earth, in penitential confusion; or devoutly looking up to heaven, for pardoning mercy!—In every friendly interview, let the "law of kindness dwell on my *lips*;" or rather, if

* *Quo fugit Venus? heu! quove color? decens*
Quo motus? quid habet illius, illius,
Quæ spirabat amores,
Quæ me surpuerat mihi? HOR.

† Rev. vi. 8. ‡ 2 Esdr. vii. 41.

* I pass, with melancholy state,
By all these solemn heaps of fate;
And think, as soft and sad I tread
Above the venerable dead,
"Time was, like me, they life possest;
"And time will be, when I shall rest." PARNEL.

† 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 19. On this place, the *Dutch* translator of the Meditations has added a note; to correct, very probably, what he supposes a mistake. On the same supposition, I presume, the compilers of our rubric ordered the last verse of *Ecclus* xlvi. to be omitted, in the daily service of the church. But that the sentiment, hinted above, is strictly true; that it was שמואל הנביא *Samuel himself* (not an infernal spirit, personating the prophet) who appeared to the female necromancer at *Endor*; appeared, not in compliance with any diabolical incantation, but in pursuance of the divine commission: this, I think, is fully proved in the *Historical account of the life of* David, vol. I. chap. 23.

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the ſeriouſneſs of my acquaintance permits, let the gospel of peace flow from my tongue. O! that I might be enabled, in every public concourſe, to lift up my voice like a trumpet; and pour abroad a more joyful ſound, than its moſt melodious accents, in proclaiming the glad tidings of free ſalvation!—Be ſhut, my *ears*, reſolutely ſhut, againſt the malevolent whiſpers of ſlander, and the contagious breath of filthy talking. But be ſwift to hear the inſtructions of wiſdom; be all attention when your REDEEMER ſpeaks; imbibe the precious truths; and convey them carefully to the heart.—Carry me, my *feet*, to the temple of the LORD, to the beds of the ſick, and houſes of the poor.—May all my members, devoted entirely to my divine Maſter, be the willing inſtruments of promoting his glory!

Then ye embalmers, you may ſpare your pains. Theſe works of faith, and labours of love; theſe ſhall be my *ſpices* and *perfumes*. Enwrapped in theſe, I would lay me gently down, and ſleep ſweetly in the bleſſed JESUS; hoping that GOD "will give commandment concerning my bones;" and one day fetch them up from the duſt, as ſilver from the furnace, purified, "I ſay not ſeven times, but ſeventy "times ſeven."

HERE my contemplation took wing; and, in an inſtant, alighted in the garden adjoining to Mount *Calvary*. Having viewed the abode of my deceaſed fellow-creatures, methought, I longed to ſee the place where our LORD lay.—And, O! what a marvellous ſpectacle was once exhibited in this memorable ſepulchre! *He*, "who clothes himſelf with light, as with a "garment; and walks upon the wings of the wind *;" HE was pleaſed to wear the habiliments of *mortality*, and dwelt among the *proſtrate* dead.—Who can repeat the wondrous truth too often? Who can dwell upon the tranſporting theme too long? HE, who ſits enthroned in glory, and diffuſes bliſs among all the heavenly hoſts; HE was once a pale and bloody corpſe, and preſſed this little ſpot.

O death! how great was thy triumph in that hour! Never did thy gloomy realms contain *ſuch* a priſoner before.—*Priſoner*, did I ſay? No; he was more than conqueror. He aroſe, far more mightily than *Samſon*, from a tranſient ſlumber; broke down the gates, and demoliſhed the ſtrong-holds, of thoſe dark dominions.—And this, O mortals, this is your only *conſolation* and *ſecurity*. JESUS has trod the dreadful path, and ſmoothed it for your paſſage.—JESUS, ſleeping in the chambers of the tomb, has brightened the diſmal manſion, and left an inviting odour in thoſe beds of duſt. The dying JESUS (never let the comfortable truth depart from your minds! the dying JESUS) is your ſure *protection*, your unqueſtionable *paſſport*, through the territories of the grave. Believe in him; and they ſhall prove a "highway to *Sion*;" ſhall tranſmit you ſafe to paradiſe. Believe in him; and you ſhall be no loſers, but unſpeakable gainers, by your diſſolution. For hear what the oracle of heaven ſays upon this important point, *Whoſo believeth in me, ſhall never die* †.—What ſublime and emphatical language is this! Thus much, at leaſt, it muſt import:—"The nature of "that laſt change ſhall be ſurprizingly altered for the "better. It ſhall no longer be *inflicted*, as a puniſh-"ment; but rather be *vouchſafed*, as a bleſſing. To ſuch "perſons, it ſhall come attended with ſuch a train of "benefits, as will render it a kind of happy impropriety, "to call it dying. Dying! No; 'tis then they *truly* be-"gin to *live*. Their exit is the end of their frailty, and "their entrance upon perfection. Their laſt groan is "the prelude to life and immortality."

O ye timorous ſouls, that are terrified at the ſound of the paſſing bell; that turn pale at the ſight of an opened grave; and can ſcarce behold a coffin or a ſkull, without a ſhuddering horror; ye that are *in bondage* to the griſly tyrant, and tremble at the ſhaking of his iron rod; cry mightily to the Father of your ſpirits, for *faith* in his dear Son. Faith will free you from your ſlavery ‡. Faith will embolden you to tread on (this fierceſt of) ſerpents ‡.—Old *Simeon*, claſping the child JESUS in the arms of his fleſh, and the glorious Mediator in the arms of his faith, departs with tranquillity and peace. That bitter perſecutor *Saul*, having won CHRIST, being found in CHRIST, longs to be diſmiſſed from cumbrous clay, and kindles into rapture at the proſpect of diſſolution ‖. Methinks, I ſee another of IMMANUEL's followers, truſting in his Saviour, leaning on his Beloved, go down to the ſilent ſhades, with compoſure and alacrity ‡.—In this powerful name, an innumerable company of ſinful creatures have ſet up their banners; and "overcome through the "blood of the Lamb." Authorized by the Captain of thy ſalvation, *thou* alſo mayſt ſet thy feet upon the neck of this king of terrors. Furniſhed with this antidote, *thou* alſo mayſt play around the hole of the aſp, and put thy undaunted hand on this cockatrice-den ‡. Thou mayſt ++ feel the viper faſtening to thy mortal part, and *fear* no *evil*: thou ſhalt one day ſhake it off by a joyful reſurrection, and *ſuffer* no *harm*.

RESURRECTION! That chearing word eaſes my mind of an anxious thought, and ſolves a moſt momentous queſtion. I was going to aſk, "Wherefore do all theſe "corpſes lie here, in this abject condition? Is this their "final ſtate? Has death conquered? and will the tyrant "hold captivity captive? How long wilt thou forget "them, O LORD? For ever?"—No, ſaith the voice from heaven; the word of divine revelation; *The righteous* are all "*priſoners of hope* =." There is an hour,

* The ſcriptures, ſpeaking of the ſupreme Being, ſay,——*He walketh upon the waves of the ſea*, to denote his uncontrollable power, *Job*. ix. 8.—*He walketh in the circuit of heaven*, to expreſs the immenſity of his preſence, *Job* xxii. 14.—*He walketh upon the wings of the wind*, to ſignify the amazing ſwiftneſs of his operations, *Pſal*. civ. 3.——In which laſt phraſe, there is, I think, an elegance and emphaſis, not taken notice of by our commentators, yet unequalled in any writer. Not, he *flieth*; he *runneth*; but, he *walketh*; and that on the *very wings* of the wind; on the moſt impetuous of elements, roufed into its utmoſt rage, and ſweeping along with inconceivable rapidity.—A tumult in nature, not to be deſcribed, is the *compoſed* and *ſedate* work of the DEITY. A ſpeed, not to be meaſured, is (with reverence I uſe the expreſſion, and to comport with our low methods of conception) the *ſolemn* and *majeſtic foot-pace* of JEHOVAH.—How flat are the following lines, even in the great maſter of lyric ſong,

Ocyor cervis, et agente nimbos
Ocyor euro,

when compared with this inimitable ſtroke of divine poetry!—He *walketh* upon the *wings* of the *wind*.

† John xi. 26.

‡ Death's terror is the mountain *faith* removes:
'Tis *faith* diſarms deſtruction.—

Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.

‖ Phil. i. 23. = 2 Tim. iv. 7. 8. ‡ 2 Pet. i. 14. = Heb. xi. 8. ++ Acts xxviii. 3. = Zech. ix. 12.

These, and ſome other quotations, I am proud to borrow from the *Night-thoughts*, eſpecially from *night* the *fourth*. In which, energy of language, ſublimity of ſentiment, and the moſt exquiſite beauties of poetry, are the *leaſt* perfections to be admired. Almoſt every line glows with devotion; riſes into the moſt exalted apprehenſions of the adorable Redeemer; and is animated with the moſt lively faith in his all-ſufficient mediation. The author of this excellent performance has the peculiar felicity of ennobling all the ſtrength of ſtyle, and every delicacy of imagination, with the grand and diſtinguiſhing truths of Chriſtianity. Theſe thoughts give the higheſt entertainment to the fancy, and impart the nobleſt improvement to the mind. They not only refine our taſte, but prepare us for death, and ripen us for glory. I never take up this admirable piece, but I am ready to cry out,—*Tecum vivere ſemper, tecum obeam libens*; i. e. "Inſpire me with "ſuch a ſpirit, and life ſhall be delightful, nor death itſelf unwelcome."

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(an awful secret that, and known only to all-forseeing wisdom) an appointed hour shall rise; when an act of grace shall pass the great seal above, and give them an universal discharge, a general delivery from the bonds of corruption.—Then shall the LORD JESUS descend from heaven, with a shout of the archangel, and the trump of GOD. *Destruction* itself shall hear his call, and the obedient *grave* give up her dead. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they shake off the sleep of ten thousand years, and spring forth, like the bounding roe, to "meet their LORD in the "air!"

And, O! with what cordial congratulations, what transporting endearments, do the soul and body, those affectionate companions, re-unite! But with how much greater demonstrations of kindness, are they *both* received by their compassionate Redeemer! The Ancient of days, who comes in the clouds of heaven, is their friend, their father, their bridegroom. He comes with ineffable power and infinite glory; but they have nothing to fear from his majestic appearance. Those *thunderous solemnities*, which spread desolation and astonishment through the universe, serve only to inflame their love, and heighten their hopes. The Judge, the awful judge, amidst all his magnificence and splendor, vouchsafes to confess their names; vouchsafes to commemorate their fidelity, before all the inhabitants of the skies, and the whole assembled world.

Hark! the thunders are hushed. See! the lightnings cease their rage.—The angelic armies stand in silent suspense. The whole race of *Adam* is wrapped in pleasing, or anxious expectation.—And now that adorable person, whose favour is better than life, whose acceptance is a crown of glory, lifts up the light of his countenance upon the righteous. He speaks; and what ravishing words proceed from his gracious lips! What ecstacies of delight they enkindle in the breasts of the faithful!—"I accept you, O my people! Ye "are they that believed in my name. Ye are they that "renounced *yourselves*, and *are complete in me*. I see "no spot or blemish in you; for ye are washed in my "blood, and clothed with my righteousness. Renewed "by my Spirit, ye have glorified me on earth, and "have been faithful unto death. Come, then, ye ser-"vants of holiness, enter into the joy of your LORD. "Come, ye children of light, ye blessed of my Father, "receive the *kingdom* that shall never be removed; wear "the *crown* which fadeth not away; and enjoy *pleasures* "for evermore!"

Then it will be one of the smallest privileges of the righteous, that they shall languish no more; that sickness will never again shew her pale countenance in their dwellings. *Death itself* will be "swallowed "up in victory." That fatal javelin, which has drank the blood of monarchs, and finds its way to the hearts of all the sons of *Adam*, shall be utterly broken. That enormous scythe, which has struck empires from their root, and swept ages and generations into oblivion, shall lie by in perpetual disuse-fulness. *Sin also*, which filled thy quiver, thou unfailing archer!—*sin*, which strung thy arm with relentless vigour,—which pointed all thy shafts with inevitable destruction,—*sin*, with *thee* be done away. Whatever is *frail*, or *depraved*, will be thrown off with our grave-cloaths. All to come is perfect holiness, and consummate happiness; the term of whose continuance is eternity.

O ETERNITY! *eternity!* how are our boldest, our strongest thoughts, lost and overwhelmed in thee! Who can set landmarks to limit thy dimensions? or sound plummets to fathom thy depths? *Arithmetic* has figures to compute all the progressions of time; *Astronomy* have instruments to calculate the distances of the planets: but what numbers can state, what lines gauge, the length and breadths of eternity! "It is "higher than heaven; what canst thou do? deeper "than hell; what canst thou know? the measure "thereof is longer than the earth, broader than the "sea."* Mysterious, mighty existence! A sum not to be lessened by the largest *deductions!* An extent not to be contracted by all possible *diminutions!* None can truly say, after the most prodigious waste of ages, "So much "of eternity is gone." For when millions of centuries are elapsed, it is but just commencing; and when millions more have run their ample round, it will be no nearer ending. Nay, when ages, numerous as the bloom of spring, increased by the herbage of summer, both augmented by the leaves of autumn, and all multiplied by the drops of rain, which drown the winter,—when these, and ten thousand times ten thousand more, more than can be represented by any similitude, or imagined by any conception,—when all these are revolved and finished, eternity, vast, boundless, amazing eternity, will *only* be *beginning!*

What a pleasing, yet awful thought is this! full of delight, and full of dread. O! may it alarm our *fears*, quicken our *hopes*, and animate all our *endeavours!* Since we are soon to launch into this endless and inconceivable state, let us give all diligence to secure our entrance into bliss.—*Now* let us give all diligence; because there is no alteration in the scenes of futurity. The wheel never turns: all is stedfast and immoveable beyond the grave. Whether we are then seated on the throne, or stretched on the rack, a seal will be set to our condition, by the hand of everlasting mercy, or inflexible justice.—The *saints* always rejoice amidst the smiles of heaven; their harps are perpetually tuned; their triumphs admit of no interruption.—The ruin of the *wicked* is irremediable. The fatal sentence, once passed, is never to be repealed. No hope of exchanging their doleful habitations. But all things bear the same dismal aspect for ever and ever.

THE *wicked*—my mind recoils † at the apprehension of their misery. It has studiously waved the fearful subject, and seems unwilling to pursue it even now.—But 'tis better to reflect upon it for a few minutes, than to endure it to eternal ages. Perhaps, the consideration of their aggravated misery may be *profitably terrible;* may teach me more highly to prize the Saviour, who "delivers from going down into the bot-"tomless pit;" may drive me, like the avenger's sword, to this only city of refuge for obnoxious sinners.

The wicked seem to lie here, like malefactors in a deep and strong dungeon; reserved against the day of trial.—"*Their departure* was without peace." Clouds of horror sat louring upon their closing eye-lids, most sadly foreboding the "blackness of darkness for ever." When the last sickness seized their frame, and the inevitable change advanced; when they saw the fatal arrow fitting to the strings, saw the deadly archer aiming at their heart, and felt the envenomed shaft fastened in their vitals;—good GOD! what fearfulness came upon them! what horrible dread overwhelmed them! How did they stand shuddering and aghast upon the tremendous precipice! excessively afraid to plunge into the abyss of eternity, yet utterly unable to maintain their standing on the verge of life.

O! what pale reviews, what startling prospects, conspire to augment their sorrows!—They look *backward*, and behold! a most melancholy scene! Sins unrepented

* *Isaiah*, speaking of the new Jerusalem, mentions this as one of its immunities, *the inhabitant thereof shall no more say, I am sick.* Another clause, in the royal charter, runs thus: *GOD shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.* Is. xxxiii. 24. Rev. xxi. 4.

† Job xi. 8. 9.

† —*Animus meminisse horret, luctuque refugit.* VIRG.

unrepented of; mercy slighted; and the day of grace ending!—They look *forward*, and nothing presents itself, but the righteous Judge, the dreadful tribunal, and a most solemn reckoning.—They roll around their affrighted eyes on attending friends. If abomplices in debauchery, it sharpens their anguish, to consider, this farther aggravation of their guilt, that they have not sinned alone, but drawn others into the snare. If religious acquaintance, it strikes a fresh gash into their hearts, to think of never seeing them any more, but only at an unapproachable distance, separated by the unpassable gulf.

At last, perhaps, they begin to *pray*. Finding no other possible way of relief, they are constrained to apply unto the Almighty. With trembling lips, and a faltering tongue, they cry unto that sovereign Being, "who kills and makes alive."—But why have they *deferred*, so long deferred their addresses to GOD? Why have they *despised* all his counsels, and stood incorrigible under his incessant reproofs? How often have they been forewarned of these terrors, and most importunately entreated to *seek the LORD while he might be found*?—I wish they may obtain mercy at the eleventh, at the last hour. I wish they may be snatched from the jaws, the opened, the gaping, the almost closing jaws of damnation. But, alas! who can tell, whether affronted Majesty will lend an ear to their complaint? whether the Holy One will work a miracle of grace in behalf of such transgressors? He may, for aught any mortal knows, "laugh at their calamity, "and mock when their fear cometh."

Thus they lie groaning out the poor remains of life; their limbs bathed in sweat; their heart struggling with convulsive throes; pains insupportable throbbing in every pulse; and innumerable darts of agony transfixing their conscience.

—*In that dread moment, how the frantic soul*
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement;
Runs to each avenue; and shrieks for help;
But shrieks in vain! How wishfully she looks
On all she's leaving, now no longer hers!
A little longer, yet a little longer,
O! might she stay, to wash away her crimes,
And fit her for her passage! Mournful sight!
Her very eyes weep blood; and every groan
She heaves, is big with horror: but the foe,
—Like a staunch murd'rer, steady to his purpose,
Pursues her close through every lane of life,
Nor misses once the track; but presses on;
Till, forc'd at last to the tremendous verge,
At once she sinks.

If *this* be the *end* of the ungodly, "My soul, come "not thou into their secret! Unto their assembly, "mine honour, be not thou united!"—How awfully accomplished is that prediction of inspired wisdom! *Sin*, though seemingly sweet in the commission, yet *at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder*.—Fly therefore from the tents, O! fly from the ways of such wretched men.

HAPPY dissolution! were this the period of their woes. But, alas! all these tribulations are only "the "*beginning of sorrows*;" a small drop only from that "cup of trembling," which is mingled for their future portion.—No sooner has the last pang dislodged their reluctant souls, but they are hurried into the presence of an injured, angry GOD. Not under the conducting care of beneficent angels, but exposed to the insults of accursed spirits, who lately *tempted* them, now *upbraid* them, and will for ever *torment* them.—Who can imagine their confusion and distress, when they stand guilty, and inexcusable, before their incensed Creator? They are received with frowns. The GOD that made them has no "mercy on them." The Prince of Peace rejects them with abhorrence. He consigns them over to chains of darkness, and receptacles of burning. Execution is sealed down, and must pass upon them the next day.—Then all the vials of wrath will be emptied upon these wretched creatures. Whatever they have violated, and the gospel they have slighted, the power they have defied, and the goodness they have abused, will all get themselves honour in their exemplary destruction. Then GOD, the GOD to whom vengeance belongeth, will draw the arrow to the very head, and set them as the mark of his inexorable displeasure.

Resurrection will be no privilege to them; but immortality itself their everlasting curse. Would they gladly bless the grave, "that land where all things are forgotten;" and wish to lie eternally hid in its deepest gloom? But the dust refuses to *conceal* their persons, or to draw its *veil* over their practices. They also must awake, must arise; must appear at the bar; and meet the Judge, their Judge, before whom "the pillars of heaven tremble, and "the earth melts away;" a Judge, once long-suffering, and very compassionate; but now unalterably determined to teach stubborn offenders,—what it is to provoke the omnipotent Godhead; what it is to *trample* upon the blood of his Son, and offer *despite* to all the gracious overtures of his Spirit.

O! the perplexity! the distraction! that must seize the impenitent rebels, when they are summoned to hold great tribunal!—What will they do in this day of their visitation? this day of final decision!—Where? how? whence? can they find help!—To which of the saints will they turn? whither betake themselves for shelter, for succour?—Alas! 'tis all in vain; 'tis all too late. Friends and acquaintance know them no more. Men and angels abandon them to their approaching doom. Even the Mediator, the MEDIATOR himself, deserts them in this dreadful hour.—*To fly*, will be impracticable; to *justify* themselves, still more impossible; and now to make any *supplication*, utterly unavailable.

Behold! the books are opened; the secrets of all hearts are disclosed; the hidden things of darkness are brought to light. How empty, how ineffectual, now are all those refined *artifices*, with which hypocrites imposed upon their fellow-creatures, and preserved a character in the sight of men!—The jealous GOD, who has been about their path, and about their bed, and spied out all their ways, sets before them the things that they have done. They cannot answer him one in a thousand, nor stand in the awful judgment. *The heavens reveal their iniquities, and the earth rises up against them* †. They are *speechless* with guilt, and *stigmatized* with infamy, before all the armies of the sky, and all the nations of the redeemed.—What a favour would they esteem it, to hide their ashamed heads in the bottom of the ocean, or even to be buried beneath the ruins of the tottering world!

If the contempt poured upon them be thus insupportable, how will their hearts endure, when the *sword* of infinite indignation is unsheathed, and fiercely waved around their defenceless heads, or pointed directly at their naked breasts? How must the wretches scream with wild amazement, and rend the very heavens with their cries, when the *right aiming thunder-bolts* go abroad! go abroad with a dreadful commission, to drive them from the kingdoms of glory; and plunge them—not into the sorrows of a moment, or the tortures of an hour,—but into all the restless agonies of unquenchable fire, and everlasting despair ‡.

* See a valuable poem, entitled, *The Grave*.

* Is. xxvii. 11. † Job xx. 27.

‡ Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever burning sulphur unconsum'd.

Misery of miseries! too shocking for reflection to dwell upon. But, if so dismal to *foresee*, and that at a distance, together with some comfortable expectation of escaping it,—O! how bitter, inconceiveably bitter, to *feel*, without any intermission, or any mitigation, throughout boundless and eternal ages!

Who has any bowels of pity?—Who has any sentiments of compassion? Who has any tender concern for his fellow-creatures? Who?—In GOD's name, and for CHRIST's sake, let him shew it, by warning every man, and beseeching every man, to *seek* the LORD while he may be *found*; to throw down the arms of rebellion, before the act of indemnity expires; submissively to adore the Lamb, while he holds out the golden sceptre.—Here let us act the friendly part to mankind; here let the whole force of our *benevolence* exert itself; in exhorting relations, acquaintance, neighbours, whomsoever we may probably influence, to take the wings of *faith* unfeigned, of *repentance* undelayed, and flee away from this wrath come.

UPON the whole, what stupendous discoveries are these! Lay them up in a faithful remembrance, O my soul. Recollect them with the most serious attention, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. When thou walkest, receive them for thy *companions*; when thou talkest, listen to them as thy *prompters*; and whatever thou dost, consult them as thy *directors*.—Influenced by these considerations, thy views will greaten, thy affections be exalted, and thou thyself raised above the tantalizing power of perishing things! Duly mindful of these, it will be the sum of thy *desires*, and the scope of thy *endeavours*, to gain the approbation of that sovereign Being, who will then fill the throne, and pronounce the decisive sentence. Thou wilt see nothing worth a wish*, in comparison of having his will for thy rule; his glory for thy aim; and his Holy Spirit for thy ever-actuating principle.

WONDER, O man; be lost in admiration, at those *prodigious events*, which are coming upon the universe: events, the greatness of which nothing finite can measure; such as will cause whatever is considerable or momentous in the annals of all generations, to sink into littleness and nothing: Events (JESUS prepare us for their approach; defend us, when they take place!) big with the everlasting fates of all the living, and all the dead.—I must see the graves cleaving, the sea teeming, and swarms unsuspected, crouds unnumbered, yea, multitudes of *thronging nations*, rising from both.—I must see the world in flames; must stand at the dissolution of all terrestrial things; and be an attendant on the *burial* of nature.—I must see the vast expanse of the sky, wrapt up like a scroll; and the incarnate GOD, issuing forth from light inaccessible, with ten thousand times ten thousand angels, to judge both *them* and *their works*.—I must see the curtain of time drop; see all eternity disclosed to view; and enter upon a *state* of being, that will never, never have an end.

And ought I not (let the vainest imagination determine; ought I not) to try the sincerity of my faith, and take heed to my ways? Is there an *inquiry*, is there a *care*, of greater, of equal, of comparable importance? Is not this an infinitely pressing call, to see that my loins are girded about, my lamp trimmed, and myself dressed for the Bridegroom's appearance? that, washed in the fountain opened in my Saviour's side, and clad with the marriage-garment wove by his obedience, I may be found in peace, unblameable, and unreproveable.—Otherwise, how shall I stand with boldness, when the stars of heaven fall from their orbs? How shall I come forth *erect* and *courageous*, when the earth itself *reels* to and fro like a drunkard *? How shall I look up with joy, and see my salvation drawing nigh, when the hearts of millions and millions fail for fear?

Now, Madam, lest my meditations set in a cloud, and leave any unpleasing gloom upon your mind, let me once more turn to the *brightening prospects* of the righteous. A view of them, and their delightful expectations, may serve to exhilerate the thoughts, which have been musing upon melancholy subjects, and hovering about the edges of infernal darkness. Just as a spacious field, arrayed in *chearful green*, relieves and invigorates the eye, which has fatigued itself by poring upon some minute, or gazing upon some glaring object.

The righteous seem to lie by in the bosom of the earth, as a *wary pilot* in some well sheltered creek, till all the storms, which infest this lower world, are blown over. Here they enjoy safe anchorage; are in no danger of *foundering*, amidst the waves of prevailing iniquity, or of being *shipwrecked* on the rocks of any powerful temptation. But 'ere long we shall behold them hoisting their flag of hope; riding before a sweet gale of atoning merit, and redeeming love; till they make, with all the sails of an assured faith, the blessed port of eternal life.

Then may the honoured friend, to whom I am writing, rich in good works, rich in heavenly tempers, but inexpressibly richer in her Saviour's righteousness,—O! may she enter the harbour, like a gallant *stately vessel*, returned successful and victorious from some grand expedition, with acclamations, honour and joy! While my *little bark*, attendant on the solemnity, and a partaker of the triumph, glides humbly after; and both rest together in the haven,—the wished-for, blissful haven, of perfect security, and everlasting repose.

THE END.

* If. xxiv. 20.

REFLECTIONS
IN A FLOWER-GARDEN.

IN A LETTER TO A LADY.

I look upon the pleasure, which we take in a garden, as one of the most innocent delights in human life. A garden was the habitation of our first parents before the fall. It is naturally apt to fill the mind with calmness and tranquillity, and is by all its verdant paintings at once gives us a great insight into the contrivance and wisdom of Providence, and suggests unanswerable subjects for meditation.

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MADAM,

SOME time ago, my meditations took a turn among the *Tombs*; they visited the awful and melancholy mansions of the dead *; and you was pleased to favour them with your attention.—May I now beg the honour of your company, in a more inviting and delightful excursion? in a beautiful *flower-garden*; where I lately walked, and at once regaled the sense, and indulged the fancy.

IT was early in a *summer-morning*, when the air was cool, the earth moist, the whole face of the creation fresh and gay. The noisy world was scarce awake. *Business* had not quite shook off his sound sleep; and *Riot* had but just reclined his giddy head. All was serene; all was still; every thing tended to inspire tranquillity of mind, and invite to serious thought.

Only the wakeful *lark* had left her nest, and was mounting on high to sing the opening day. Elevated in air, she seemed to call the labourious husbandman to his toil, and all her fellow-songsters to their notes.—Earliest of birds, said I, companion of the dawn, may I always rise at thy voice! rise, to offer the matin-song, and adore that beneficent Being, "who maketh the outgoings of the morning and even-"ing to rejoice."

How charming to rove abroad, at this sweet *hour of prime!* to enjoy the calm of nature; to tread the dewy lawns, and taste the unrifled freshness of the air!

> *Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,*
> *With charm of earliest birds* *.

What a pleasure do the sons of *sloth* lose? Little, ah! little is the sluggard sensible, how delicious an entertainment he foregoes, for the poorest of all animal gratifications †.

* "Discourses on the *vanity* of the Creature, which repre-"sent the barrenness of every thing in this world, and its inca-"pacity of producing any solid or substantial happiness, are use-"ful.—Those speculations also, which shew the *bright side* "of things, and lay forth those innocent entertainments, "which are to be met with among the several objects that en-"compass us, are no less beneficial." *Spect.* vol. v. No. 393. *Upon the plan of these observations, the preceding and following reflections are formed.*

* MILT. Par. Lost, b. iv. lin. 641.

† See! how revelation and reason, the scriptures and the classics, unanimously exhort to this most beneficial practice. They both invite us to *early rising*, by the most engaging motives, and the most alluring representations.

The

The greyneſs of the dawn decays gradually. Abundance of ruddy ſtreaks tinge the fleeces of the firmament; till, at length, the *dappled* aſpect of the eaſt is loſt, in one ardent and boundleſs *bluſh*.—Is it the ſurmiſe of imagination, or do the ſkies really redden with ſhame, to ſee ſo many ſupinely ſtretched on their drowſy pillows?—Shall man be loſt in luxurious eaſe? ſhall man waſte theſe precious hours in idle ſlumbers? while the vigorous ſun is up and going on his Maker's errand? while all the feathered choir are hymning their Creator, and paying their homage in harmony?—No! Let *him* heighten the melody of the tuneful tribes, by adding the rational ſtrains of devotion. Let *him* improve the fragrant oblations of nature, by mingling, with the riſing odours, the more refined breath of praiſe.

'Tis natural for man to look upward *; to throw his firſt glance upon the objects that are above him.

Strait towards heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
And gaz'd a while the ample SKY †.

Prodigious theatre! where lightnings dart their fire, and thunders utter their voice; where tempeſts ſpend their rage, and worlds unnumbered roll at large!—O the *greatneſs* of that mighty hand, which meteth out this amazing circumference with a ſpan! O the *immenſity* of that wonderful Being, before whom this unmeaſurable extent is no more than a point!—And O (thou pleaſing thought!) the unſearchable *riches* of that *mercy*, which is *greater than the heavens* †, is more enlarged and extenſive, in its gracious exerciſe, than theſe illimitable tracts of air, and ſea, and firmament! which pardons crimes of the moſt enormous ſize, and the moſt horrid aggravations; pardons them, in conſideration of the Redeemer's atonement, with perfect freeneſs, and the utmoſt readineſs! more readily, if it were poſſible, than this *all-ſurrounding expanſe* admits, within its circuit, a ridge of mountains, or even a grain of ſand.

Come hither, then, ye *awakened*, trembling ſinners. Come ‖, weary and heavy-laden with a ſenſe of your iniquities. Condemn yourſelves. Renounce all reliance on any thing of your own. Let your *truſt be in the tender mercy of* GOD, *for ever and ever.*

Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages! Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us ſee if the vine flouriſh, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth. Cant. vii. 11, 12.

Ante ſatas primum ſidera, frigida rura
Carpamus; dum nova nouum, dum gramina cænent,
Et roſ en tenera pecori gratiſſimus herba eſt.
VIRG. *Georg.* III.

Os hominis ſublime dedit, cœlumque tueri
Juſſit, et erecto ad ſidera tollere vultus.
OVID.

* MILT. Par. Loſt, B. viii. lin. 257.

† Pſal. cviii. 4.

‖ The lines which follow, are admirably deſcriptive of the ſpirit and practice hinted above. In them deſire *pants*; prayer *wreſtles*; and faith, as it were, *graſps* the prize.—I take leave to tranſplant them into this place; and I could wiſh them to better, a more conſpicuous ſituation, than either their *new* or their *native* ſoil. Their native ſoil is no other than *the lamentation of a ſinner*, written by Mr *Sternhold*. Notwithſtanding the unpromiſing genius of the performance, I think, we may challenge the greateſt maſters, to produce any thing more ſpirited and importunate; more full of nature, or more fluſhed with life.

Mercy, good LORD, *mercy I crave;*
This is the ſorel ſum;
For mercy, LORD, is all my ſuit;
LORD, let thy mercy come.

The ſhort ſentences—Not a ſingle copulative—The frequent repetition of the divine name—The almoſt inceſſant reiteration of the bleſſing, ſo paſſionately deſired, and inexpreſſibly needed—this is the genuine language of ardor; theſe are beauties obvious to every eye; and cannot fail, either to pleaſe the *judicious* taſte, or to edify the *gracious* heart.

IN them hath he ſet a tabernacle for the ſun *.——Behold him coming forth from the chambers of the eaſt. See! the cloud, like floating curtains, are thrown back at his approach. With what *refulgent majeſty* does he walk abroad! How tranſcendently bright is his countenance, ſhedding day, and inexhauſtible light, through the univerſe!——Is there a ſcene, though finiſhed by the moſt elaborate and coſtly refinements of art, "comparable to theſe illuſtrious ſolemnities of opening ſunſhine! Before *theſe*, all the ſtudied pageantry of the "theatre, the glittering œconomy of an aſſembly, or "even the heightened ornaments of a royal palace, "hide their diminiſhed heads, and ſhrink into nothing." I have read of a perſon ſo ſtruck with the ſplendors of this noble luminary, that he imagined himſelf made on purpoſe to contemplate its glories. O! that Chriſtians would adopt his perſuaſion, and tranſfer it to the *Sun of Righteouſneſs!* Thus applied, it would ceaſe to be a chimerical notion, and become a moſt important truth. For ſure I am, it is the ſupreme happineſs of the eternal ſtate, and therefore may well be the ruling concern of this preſent life, *to know the only true* GOD, *and* JESUS CHRIST, *whom he hath ſent.*——Nor do I ſtand alone in this opinion. The very beſt judge of whatever is valuable in ſcience, or perfective of our nature; a judge, who formed his taſte on the maxims of paradiſe, and received the finiſhings of his education in the third heavens; this judge determines to *know nothing but* JESUS CHRIST, *and him crucified*. He poſſeſſed, in his own perſon, the fineſt, the moſt admired *accompliſhments*; yet pronounces them no better than *dung*, in compariſon of the † ſuper-eminent excellency of this ſaving knowledge.

Methinks I diſcern a thouſand admirable properties in the ſun. 'Tis, certainly, the beſt material emblem of the Creator. There is more of GOD in its *luſtre*, *energy*, and *uſefulneſs*, than in any other viſible being. To worſhip it as a deity, was the leaſt inexcuſable of all the Heathen idolatries. One ſcarce can wonder, that fallen reaſon ſhould miſtake ſo fair a *copy* for the adorable *original*. No compariſon, in the whole book of ſacred wiſdom, pleaſes me more, than that which reſembles the bleſſed JESUS, to yonder regent of the day ‡; who now advances on his azure road, to ſcatter light and diſpenſe gladneſs through the nations.

WHAT were all the realms of the world, but a *dungeon* of *darkneſs*, without the beams of the ſun? All their fine ſcenes hid from our view, loſt in obſcurity.—In vain we roll around our eyes in the midnight gloom. In vain we ſtrive to behold the features of amiable nature. Turn whither we will no form or comeline's appears. All ſeems a dreary waſte, an undiſtinguiſhed chaos, till the returning hours have unbarred the gates of light, and let forth the morn.—Then what a proſpect opens! The heavens are paved with azure, and ſtrewed with roſes. A variety of the liveliеſt verdures array the plains. The flowers put on a glow of the richeſt colours. The whole creation ſtands forth, dreſſed in all the charms of beauty. The raviſhed eye looks round, and wonders.

And what had been the condition of our intellectual nature, without the great Redeemer, and his *divine revelation?*——Alas! what abſurd and unworthy apprehenſions did the *Pagan* ſages form of GOD! What idle dreams, what childiſh conjectures, were their doctrines of a future ſtate.—How did the bulk, even of that favoured nation, the *Jews*, weary themſelves in every vanity, to obtain peace and reconciliation with their offended JEHOVAH! till JESUS aroſe upon their benighted minds, and brought life and immortality

* Pſal. xix. 4.

† TO ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως. Phil. iii. 7.

‡ *Unto you that fear my name, ſhall the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſe, with healing in his wings.* Mal. iv. 2.

light; viz. HE arose, *to enlighten the wretched Gentile, and to be the glory of his people Israel.*

Now we no longer cry out, with a reſtleſs impatience, *Where is my GOD, my maker?* For we are allowed to contemplate the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, *in the face of* JESUS CHRIST.—Now we no longer inquire, with an unſatisfied ſolicitude, "Which is the way to bliſs?" becauſe JESUS has marked the *path*, by his ſhining example; and left us an unerring clue in his holy word.—Now we have no more reaſon to perceive with miſgiving hearts in our journey to eternity, or to aſk anxiouſly as we go, "Who "will roll away the ſtone, and open the everlaſting "doors? Who will remove the flaming ſword, and "give us admiſſion into the delights of paradiſe?" For it is done, all done, by the Captain of our ſalvation. Sin he has *expiated*, by the unblemiſhed ſacrifice of himſelf. The law he has *fulfilled*, by his perfect obedience. The ſinner he *tranſforms*, by his ſanctifying Spirit.—In a word, he hath both preſented us with a *clear diſcovery* of good things to come, and adminiſtered to us an *abundant entrance* into the final enjoyment of them.

Whenever, therefore, we bleſs GOD for the circling ſeaſons, and revolving day, let us adore, thankfully adore him, for the *more precious* appearance of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, and his glorious goſpel. Without which, we ſhould have been groping, even to this hour, in ſpiritual darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death: without which, we muſt have wandered in a maze of inextricable uncertainties; and have "ſtumbled upon the dark "mountains" of error, till we fell into the bottomleſs pit of perdition.

WITHOUT that grand *enlivening* principle, what were this earth, but a lifeleſs maſs? a rude lump of *inactive* matter? The trees could never break forth into leaves, nor the plants ſpring up unto flowers. We ſhould no more behold the meadows mantled over with green, nor the vallies ſtanding thick with corn. Or, to ſpeak in the beautiful language of a prophet; * *No longer would the fig-tree bloſſom, nor fruit be in the vine: the labour of the olive would fail, and the fields could yield no meat: the flocks muſt be cut off from the fold, and there would be no herd in the ſtalls.*—The ſun darts its beams among all the vegetable tribes, and paints the ſpring, and enriches the autumn. This pierces to the the roots of the vineyard and the orchard; and ſets afloat thoſe fermenting juices, which at length burſt into floods of wine, or bend the boughs with a mellow load.—Nor are its favours confined to the *upper regions*; but diſtributed into the *deepeſt receſſes* of creation. It penetrates the beds of metal, and finds its way to the place of the ſapphires. It tinctures the ſeeds of gold, that are ripening into ore; and throws a brilliancy into the water of the diamond, that is hardening on its rock.—In ſhort, the beneficial agency of this magnificent luminary is inexpreſſible. It *beautifies*, and *impregnates*, univerſal nature. "There is nothing hid "from the heat thereof."

JUST in the ſame manner, were the rational world *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*, without the reviving energy of JESUS CHRIST. He is "the reſurrection and the "life;" the overflowing fountain of the one, and the all-powerful cauſe of the other. The ſecond *Adam*, is *quickening ſpirit*, and all his ſaints live through him. He *influences* upon their affections; and they ſhoot forth into heavenly graces, and abound in the fruits of righteouſneſs. Faith unfeigned, and love undiſſembled, thoſe nobleſt productions of the renewed nature, are the effect of *his* operation on the mind. Not ſo much as one divine diſpoſition could ſpread itſelf, not one Chriſtian habit unfold and flouriſh, without the kindly influences of *his* grace.

* Hab. iii. 17.

As there is no fruitfulneſs, ſo likewiſe no *chearfulneſs*, without the ſun.—When that ſuſpicious ſovereign of the day diffuſes the mildneſs of his morning-ſplendor, he creates an univerſal feſtival. Millions of glittering inſects awake into exiſtence, and bask in his rays. The birds ſtart from their ſlumbers, and pour their delighted ſouls in harmony. The flocks, with bleating accents, hail the welcome bleſſing. The valleys ring with rural muſic; the hills echo back the artleſs ſtrains. All that is vocal, joins in the general choir: all that has breath, exults in the chearing influence.—Whereas, was that radiant orb extinguiſhed, a tremendous gloom would enſue, and horror inſupportable. Nay, let it only be *eclipſed* for a few minutes, and all nature aſſumes an air of *ſadneſs*. The heavens are wrapt in ſables, and put on a kind of mourning. The moſt ſprightly animals hang down their dejected heads. The ſongſters of the grove are ſtruck dumb. Howling beaſts roam abroad for prey, ominous birds come forth and ſcreech: the heart of man fails, or a ſudden pang ſeizes the foreboding mind.—So, when CHRIST hides away his face, when faith loſes ſight of that Conſolation of *Iſrael*, how *gloomy* are the proſpects of the ſoul! Our GOD ſeems to be a conſuming fire, and our ſins cry loudly for vengeance. The thoughts bleed inwardly; the Chriſtian walks heavily. All without is irkſome; all within is diſconſolate.—Lift up then, moſt gracious JESUS, thou *noble Day-ſpring* from on high! O lift up the light of thy countenance upon thy people! Reveal the fulneſs of thy mediatorial ſufficiency; make clear our title to this great ſalvation; and thereby impart

What nothing earthly gives, or can deſtroy,
The ſoul's calm ſunſhine, and the heart-felt joy.

IN one inſtance more let me purſue the ſimilitude. The ſun, I obſerve, pours his luſtre all *around*, to every *diſtance*, and in every *direction*. Profuſely liberal of his gifts, he illuminates and chears all the ends of the earth, and the whole compaſs of the ſkies. The eaſt reddens with his riſing radiance, and the weſtern hills are gilded with his ſtreaming ſplendors. The chilly regions of the north are cheriſhed by his genial warmth; while the ſouthern tracts glow with his fire.—Thus are the influences of the Sun of Righteouſneſs *diffuſive* and *unconfined*. The generations of old felt them; and generations yet unborn will rejoice in them. The merits of his precious death extended to the firſt, and will be propagated to the laſt, ages of mankind.—May they, 'ere long, viſit the remoteſt climates, and darkeſt corners of the earth! Command thy goſpel, bleſſed JESUS, thy everlaſting goſpel, to take the wings of the morning, and travel with yonder ſun. Let it fly upon ſtrong pinions among every people, nation, and language; that where the heat ſcorches, and the cold freezes, thou mayſt be known, confeſſed, and adored! that *ſtrangers* to thy name, and *enemies* to thy doctrine, may be enlightened with the knowledge, and won to the love, of thy truth! O may that beſt of years come; that wiſhed-for period advance, when *all the ends of the world ſhall remember themſelves, and be turned unto the LORD; and all the kindreds of the nations worſhip before him*†.

FROM the heavens, we retire to the earth. Here the drops of *dew*, like ſo many liquid cryſtals‖, ſparkle upon the eye. How *brilliant* and unſullied is their luſtre! How little inferior to the proud ſtone, which irradiates a monarch's crown! They want nothing but

* "The ſun, which is as the great ſoul of the univerſe, and "produces all the neceſſaries of life, has a particular influence "in *chearing* the mind of man, and making the heart glad." *Spect.* vol. V. No. 387. † PSAL. xxii. 27.

‖ Now morn, her roſy ſteps in th' eaſtern clime
Advancing, ſow'd the earth with *orient pearl*. MILT.

ſolidity and permaneney, to equal them with the fineſt treaſures of the jeweller's caſket.—Here it muſt be confeſſed, they are greatly deficient; ſhort-lived ornaments; poſſeſſed of little more than a *momentary radiance*. The ſun, that lights them up, will ſoon melt them into air, or exhale them into vapours. Within another hour, we may "look for their place, and they "ſhall be away."—O! may every good reſolution of mine, and of my flock's; may our united breathings after GOD, not be like theſe *tranſient decorations* of the morning, but like the ſubſtantial glory of the growing day! The one ſhines more and more, with augmented ſplendors; while the other, having glittered gaily for a few moments, diſappear and are loſt.

How ſenſibly has this dew *refreſhed* the vegetable kingdoms! the fervent heat of yeſterday's ſun had almoſt parched the face, and exhauſted the ſweets, of nature. But what a ſovereign reſtorative are theſe *cooling diſtillations* of the night! How they gladden and invigorate the languiſhing herbs! Sprinkled with theſe reviving drops, their verdure deepens; their bloom is new fluſhed; their fragrance, faint or intermitted, becomes potent and copious.—Thus does the ever-bleſſed SPIRIT *revive* the drooping troubled conſcience of a ſinner. When that almighty Comforter ſheds his ſweet influence on the ſoul, diſplays the all-ſufficient ſacrifice of a divine Redeemer, and "witneſſes with our ſpirit," that we are *intereſted* in the Saviour, and, by this means, are *children* of GOD; then what a pleaſing change enſues! Former anxieties are remembered no more. Every uneaſy apprehenſion vaniſhes. Soothing hopes, and delightful expectations, ſucceed. The countenance drops its dejected mein; the eyes brighten with a lively chearfulneſs; while the lips expreſs the heart-felt ſatisfaction, in the language of thankſgiving, and the voice of melody.—In this ſenſe, merciful GOD, *be as the dew unto Iſrael!* "Pour upon them the continual dew of thy bleſſing." And O! let not my fleece be dry, while heavenly benediction deſcends upon all around.

Who can number theſe pearly drops? They hang on every hedge; they twinkle from every ſpray; and adorn the whole herbage of the field. Not a blade of graſs, not a ſingle leaf, but wears the watery pendants. So *vaſt* is the *profuſion*, that it baffles the arithmetician's art.—Here let the benevolent mind contemplate and admire that emphatical ſcripture, which, from this elegant ſimilitude, deſcribes the *increaſe* of the *Meſſiah*'s kingdom. The royal prophet, ſpeaking of CHRIST, and foretelling the ſucceſs of his religion, has this remarkable expreſſion*; *The dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning*, (i. e.) As the morning is the mother of dews; produces them, as it were, from a proliſic womb; and ſcatters them, with the moſt laviſh abundance, over all the ſurface of the earth: *ſo ſhall thy ſeed be*, O thou everlaſting Father! By the preaching of thy word, ſhall ſuch an innumerable race of regenerate children be born unto thee, and prove an ornament and a bleſſing to all ages. Millions, millions of willing converts, from every nation under heaven, ſhall croud into thy family, and repleniſh thy church; till they become like the ſtars of the ſky, or the ſands of the ſea for multitude; or even as *numberleſs* as theſe fine *ſpangles*, which now cover the face of nature.——

* *Pſal.* cx. 3, מרחם משחר לך טל ילדתך. The moſt exact tranſlation of this difficult paſſage is, I apprehend, as follows; *Pra vere uteri auroræ, tibi eſt res juventutis vel prolis tuæ.* The dew of thy birth is larger, more copious, than the dew which proceeds from the womb of the morning.—I cannot acquieſce in the new verſion; becauſe that diſjoins *the womb of the morning*, from *dew of thy birth*. Whereas, they ſeem to have a clear affinity, and a cloſe connection. The womb of the morning is, with the utmoſt pertinency, applied to the conception and and production of dews; agreeably to a delicate line, in that great maſter of juſt deſcription, and lively painting, Mr *Thomſon*:

The meek-ey'd morn appears, mother of dews. Summer.

We meet with a fine expreſſion in the book of *Job*, which may ſerve to confirm this remark; may illuſtrate the propriety of the phraſe, uſed in this connection. "Hath the rain a father, or "who hath begotten the drops of dew?" It ſeems, the oriental writers delighted to repreſent the dew, as a kind of birth, as the offſpring of the morning. And if ſo, ſurely there could be no image in the whole compaſs of the univerſe, better adapted to the pſalmiſt's purpoſe, or more ſtrongly ſignificant of thoſe multitudes of proſelytes, which were *born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD*; by the powerful energy of his word and Spirit.—Upon this ſuppoſition, the whole verſe deſcribes

The willing ſubjection,
The gracious accompliſhments,
And the vaſt number,
} of Chriſt's converts.

q. d. *In the day of thy power*, when thy glorious goſpel ſhall be publiſhed in the world, and accompanied with marvellous efficacy,—in that memorable period, *thy people*, diſcontinuing the former oblations, commanded under the *Moſaic* law, ſhall devote *themſelves*, as ſo many living ſacrifices, to thy honour. Not conſtrained by force, but charmed with thy excellency, they ſhall come in *volunteers* to thy ſervice, and be *free-will offerings* in thy church.—Neither ſhall they be "empty vines," or bare profeſſors; but ſhall walk in all the *beauties of holineſs*, and bring forth ſuch amiable fruit, as will adorn the doctrine they embrace.—What is ſtill more deſirable, they ſhall be as *numerous*, as they are willing and holy: born to thee in numbers immenſe and inconceivable; exceeding even the countleſs myriads of dew-drops, which are begotten by the night, and iſſue from the womb of the recent morning.

By this interpretation, the text, I think, is cleared of its obſcurity; and appears both truly ſublime, and perfectly juſt.

May I be pardoned the *digreſſion*, and acquitted from *preſumption*, if, on this occaſion, I take leave to animadvert upon what ſeems harſh and unnatural in the common expoſition of the laſt verſe of this pſalm? All the commentators (as many, at leaſt, as I have conſulted) inform their readers, that to *drink of the brook in the way*, ſignifies *to undergo ſufferings and death*; which, in my opinion, is a conſtruction extremely forced, and hardly ſupportable; altogether remote from the import of ſuch poetical forms of diction cuſtomary among the eaſtern nations. In thoſe ſultry climes, nothing could be more welcome to the traveller, than a brook ſtreaming near his paths. To quench his thirſt, and lave his feet, in the cooling current, was one of the greateſt refreſhments imaginable, and re-animated him to purſue his journey. For which reaſon, among others, brooks are a very favourite image with the inſpired penman; uſed to denote a ſituation *fertile* and *delightful*, or a ſtate of *pleaſure* and *ſatisfaction*; but never, that I can recollect, to picture out the contrary condition of tribulation and diſtreſs.

The *water-floods*, indeed, in the ſacred writings, often repreſent ſome imminent danger, or grievous affliction. But then they are not— נחלים כרורי —ſtreams ſo *calm*, that they keep within their banks, and glide quietly by the traveller's footſteps; ſo *clear*, that they are fit for the wayfaring man's uſe, and invite his lips to a draught; both which notions are plainly implied in the text.—They are rather—נחלי שבלי—*boiſterous billows*; burſting over a ſhip, or daſhing themſelves, with dreadful impetuoſity, upon the ſhore: or—שבלת—*ſweeping inundations*; which bear down all before them, and drown the neighbouring country.—Beſides, in theſe inſtances of horror, we never find the word— שתה —*He ſhall drink*; which conveys a pleaſing idea (unleſs when it relates to a cup, filled with bitter, intoxicating, or empoiſoned liquors; a caſe quite different from that under conſideration); but either—כעה—which imports *terror* and *aſtoniſhment*; or elſe—שטף and ערך—which ſignify to *ruſh upon*, to *overwhelm*, and even to *bury* under the waves.

Upon the whole, May not the paſſage more properly allude to the *influences* of the *Holy Ghoſt*? which were communicated, in unmeaſurable degrees, to our great High Prieſt; and were, in fact, the cauſe of his ſurmounting all difficulties.—Theſe are frequently repreſented by *waters*; "Whoſo believeth on me, "out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of *living waters*." The enjoyment of them is deſcribed by *drinking*; "He that *drink*-"*eth* of the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt."—Then, the ſenſe may run in this well-connected and perſpicuous manner. Is it aſked, How ſhall the Redeemer be able to execute the various and important offices foretold in the preceding

Behold then, ye obſtinately wicked, though you "are "not gathered, yet will the Saviour be glorious." His deſign ſhall not miſcarry, nor his labour prove abortive, though you render it of none effect with regard to yourſelves. Think not, that IMMANUEL will want believers, or heaven inhabitants, becauſe *you* continue incorrigible. No; the Lamb that was ſlain, will "ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied," in a never-failing ſeries of faithful people below, and an immenſe choir of glorified ſaints above; who ſhall form his retinue, and ſurround his throne, in ſhining and triumphant armies, ſuch as no man can number.

HERE I was reminded of the various expedients which Providence, unſearchably wiſe, uſes, to *fructify* both the material and intellectual world.—Sometimes you ſhall have *impetuous* and heavy *ſhowers*, burſting from the angry clouds. They laſh the plains, and make the rivers foam. A ſtorm brings them, and a deluge follows them.—At other times, theſe *gentle dews* are formed, in the ſerene evening air. They ſteal down, by ſlow degrees, and with inſenſible ſtillneſs; ſo ſubtile, that they deceive the niceſt eye; ſo ſilent, that they eſcape the moſt delicate ear; and when fallen, ſo very light that they neither bruiſe the tendereſt, nor oppreſs the weakeſt flower.—Very *different* operations! yet each concurs in the *ſame* beneficial end, and both impart fertility to the lap of nature.

So, ſome perſons have I known reclaimed from the unfruitful works of darkneſs, by *violent* and ſevere means. The Almighty addreſſed their ſtubborn hearts, as he addreſſed the *Iſraelites* at *Sinai*, with lightning in his eyes, and thunder in his voice. The conſcience, ſmit with a ſenſe of guilt, and apprehenſive of eternal vengeance, trembled through all her powers; juſt as that ſtrong mountain tottered to its centre. Pangs of remorſe and agonies of fear, preceded their new birth. They were reduced to the laſt extremities, almoſt overwhelmed with deſpair, before they found reſt in JESUS CHRIST.—Others have been recovered from a vain converſation, by methods more *mild* and attractive. The Father of ſpirits applied himſelf to their teachable minds, in "a ſtill and ſmall voice." His grace came down, as the rain into a fleece of wool; or as theſe ſoftening drops, which now water the earth. The kingdom of GOD took place in their ſouls, without noiſe or obſervation. They paſſed from death unto life, from a carnal to a regenerate ſtate, by almoſt imperceptible advances. The tranſition reſembled the growth of corn; was very viſible, when effected; though ſcarce ſenſible, while accompliſhing.—O thou Author and Finiſher of our faith, recall us from our wanderings, and reunite us to thyſelf! Whether thou *alarm* us with thy terrors, or *allure* us with thy ſmiles; whether thou drive us with the ſcourge of conviction, or draw us with the cords of love; let us, in any wiſe, return to thee; for thou art our ſupreme good; thou art our only happineſs.

BEFORE I proceed farther, let me aſcend the *terrace*, and take one ſurvey of the neighbouring *country*.—What a proſpect ruſhes upon my ſight! How vaſt; how various; how "full and plenteous with all man-"ner of ſtore!" Nature's whole wealth!—What a rich and inexhauſtible magazine is here, furniſhing ſubſiſtence for every creature! Methinks I read, in theſe ſpacious volumes, a moſt lively comment upon that noble celebration of the divine beneficence; *He openeth his hand, and filleth all things living with plenteouſneſs.*

Theſe are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! Thine this univerſal frame,
Thus wond'rous fair! Thyſelf how wond'rous then!
MILT.

The *fields* are covered deep, and ſtand thick, with corn. They expand the milky *grain* to the ſun; while the gales, now inclining, now raiſing each flexile ſtem, open all their ranks to the agency of his beams: which will ſoon impart a firm conſiſtence to the grain, and a gloſſy golden hue to the ear; that they may be qualified to fill the barns of the huſbandman with plenty, and his heart with gladneſs.

Yonder lie the *meadows*, ſmoothed into a perfect level; decorated with an embroidery of the gayeſt flowers; and loaded with * ſpontaneous crops of *herbage*: which, converted into hay, will prove a moſt commodious proviſion for the barrenneſs of winter; will ſupply with fodder our ſerviceable animals, when all the verdure of the plain is killed by froſts, or buried in ſnows.—A winding *ſtream* glides along the flowery margin; and receives the image of the bending ſkies, and waters the roots of many a branching willow. 'Tis ſtocked, no doubt, with variety of *fiſh*; which afford a ſolitary diverſion to the angler, and nouriſh for his table a delicious treat. Nor is it the only merit of this liquid element, to maintain the finny nations; it alſo carries *cleanlineſs*, and diſpenſes *fruitfulneſs*, where-ever it rolls the cryſtal current.

The *paſtures*, with their verdant mounds, chequer the proſpect, and prepare a ſtanding repaſt for our cattle. There "our oxen are made ſtrong to labour;" "and our ſheep bring forth thouſands and ten thou-"ſands." There the horſe acquires vigour, for the diſpatch of our buſineſs; and ſpeed, to expedite our journeys. From thence the kine bring home their udders, diſtended with one of the richeſt and healthieſt liquors in the world.

On ſeveral ſpots, a *grove* of trees, like ſome grand colonnade, erects its towering head. Every one projects a friendly ſhade for the beaſts, and creates a hoſpitable lodging for the birds. Every one ſtands ready, to furniſh *timber* for a palace; *maſts* for a navy; or, with a more condeſcending courteſy, *fuel* for our hearths.—One of them ſeems ſkirted with a wild, uncultivated *heath*; which, like well-diſpoſed ſhades in painting, throws an additional luſtre on the more ornamented parts of the landſcape. Nor is its uſefulneſs, like that of a foil, relative only, but real. There ſeveral valuable creatures are produced, and accommodated, without any expence or care of ours. There, likewiſe, ſpring abundance of thoſe *herbs*, which aſſuage the ſmart of our wounds, and allay the fiery tumults of the fever; which impart floridity to our circulating fluids, add a more vigorous tone to our active ſolids, and thereby repair the decays of our enfeebled conſtitutions.

Nearer the houſes, we perceive an ample ſpread of branches; not ſo ſtately as the oaks, but more amiable for their annual ſervices. A little while ago, I beheld them; and all was one beauteous, boundleſs waſte of *bloſſoms*. The eye marvelled at the lovely ſight, and the heart rejoiced in the proſpect of autumnal plenty. But now the blooming maid is reſigned, for the uſeful matron. The flower is fallen, and the *fruit* ſwells out on every twig. Breathe ſoft, ye winds! O ſpare the tender fruitage, ye ſurly blaſts! Let the *pear-tree* ſuckle her juicy progeny, till they drop into our hands, and diſſolve in our mouths. Let the *plumb* hang unmoleſted upon her boughs, till ſhe fatten her delicious fleſh, and cloud

ding parts of the pſalm? The prophet replies, *He ſhall drink of the brook in the way.* He ſhall not be left barely to his human nature, which muſt unavoidably ſink under the tremendous work of recovering a loſt world; but, through the whole courſe of his incarnate ſtate, through the whole adminiſtration of his mediatorical kingdom, ſhall be ſupported with omnipotent ſuccours. He ſhall drink at the brook of Almighty power, and travel on in the greatneſs of an uncreated ſtrength.—*Therefore ſhall he lift up his head.* By this means, ſhall he be equal to the prodigious taſk, and ſuperior to all oppoſition. By this means, ſhall he be thoroughly ſucceſsful in whatever he undertakes, and greatly triumphant over all his enemies.

* ——*Injuſſa virescunt*
Gramina—— VIRG.

cloud her polished skin with blue. And as for the *apples*, that staple-commodity of our *orchards*, let no injurious shocks precipitate them immaturely to the ground; till revolving suns have singed them with a ruddy complexion, and concocted them into an exquisite flavour! Then, what copious hoards, of what burnished rinds, and what delightful relishes, will replenish the store-room! Some, to present us with an early entertainment, and refresh our palates amidst the sultry heats. Some, to borrow ripeness from the falling snows, and carry autumn into the depths of winter. Some, to adorn the salver, make a part of the desert, and give an agreeable * close to our feasts. Others, to fill our vats with a foaming flood; which, mellowed by age, may sparkle in the glass, with a liveliness and delicacy little inferior to the blood of the grape.

I observe several small *inclosures*, which seem to be apprehensive of some hostile visit from the north; and, therefore, are defended, on that quarter, by a thick wood, or a lofty wall. At the same time they cultivate an uninterrupted correspondence with the south, and throw open their whole dimensions to its friendly warmth. One, in particular, lies within the reach of a distinguishing view, and proves to be a *kitchen-garden*. It looks, methinks, like a plain and frugal republic. Whatever may resemble the pomp of courts, or the ensigns of royalty, is banished from this humble community. None of the productions of the olitory affect finery, but all are habited with the very perfection of decency. Here those celebrated qualities are eminently united, the utmost simplicity with the exactest neatness †.—A skilful hand has parcelled out the whole ground into narrow beds, and intervening alleys. The same discreet management has assigned to each verdant family, a peculiar and distinct abode. So that there is no confusion amidst the greatest multiplicity; because every individual knows its proper home, and all the tribes are ranged with perfect regularity.—If it be pleasing to behold their orderly situation, and their modest beauties; how much more delightful, to consider the advantages they yield! What a *fund* of choice *accommodations* is here! what a source of wholesome dainties, and all for the enjoyment of man. Why does the *parsley*, with her frizzled locks, shag the border; or why the *celery*, with her whitening arms, perforate the mould; but to render his soups savoury? The *asparagus* shoots its tapering stems, to offer him the first-fruits of the season; and the *artichoke* spreads its turgid top, to give him a treat of vegetable marrow. The tendrils of the ‡ *cucumber* creep into the sun; and, though balking in its hottest rays, they secrete for their master, and barrel up for his use, the most cooling juices of the soil. The *beans* stand firm, like files of embattled troops; the *peas* rest upon their props, like so many companies of invalids; while both replenish their pods with the fatness of the earth, on purpose to pour it on their owner's table.—Not one species, among all this variety of herbs, is a cumberer of the ground. Not a single plant, but is good for food, or some way salutary. With so beneficent an

* *Ab ovo*
Usque ad mala—— Hor.

† *Simplex munditiis.* Hor.

‡ *Virgil*, with great conciseness, and equal propriety, describes the *cucumber*—

——*Tortusque per herbam*
Cresceret in ventrem cucumis.—— Georg. IV.

Milton has (if we admit Dr *Bentley*'s alteration, which I, I think in *this* place, unquestionably just) almost translated the *Latin* poet,

—— Forth crept
The *swelling* gourd——

Par. Lost, b. VII. l. 320.

economy, are the several periods of their ministration settled, that no portion of the year is left destitute of nourishing esculents. What is still more obliging, every portion of the year affords *such* esculents, as are best suited to the temperature of the air, and the state of our bodies.—Why then should the *possessor* of so valuable a spot envy the condition of Kings? since he may daily walk amidst rows of peaceable and obsequious, though mute subjects. Every one of which tenders him some agreeable present, and pays him a willing tribute; such as is most happily adapted, both to supply his wants, and to regale his taste; to furnish him, at once, with plenty and with pleasure.

At a distance, one descries the mighty *hills*. They heave their huge ridges among the clouds; and look like the barriers of kingdoms, or the boundaries of nature. Bare and deformed as their surface may appear, their bowels are fraught with inward treasures; treasures lodged fast in the *quarries*, or sunk deep in the *mines*. From thence, Industry may draw her implements to plough the soil, to reap the grain, and procure every necessary convenience. From thence, Art may fetch her materials, to rear the dome, to swell the organ, and form the noblest ornaments of polite life.

On another side, the *great deep* terminates the view. *There go the ships; there is that leviathan*; and there, in that world of waters, an inconceivable number of animals have their habitation.—This is the capacious *cistern* of the *universe*; which admits, as into a receptacle, and distributes, as from a reservoir, whatever waters the whole globe. There is not a fountain that gushes in the unfrequented desert; nor a rivulet that flows in the remotest continent, nor a cloud that swims in the highest regions of the firmament, but is fed by this all-replenishing source.—The ocean is the grand *vehicle* of *trade*, and the uniter of distant nations. To us it is peculiarly kind, not only as it wafts into our ports the harvest of every climate, and renders our island the centre of traffic; but also as it secures us from foreign invasions, by a sort of impregnable entrenchment †.

Methinks, the view of this profuse munificence inspires a *secret delight*, and kindles a *disinterested good-will*.—While the "little hills clap their hands," and the luxuriant "valleys laugh and sing;" who can forbear catching the general joy? who is not touched with lively sensations of pleasure?—While the everlasting Father is scattering blessings through the whole family, and crowning the year with his goodness; who does not feel his breast overflowing with a diffusive benevolence?—My heart, I must confess, beats high with satisfaction; and breathes out *congratulatory wishes*, upon all the tenants of these rural abodes: "Peace be within your walls, as well as plenteousness

* Hic *rarum tamen in dumis olus, albaque circum*
Lilia, verbenasque premens, vescumque papaver,
Regum æquabat opes animis: *seraque revertens*
Nocte domum, dapibus mensas onerabat inemptis.
Virg. Georg. IV.

† *Whose rampart was the sea.* Nahum iii. 8.

I hope, this little excursion into the country, will not be looked upon as a *departure* from my subject; because a rural view, though no essential part of a garden, is yet a desirable appendage, and necessary to *complete* its beauty.—As usefulness is the most valuable property which can attend any production, *this* is the circumstance chiefly touched upon in the survey of the landscape. Though every piece of this extensive and diversified scene is cast in the most elegant mould, yet nothing is calculated merely for shew and parade. You see nothing formed in the taste of the ostentatious obelisk, or insignificant pomp of the pyramid. No such idle expences were admitted into that consummate plan, which regulated the structure of the universe. All the decorations of Nature are no less *advantageous*, than *ornamental*; such as speak the MAKER infinitely beneficent, as well as incomparably magnificent.

"around

"around your dwellings! Live, ye highly favour-
ed; live ſenſible of your beneſits, and thankful to your
Benefactor. Look round upon theſe prodigiously
large incomes of the fruitful ſoil, and call them (for
you have free leave) all your own.—Only let me re-
mind you of one very important truth. Let me ſug-
geſt, and may you never forget, that you are *obliged*
to CHRIST JESUS, for every one of theſe accommoda-
tions, which ſpring from the teeming earth, and the
ſmiling ſkies.

CHRIST * *made* them, when they were not.—
He fetched them up from utter darkneſs; and gave them
both their being, and their beauty. He created the ma-
terials, of which they are compoſed; and moulded
them into this endleſs multiplicity of amiable forms
and uſeful ſubſtances. He arrayed the heavens with a
veſture of the mildeſt blue; and clothed the earth in
a livery of the gayeſt green. His pencil ſtreaked the
lily, and painted the roſe. His breath perfumed
the violet, and ſcented the woodbine. His ſtrength ſet faſt the mountains;
his goodneſs garniſhed the vales; and the ſame *touch*
which healed the *leper*, wrought the whole viſible *ſyſtem*
into this complete perfection.

CHRIST *recovered* them, when they were for-
feited.—By *Adam*'s ſin, we loſt our right to the com-
forts of life, and fruits of the ground. His diſobedi-
ence was the moſt impious and horrid *treaſon* againſt
the KING of kings. Conſequently, his whole pa-
trimony became *confiſcated*: as well the portion of
temporal good things, ſettled upon the human race
during their minority; as that everlaſting heritage re-
ſerved for their enjoyment, when they ſhould come
to full age. But the "ſeed of the woman," inſtant-
ly interpoſing, took off the attainder, and redeemed
the alienated inheritance. The firſt *Adam* being diſin-
herited, the ſecond *Adam* † was *appointed heir of all*
things, viſible as well as inviſible. And we, holding our
poſſeſſion of the former, we expect an inſtatement in the

* When I aſcribe the work of creation to the SON, I would by no means be ſuppoſed to with-hold the ſame honour from the eternal FATHER, and ever-bleſſed SPIRIT. The acts of theſe inconceivably glorious perſons are, like their eſſence, undivided and one. But I chuſe to ſtate the point in this manner, becauſe this is the manifeſt doctrine of the New Teſtament, is the expreſs belief of our church, and a moſt noble peculiarity of the goſpel-revelation.—I chuſe it alſo, becauſe I would take every opportunity of inculcating, and celebrating, the *divinity* of the REDEEMER: A truth, which imparts an unutterable dignity to Chriſtianity: a truth, which lays an unmoveable foundation for all the comfortable hopes of a Chriſtian: a truth, which will render the myſtery of our redemption, the wonder and delight of eternity: and with this truth, every one will obſerve, my attention is inſeparably connected.

If any one queſtions, whether this be the doctrine of our church; let the *creed*, which we repeat in our moſt ſolemn devotions, determine his doubt: "I believe," ſays that form of ſound words, "in one LORD JESUS CHRIST, very GOD "of very GOD, *by whom all things were made*."—If it be farther inquired, From whence the *Nicene* fathers derived this article of their faith? I anſwer, From the writings of the beloved diſciple, who lay on the Saviour's boſom; and of that great apoſtle, who had been caught up into the third heaven, *John* i. 3. *Col.* i. 16.

† *Heb.* i. 2.—In this ſenſe at leaſt, CHRIST is *the Saviour of all men*. The former and latter rain; the precious fruits of the earth; food to eat, and raiment to put on;—all theſe he purchaſed, even for his irreclaimable enemies. *They* eat of his bread, who lift up their heel againſt him.

We learn from hence, in what a peculiar and endearing light the *Chriſtian* is to contemplate the things that are ſeen. *Heathens* might diſcover an eternal power, and infinite wiſdom, in the ſtructure of the univerſe: Heathens might acknowledge a moſt ſtupendous liberality, in the unreſerved grant of the whole fabric, with all its furniture, to the ſervice of man. But the Chriſtian ſhould ever keep in mind his forfeiture of them, and the price paid to redeem them. He ſhould receive the gifts of indulgent providence, as the *ſyrtches* received their law, from the hand of a Mediator: or rather, to him they ſhould come, not only iſſuing from the ſtores of an unbounded bounty, but ſwimming (as it were) in that crimſon tide, which ſtreamed from IMMANUEL's wounds.

latter, purely by virtue of our alliance to him, and our union with him.

3. CHRIST *upholds* them, which would otherwiſe tumble into ruin.—*By him*, ſays the oracle of inſpiration, *all things conſiſt*.* His finger rolls the ſeaſons round, and preſides over all the celeſtial revolutions. His finger winds up the wheels, and impels every ſpring of vegetative nature. In a word, the whole weight of the creation reſts upon his mighty arm, and receives the whole harmony of its motion from his unerring eye.—This habitable globe, with all its rich appendages, and fine machinery, could no more continue than they could create themſelves. *Start*, they would into inſtant *confuſion*, or *drop* into their primitive *nothing*, did not his power ſupport, and his wiſdom regulate them, every moment. In conformity to his will, they ſubſiſt, ſtedfaſt and invariable in their orders; and wait only for his ſovereign nod, to "fall away like water that "runneth apace."

4. CHRIST † *actuates* them, which would otherwiſe be lifeleſs and inſignificant.—Penſioners they are, conſtant penſioners, on his bounty; and borrow their *all* from his fulneſs. *He only has life*; and whatever operates, operates by an emanation from his all-ſufficiency. Does the grape refreſh you with its enlivening juices? It is by a warrant received, and virtue derived, from the Redeemer. Does bread ſtrengthen your heart, and prove the ſtaff of your life? Remember, that it is by the Saviour's appointment, and through the efficacy of his operation. You are charmed with *his* melody, when the "time of the ſinging of "birds is come, and the voice of the nightingale is "heard in your land." You taſte *his* goodneſs in the luſcious fig, the melting peach, and the muſky flavour of the apricot. You ſmell *his* ſweetneſs in the opening honeyſuckle, and every odoriferous ſhrub.

Could theſe creatures ſpeak for themſelves, they would, doubtleſs, diſclaim all ſufficiency of their own, and aſcribe the whole honour to their Maker.—"We "are ſervants," would they ſay, "of HIM, who died "for you. *Ciſterns*, only dry ciſterns in ourſelves, we "*tranſmit* to mortals no more than the uncreated fountain tranſfuſes into us. Think not, that, from any "ability of our own, we furniſh you with aſſiſtance, "or adminiſter to your comfort. It is the divine e-"nergy, the divine energy alone, that works in us, "and does you good.—We *ſerve* you, O ye ſons of "men, that you may *love* him, who placed us in "theſe ſtations. O! love the LORD, therefore, all "ye who are ſupported by our miniſtry; or elſe we "ſhall ‡ groan, with indignation and regret, at your "abuſe of our ſervices.—Uſe us, and welcome; for "we are yours, if ye are CHRIST's. Crop our "choiceſt beauties; rifle all our treaſures; accom-"modate yourſelves with our moſt valuable qualities; "only let us be incentives to your *gratitude*, and mo-"tives to your *obedience*."

HAVING ſurveyed the ſpacious ſky, and lent a glance round the inferior creation, 'tis time to deſcend from

* *Coloſ.* i. 17. I beg leave to ſubjoin St *Chryſoſtom*'s pertinent and beautiful note upon the paſſage; by which it will appear, that the ſentiment of theſe ſections is not merely a private opinion, but the avowed belief of the primitive church. Τελειον, ſays the eloquent father, εις αυτον χρειαζεται η παλιν υποστασις· η μονον αυλος φυλαξ εκ της μη οντος εις το ειναι παρηλθεν, αλλα και αυλος αυλα συνεχραλι και ωσε αν αποστασθη της αυλε προνοιας, απωλετο και διεφθαρλαι.

† *John* v. 17. *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*; or, I exert that unremitting and unwearied energy, which is the life of the creation.—Thus the words are paraphraſed by a maſterly expoſitor, who has illuſtrated the life of our bleſſed LORD, in the moſt elegant taſte of criticiſm; with the moſt amiable ſpirit of devotion; and without any mixture of the malignant leaven, or low ſingularities, of a party. See the *Family-Expoſitor*, vol. I. ſect. 47.

‡ Rom. viii. 22.

this eminence, and confine my attention to the *beautiful spot* below.—Here Nature, always pleasing, every where lovely, appears with peculiar attractions. Yonder she receives dressed in her deshabille; grand, but irregular. Here she calls in her handmaid, Art; and shines in all the delicate ornaments, which the nicest cultivation is able to convey. *Those* are her common apartments, where she lodges her ordinary guests; *this* is her cabinet of curiosities, where she entertains her intimate acquaintance.—My eye shall often expatiate over these scenes of universal fertility; my feet shall sometimes brush through the thicket, or traverse the lawn, or stroll along the forest-glade: but to this delightful recreat shall be my chief resort. Thither will I *make excursions*; but here will I *dwell*.

If, from my low procedure, I may form an allusion to the most exalted practices, I would observe, upon this occasion, That the celebrated *Erasmus*, and our judicious *Locke*, having trod the circle of the sciences, and ranged through the whole extent of *human* literature, at length betook themselves solely to the *Bible*. Leaving the sages of antiquity, they sat incessantly at the feet of JESUS. Wisely they withdrew from that immense multiplicity of learning, from those endless tracts of abstruse erudition, where noxious weeds are mixed with wholesome herbs; where is generally a much larger growth of prickly shrubs, than of fruitful boughs. They spent their most mature hours in those hallowed gardens, which GOD's own wisdom planted, which GOD's own Spirit watereth, and in which GOD's own Son is continually walking; where he meeteth those that seek him, and revealeth to them the glories of his person, and the riches of his goodness.

Thus would I finish the remainder of my days! Having just *tasted* (what they call) the politer studies, I would now devote my whole *application* to the lively oracles. From other pursuits, I might glean, perhaps, a few scattered fragments of low, of lean, of unsatisfactory instruction. From this I trust to reap a harvest of the sublimest truths, the noblest improvements, and the purest joys *,—Waft me then, O! waft my mind to *Sion*'s consecrated bowers. Let my thoughts perpetually rove through the awfully-pleasing walks of inspiration. Here grow these heaven-born plants, the trees of *life* and *knowledge*; whose ambrosial fruits we now may "take and eat, and live for ever." Here flow those precious streams of *grace* and *righteousness*, whose living waters, "whosoever drinks, shall thirst no "more." And what can the fables of *Grecian* song, or the finest pages of *Roman* eloquence,—what can they exhibit, in any degree comparable to these matchless prerogatives of revelation?—Therefore, though I should not dislike to pay a *visit* now and then to my Heathen masters, I would *live* with the prophets and apostles. With those I would carry on some occasional correspondence; but these should be my bosom-friends, my inseparable companions, "my delight, and my "counsellors."

WHAT *sweets* are these, which so agreeably salute my nostrils? They are the breath of the flowers, the incense of the garden.—How liberally does the jessamine dispense her odoriferous riches? How deliciously has the woodbine embalmed this morning-walk? The air is all perfume.—And is not this another most engaging argument to forsake the bed of *sloth*? Who would lie dissolved in senseless slumbers, while so many breathing sweets invite him to a feast of fragrancy? Especially considering, that the advancing day will exhale the volatile dainties. A *fugitive treat* they are, prepared only for the wakeful and industrious. Whereas, when the sluggard lifts his heavy eyes, the flowers will droop; their fine scents be dissipated; and, instead of this refreshing humidity, the air will become a kind of liquid fire.

With this very *motive*, heightened by a representation of the most charming pieces of morning-scenery, the parent of mankind awakes his lovely consort. There is such a delicacy in the choice, and so much life in the description, of these rural images, that I cannot excuse myself, without repeating the whole passage.—Whisper it, some friendly *genius*, in the ear of every one, who is now sunk in sleep, and lost to all these refined gratifications!

Awake: the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls you: ye lose the prime, to mark how spring
The tended plants, how blows the citron-grove;
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed;
How Nature paints her colours; how the bee
Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweets.

How delightful is this fragrance! It is distributed in the nicest *proportion*; neither so strong, as to oppress the organs; nor so faint, as to elude them. We are soon cloyed at a sumptuous banquet; but this pleasure never loses its *poignancy*, never palls the appetite.—Here luxury itself is innocent; or rather, in this case, indulgence is incapable of excess.—This balmy entertainment, not only regales the *sense*, but † chears the very *soul*; and, instead of clogging, elates its powers.—It puts me in mind of that ever memorable sacrifice, which was once made in behalf of offending mortals, I mean the *sacrifice of the blessed* JESUS, when he offered up himself to GOD, "for a sweet-smelling sa-"vour." Such the Holy Spirit styles that wonderful oblation; as if no image, in the whole sensible creation, was so proper to give us an idea of the *ineffable satisfaction*, which the Father of mercies conceived from that unparalleled atonement, as the *pleasing sensations*, which such rich perfumes are capable of raising. "Thousands of rams, and ten thousands of "rivers of oil," from an apostate world; the most submissive acknowledgments, added to the most costly offerings, from men of defiled hands, and unclean lips; what could they have effected? A prophet represents the "high and lofty One, that inhabiteth "eternity," turning himself away from such filthy rags; turning himself away, with a disdainful abhorrence‡, as from the noisome streams of a dunghill.—But in CHRIST's immaculate holiness, in CHRIST's consummate obedience, in CHRIST's most precious blood-shedding, with what unimaginable complacency does justice rest satisfied, and vengeance acquiesce!—All thy *works*, O thou Surety for ruined sinners! all thy *sufferings*, O thou slaughtered Lamb of GOD! as well as all thy *garments*, O thou Bridegroom of thy church! *smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia*‖! They are infinitely more grateful to the eternal Godhead, than the choicest exhalations of the garden, than all the odours of the spicy east, can be to the human nostrils.

As the altar of old sanctified the gift; so this is the great propitiation, which recommends the obnoxious persons, and unprofitable services of the believing world. In *this* may my soul be interested! By *this* may it be reconciled to the Father!—There is such a leprous depravity cleaving to my nature, as pollutes whatever I perform. My most profound adorations, and sincerest acts of religion, must not presume to *challenge* a reward, but humbly *implore* forgiveness §. Renouncing,

* *Quicquid docetur, veritas; quicquid præcipitur, bonitas; quicquid promittitur, felicitas.*

* MILT. Par. Lost, b. v. l. 20.

† *Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart.* Prov. xxvii. 9.

‡ Amos v. 21. 22. ‖ Psal. xlv. 9.

§ A writer of distinguished superiority, *thus* addresses the great Observer of actions, and Searcher of hearts; and vindicates *my* sentiments, while he so justly and beautifully utters his own:

Look down, great GOD, with pity's softest eye,
On a poor breathing particle in dust,

His

therefore, myself in every inſtance of duty, diſclaiming all ſhadow of confidence * in any deeds of my own, may I now, and evermore, *be accepted through the Beloved!*

WHAT *colours*, what charming colours, are here! Theſe ſo nobly bold; and thoſe ſo delicately languid. What a glow is enkindled in ſome! what a gloſs ſhines upon others! In one, methinks, I ſee the ruby with her bleeding radiance; in another, the ſapphire with her ſky-tinctured blue; in all ſuch an exquiſite richneſs of dyes, as no other ſet of paintings in the univerſe can boaſt †.—With what a maſterly *ſkill* is every one of the varying tints *diſpoſed!* Here they ſeem to be thrown on with an eaſy daſh of ſecurity and freedom; there they are adjuſted by the niceſt touches of art and accuracy. Thoſe which form the ground, are always ſo judiciouſly choſen, as to heighten the luſtre of the ſuperadded figures; while the verdure of the impalement or the ſhadings of the foliage, impart new livelineſs to the whole. Indeed, whether they are blended or arranged, ſoftened or contraſted, they are manifeſtly under the conduct of a taſte that never miſtakes, a felicity that never falls ſhort of, the very perfection of elegance.—Fine, inimitably fine, is the *texture* of the web, on which theſe ſhining treaſures are diſplayed. What are the labours of the *Perſian* looms, or the boaſted commodities of *Bruſſels*, compared with theſe curious manufactures of nature? Compared with theſe, the moſt admired chintzes loſe their reputation; even ſuperfine cambricks appear coarſe as canvaſs in their preſence.

What a chearing argument does our Saviour derive from hence, to ſtrengthen our *affiance* in GOD! He directs us to learn a leſſon of heaven-depending faith, from every bird that wings the air, and from every flower that bloſſoms in the field. If Providence, with unremitted care, ſupports thoſe inferior creatures, and arrays theſe inſenſible beings with ſo much ſplendor; ſurely he will in nowiſe with-hold from his elect children, "bread to eat, and raiment to put on."—Ye faithful followers of the Lamb, diſmiſs every low *anxiety*, relating to the needful *ſuſtenance* of life. He that feeds the ravens from an inexhauſtible magazine; he that paints the plants with ſuch ſurpaſſing elegance; in ſhort, he that provides ſo liberally, both for the animal and vegetable parts of his creation; will not, cannot, neglect his own people.—*Fear not, little flock*, ye peculiar objects of almighty love! *it is your Father's good pleaſure to give you a kingdom* ‡. And, if he freely gives you an everlaſting kingdom hereafter, is it poſſible to ſuppoſe, that he will deny you any neceſſary conveniences here?

His crimes forgive; forgive his virtues too,
Thoſe *ſmaller faults, half-converts* to the right.
Night-Thoughts, No. IX.

* See page 44. and 45. in the *ſecond* edition of a moſt *candid* and *evangelical* little treatiſe, called CHRISTIANITY the great ORNAMENT of human life.——"If Chriſtians "happily avoid the *dangerous* extreme, and too often *fatal* "rock of a dead *fruitleſs* faith on the one hand, he (*i.e.* Satan) will endeavour, by all kind of plauſible inſinuations, "to ſplit them on the oppoſite, *viz.* ſpiritual pride, oſtentation, "and *dependence on their works*, as if THESE were the *meritorious* or *procuring* cauſe of all true peace, hope, conſolation, and divine acceptance.—Now, this *ſelf-dependence* "may be ranked among the *moſt dangerous* of the infernal po"litics, becauſe the fatal poiſon lies *deep*, and too often *un*"*diſcerned.*"

† ——*Who can paint*
Like Nature? *Can Imagination boaſt*,
Amid his gay creation, hues like theſe?
And can he mix them with that matchleſs ſkill,
And lay them on ſo delicately fine,
And loſe them in each other, as appears
In every bud that blows?—THOMS. Spring.

‡ Luke xii. 32.

OUR cannot forbear reflecting, in this place, on the too prevailing humour, of being fond and oſtentatious of *dreſs* *. What an abject and miſtaken ambition is this! How unworthy the dignity of *immortal*, and the wiſdom of *rational* beings! Eſpecially, ſince theſe little productions of the earth have indiſputably the pre-eminence in ſuch outward embelliſhments.—Go, clothe thyſelf with purple, and fine linen; trick thyſelf up in all the gay attire, which the ſhuttle or the needle can furniſh: yet know, to the mortification of thy vanity, that the *native* elegance of a common daiſy † eclipſes all this *elaborate* finery.—Nay, wert thou decked like ſome illuſtrious princeſs, on her coronation-day, in all the ſplendor of royal apparel; couldſt thou equal even *Solomon*, in the height of his magnificence and glory; yet would the meaneſt among the *flowery populace* outſhine thee. Every diſcerning eye would give the preference to theſe beauties of the ‖ ground.—Scorn then to borrow thy recommendations from a neat diſpoſition of threads, and a curious arrangement of colours. Aſſume a becoming greatneſs of temper. Let thy endowments be of the immortal kind. Study to be *all-glorious within*. Be clothed with humility. Wear the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit §. To ſay all in a word, *Put on the* LORD JESUS CHRIST §.

* Mr *Addiſon* has a fine remark on a female warrior, celebrated by *Virgil*. He obſerves, that, with all her other great qualities, this *little foible* mingled itſelf; becauſe, as the poet relates, an intemperate fondneſs for a rich and ſplendid ſuit of armour betrayed her into ruin. In this circumſtance, our critic diſcovers a *moral* concealed; this he admires, as a neat, though oblique *ſatire*, on that trifling paſſion. *Spect.* vol. I. No. 15.

I would refer it to the judicious reader, whether there is not a beauty of the *ſame* kind, but touched with a *more* maſterly hand, in the ſong of *Deborah*.—Speaking of *Siſera*'s mother, the ſacred euchariſtic ode repreſents her as anticipating, in her fond fancy, the victory of her ſon; and indulging the following ſoliloquy:—*Have they not ſped? have they not divided the prey? to* Siſera *a prey of divers colours; a prey of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work on both ſides; meet for the necks of them that take the ſpoil?*—She takes no notice of the ſignal ſervice, which her hero would do to his country, by quelling ſo dangerous an inſurrection. She never reflects on the *preſent* acclamations, the *future* advancement, and the *eternal* renown, which are the tribute uſually paid to a conqueror's merit. She can conceive, it ſeems, nothing greater, than to be clad in an embroidered veſture; and to trail along the ground, a robe of the richeſt dyes. This is in *her* imagination, the moſt lordly ſpoil he can win; the moſt ſtately trophy he can erect.—It is alſo obſervable, how ſhe *dwells* upon the trivial circumſtance, reiterating it again and again. It has ſo charmed her ignoble heart, ſo entirely engroſſed her little views, that ſhe can *think* of nothing elſe, *ſpeak* of nothing elſe, and can hardly ever *drift* from the darling topic.—Is not this a keen, though delicately touched cenſure, on that poor contemptible, grovelling taſte, which is enamoured with ſilken finery, and makes the *attributes* of a butterfly the *idol* of its affections.

How conſpicuous is the elevated and magnificent ſpirit of that venerable *mother* in *Iſrael*, when viewed in compariſon with the low, the deſpicable turn of this *Canaaniſh lady*!—Such ſtrong and beautiful *contraſts* are, I think, ſome of the moſt ſtriking excellencies of poetic painting: and in no book are they more frequently uſed, or expreſſed with greater life, than in the *ſacred* volumes of inſpiration.

† Peaceful and lowly in their native ſoil,
They neither know to ſpin, nor care to toil;
Yet with confeſs'd magnificence deride
Our mean attire, and impotence of pride. PRIOR.

‡ Mr *Cowley*, with his uſual brilliancy of imagination, ſtyles them *ſtars of earth*.

‖ How beautifully does the prophet deſcribe the *furniture* of a renewed and heavenly *mind*, under the ſimilitude of a rich and complete *ſuit* of *apparel*! *I will greatly rejoice in the* LORD; *my ſoul ſhall be joyful in my* GOD; *for he hath clothed me with the garments of ſalvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs, as a bridegroom decketh himſelf with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herſelf with her jewels.* Iſ. lxi. 10.

§ Rom. xiii. 14.

let

let his *blood* be ſprinkled upon thy conſcience, and it ſhall be whiter than the virgin-ſnows. Let his *righteouſneſs*, like a ſpotleſs robe, adorn thy inner man; and thou ſhalt be amiable, even in the moſt diſtinguiſhing eye of GOD. Let his bleſſed *Spirit* dwell in thy heart; and, under his ſanctifying operations, thou ſhalt be made partaker of a divine nature.

Theſe are real excellencies; truly noble accompliſhments theſe. In this manner be arrayed, be beautified; and thou wilt not find a rival in the feathers of a peacock, or the foliation of a tulip. Theſe will exalt thee far above the *low pretenſions* of lace and embroidery. Theſe will prepare thee to ſtand in the beatific preſence, and take thy ſeat among the angels of light.

WHAT an enchanting *ſituation* is this! One can ſcarce be melancholy within the atmoſphere of flowers. Such lively hues, and delicious odours, not only addreſs themſelves agreeably to the ſenſes; but touch, with a ſurpriſing delicacy, the ſweeteſt movements of the mind:

> ——*To the heart inſpiring*
> *Vernal delight and joy.* MILT. b. iv.

How often have I felt them diſſipate the *gloom* of thought, and tranſfuſe a ſudden gaiety through the dejected ſpirit! I cannot wonder, that kings deſcend from their *thrones*, to walk amidſt blooming ivory and gold; or retire from the moſt ſumptuous feaſt, to be recreated with the more refined ſweets of the garden. I cannot wonder that queens forego, for a while, the compliments of a nation, to receive the tribute of the parterre; or withdraw from all the glitter of a *court*, to be attended with the more ſplendid *equipage* of a bed of flowers.—But if this be ſo pleaſing, what tranſporting pleaſure muſt ariſe from the fruition of uncreated excellency! O! what unknown delight, to enter into thy *immediate preſence*, moſt bleſſed LORD GOD! to ſee thee †, thou King of heaven, and LORD of glory, no longer "through a glaſs darkly, but face "to face!" to have all thy goodneſs, all thy greatneſs, ſhine before us; and be made glad for ever with the brighteſt diſcovery of thy perfections, with the ineffable joy of thy countenance.

This we cannot bear, in our preſent imperfect ſtate. The effulgence of unveiled divinity would dazzle a mortal ſight. Our feeble faculties would be *overwhelmed* with ſuch a fullneſs of ſuperabundant bliſs; and muſt lie *oppreſſed* under ſuch an exceeding great, eternal *weight* of glory.—But, when this corruptible hath put on incorruption, the powers of the ſoul will be greatly invigorated; and the earthly tabernacles will be transformed into the likeneſs of CHRIST's glorious body. Then, though "the moon ſhall be confounded, and the ſun aſhamed *," when the LORD of hoſts is revealed from heaven; yet ſhall his faithful people be enabled to *ſee him as he is* †.

Here then, my wiſhes, here be fixed. Be *this* your determined and invariable aim.——Here, my affections, here give a-looſe to your whole ardor. Cry out, in the language of inſpiration, *This one thing have I deſired of the* LORD, *which*, with inceſſant earneſtneſs, *I will require; that I may dwell in the* celeſtial *houſe of the* LORD, *all the days of my* future *life; to behold the* fair *beauty of the* LORD ‡, and to contemplate, with wonder and adoration—with unſpeakable and everlaſting rapture—all the attributes of the incomprehenſible Godhead.

SOLOMON, a moſt penetrating judge of human nature, knowing how highly mankind is charmed with the fine qualities of flowers, has figured out the bleſſed JESUS, that "faireſt among ten thouſand," by theſe lovely repreſentatives. He ſtyles him ‖ *the roſe of Sharon*, and *the lily of the vallies* §; like the firſt, full of delights, and communicable graces; like the laſt, exalted in majeſty, and complete in beauty.—In that ſacred paſtoral, he ranges the creation; borrows its moſt finiſhed forms; and dips his pencil in its choiceſt dyes, to preſent us with a ſketch of the amiableneſs of his perſon: his amiableneſs, who is the light of the world; the glory of his church; the only hope, the ſovereign conſolation of ſinners; and exalted, infinitely exalted, not only above the ſublimeſt compariſon, but even "above all bleſſing and praiſe."—May I alſo make the ſame heavenly uſe of all ſublunary enjoyments! Whatever is pleaſurable or charming *below*, let it raiſe my deſire to thoſe delectable objects, which are *above*; which will yield, not partial, but perfect felicity; not tranſient, but never-ending, ſatisfaction and joy.—Yes, my ſoul, let theſe beauties in *miniature* always remind thee of that glorious perſon, in whom "dwells all the "*fulneſs* of the Godhead bodily." Let theſe little emanations teach thee to thirſt after the eternal fountain. O! may the creatures be thy conſtant clue to the Creator! For this is a certain truth, and deſerves thy frequent recollection, demands thy moſt attentive conſideration; that the whole compaſs of finite perfection, is only a faint *ray* ¶, ſhot from that immenſe ſource;—is only a ſmall *drop*, derived from that inexhauſtible ocean—of all good.

WHAT a ſurpriſing *variety* is obſervable among the flowery tribes! How has the bountiful hand of Providence diverſified theſe niceſt pieces of his workmanſhip! added the charms of an endleſs novelty, to all their other perfections!——A conſtant uniformity would

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* "I would have my reader endeavour to MORALIZE "this natural pleaſure of the ſoul, and to improve this *vernal* "*delight*, as *Milton* calls it, into a *Chriſtian virtue*. When "we find ourſelves inſpired with this pleaſing inſtinct, this "ſecret ſatisfaction and complacency, ariſing from the beauties "of the creation, let us conſider, to *whom* we ſtand indebted "for all theſe entertainments of ſenſe; and *who* it is that "thus opens his hand, and fills the world with good.—Such "an habitual diſpoſition of mind *conſecrates* every field and "wood, turns an *ordinary walk* into a morning and evening "ſacrifice; and will improve thoſe tranſient gleams, which "naturally brighten up and refreſh the ſoul on ſuch occaſions, "into an inviolable and perpetual ſtate of bliſs and happi"neſs." *Spect.* vol. V. No. 394.

† *Iſaiah* repreſents the felicity of the righteous, in the everlaſting world, by this elegant and amiable image; *Thine eyes ſhall ſee the King in his beauty.*—*Milton* touches the ſame ſubject, with wonderful elevation and majeſty of thought:

> ——*They walk with GOD,*
> *High in ſalvation, and the climes of bliſs.*

Words, which, like the fiery car, almoſt tranſport our affections to thoſe glorious abodes.

Iſ. xxxiii. 17. MILT. b. XI. v. 707.

‡ Pſal. xxvii. 4. ‖ Cant. ii. 1.

> *Malus ut arboribus decori eſt, ut vitibus uvæ,*
> *Utque roſæ campis, ut lilia vallibus alba,*
> *Sic* CHRISTUS *decus omne ſuis.*——

§ By the *lily of the vallies*, I apprehend, is meant, not the flower which commonly paſſes under that denomination, and is comparatively mean; but the grand, majeſtic, garden-lily, growing in a rich, irriguous ſoil, where it flouriſhes in the moſt ample manner, and arrives at the higheſt perfection. The circumſtance of the vallies, added by the ſacred writer, is ſignificant not of the *ſpecies*, but of the *place*.—This is by far the nobleſt interpretation, and moſt exactly ſuitable to the ſpiritual ſenſe; which intimates, that the bleſſed JESUS delights to dwell, by the communications of his Spirit, in *humble* hearts. שושנת העמקים *lilium vallibus gaudens.*

¶ —Thou ſitt'ſt above all heav'ns,
To us inviſible, or *dimly ſeen*
In theſe thy loweſt works; yet theſe declare
Thy goodneſs beyond thought, and pow'r divine.
MILT. book v.

soon render the entertainment tiresome, or insipid; therefore every species is formed on a separate plan, and exhibits something entirely *new*. The fashion spreads not from family to family; but every one has a mode of its own, which is truly original. The most cursory glance perceives an apparent difference, as well as a peculiar delicacy, in the *airs* and *habits*, the *attitude* and *lineaments*, of every distinct class.

Some rear their heads with a majestic mien, and overlook, like *sovereigns* or *nobles*, the whole parterre. Others seem more moderate in their aims, and advance only to the middle stations; a genius turned for heraldry might term them the *gentry* of the border. While others, free from all aspiring views, creep unambitiously on the ground, and look like the *commonalty* of the kind.—Some are interfected with elegant *stripes*, or studded with radiant *spots*. Some affect to be genteelly *powdered*, or neatly *fringed*; while others are plain in their aspect, unaffected in their dress, and content to please with a naked *simplicity*. Some assume the monarch's *purple*; some look most becoming in the virgin's *white*; but *black*, doleful black, has no admittance into the wardrobe of spring. The weeds of mourning would be a manifest indecorum, when nature holds an universal festival. She would now inspire none but delightful ideas, and therefore always makes her appearance in some * amiable suit.—Here *stands* a warrior, clad with crimson; there *sits* a magistrate, robed in scarlet; and yonder *struts* a pretty fellow, that seems to have dipped his plumes in the rainbow, and glitters in all the gay colours of that resplendent arch. Some *rise* into a curious cup, or *fall* into a set of beautiful bells. Some spread themselves in a swelling tuft, or *crowd* into a delicious cluster.—In some, the predominant stain softens by the gentlest *diminutions*, till it has even stole away from itself. The eye is amused at the agreeable delusion; and we wonder to find ourselves insensibly decoyed into a quite different lustre. In others, you would think, the fine tinges were emulous of pre-eminence. Disdaining to mingle, they *confront* one another with the resolution of rivals, determined to dispute the prize of beauty; while each is improved, by the opposition, into the highest vivacity of complexion.

How manifold are thy works †, O LORD! Multiplied even to a prodigy. Yet *in wisdom*, consummate wisdom, *hast thou made them all*.—How I admire the *vastness* of the contrivance, and the *exactness* of the execution! Man, feeble man, with difficulty accomplishes a single work. Hardly, and after many efforts, does he arrive at a tolerable imitation of some one production of nature. But the almighty Artist spoke millions of substances into instantaneous being; the whole collection wonderfully various, and each individual completely perfect.—Repeated experiments generally, I might say always, discover errors or defects in *our* happiest inventions. Nay, what wins our approbation, at the present hour, or in this particular place, is very probably, in some remote period, or some distant clime, treated with contempt. Whereas, *these* fine structures have pleased every taste, in every country, for almost six thousand years. Nor has any ‡ fault been detected in the original plan, nor any room left for the least improvement upon the first model.—All our performances, the more *minutely* they are scanned, the more *imperfect* they appear. With regard to these delicate objects, the more we search into their properties, the more we are ravished with their graces. They are sure to disclose fresh strokes of the most masterly skill, in proportion to the attention with which they are examined.

Nor is the *simplicity* of the *operation* less astonishing, than the accuracy of the workmanship, or the infinitude of the effects. Should you ask, "Where, and "what are the materials which beautify the blooming "world? What rich tints, what splendid dyes, what stores "of shining crayons, stand by the heavenly Limner, "when he paints the robe of nature?" 'Tis answered, His powerful pencil needs no such costly apparatus. A single principle, under his conducting hand, branches out into an immensity of the most varied, and most finished forms. The *moisture* of the earth, and of the circumambient air, passed through proper strainers, and disposed in a range of pellucid tubes; this performs all the wonders, and produces all the beauties, of vegetation. This *creeps* along the fibres of the low-spread moss, and *climbs* to the very tops of the lofty waving cedars. This, attracted by the root, and circulating through invisible canals; this burls into germs, expands itself into leaves, and clothes the forest with all its verdant honours.—This one *, *plain* and *simple* cause, gives birth to all the charms, which deck the youth and maturity of the year. This *blushes* in the early hepatica, and *flames* in the late-advancing poppy. This *reddens* into blood in the veins of the mulberry; and *attenuates* itself into leafen gold, to create a covering for the quince. This *breathes* in all the fragrant gales of our garden, and *weeps* odorous gum in the groves of *Arabia*.—So † *wonderful* is our Creator *in counsel*, and *so excellent in working!*

In a grove of tulips, or a knot of pinks, one perceives a difference in almost every individual. Scarce any two are turned and tinctured exactly alike. Each allows himself a little *particularity* in his *dress*, though all belong to one family: so that they are various, and yet the same.—A pretty emblem this of the *smaller differences* between Protestant Christians. There are modes in religion, which admit of variation, without prejudice to sound faith, or real holiness. Just as the drapery on these pictures of the spring, may be formed after a variety of patterns, without blemishing their beauty, or altering their nature.—Be it so then, that, in some points of inconsiderable consequence, several of our brethren dissent: yet let us all live amicably and sociably together; for we harmonize in *principles*, though we vary in *punctilios*. Let us join in conversation, and intermingle interests; discover no estrangement of behaviour, and cherish no alienation of affection. If any strife subsists, let it be to follow our divine Master most closely, in humility of heart, and unblameableness of life. Let it be to serve one another most readily, in all the kind offices of a cordial friendship. Thus shall she be *united*, though *distinguished*; united in the same grand fundamentals, though distinguished by some small circumstantials; united in one important bond of brotherly love, though distinguished by some slighter peculiarities of sentiment.

Between Christians, whose judgments disagree only about a form of prayer, or manner of worship, I apprehend, there is no more *essential* difference, than between flowers which bloom from the same kind of seed, but happen to be somewhat diversified in the mixture of their colours.—Whereas, if *one* denies the divinity of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and degrades the incarnate GOD to the meanness of a mere creature; if *another* cries up the worthiness of human works, and depreciates the alone-meritorious righteousness of

* —*Nunc formosissimus annus.* VIRG. † Psal. civ. 24.

‡ Eccles. iii. 14. *I know, that whatsoever* GOD *doth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be added to it, nor any thing taken from it.*

* "When every several effect has a particular separate cause, "this gives no pleasure to the spectator, as not discovering con-"trivance. But that work is beheld with admiration and delight, "as the result of deep counsel, which is *compleated* in its *parts*, "and yet *simple* in its *operations*: where a great variety of ef-"fects are seen to arise from one principle operating uniform-"ly." ABERNETHY *on the attributes.*

† Is. xxviii. 29.

the glorious Mediator; if a *third* addreſſes the incommunicable honours to a finite being, and bows to the image, or prays to the ſaint;—theſe are errors, extremely derogatory to the REDEEMER's dignity, and not a little prejudicial to the comfort of his people. Againſt theſe to remonſtrate; againſt theſe to urge every argument, and uſe every diſſuaſive; beſpeaks not the cenſorious bigot, but the friend of truth, and the lover of mankind.—Whereas, to ſtand neuter and ſilent, while ſuch principles are propagated, would be an inſtance of criminal remiſſneſs, rather than of Chriſtian moderation.—For the *perſons*, we will not fail to maintain a tender compaſſion; we will not ceaſe to put up earneſt interceſſions; we will alſo acknowledge and love whatever is excellent and amiable in their character. Yet we dare not ſubſcribe their *creed*; we cannot remit our aſſiduous, but kind endeavours, if by any means we may reconcile them to a more *ſcriptural* belief, and a *purer* worſhip *.

ANOTHER circumſtance, recommending and endearing the flowery creation, is their *regular ſucceſſion*. They make not their appearance all at once, but in an orderly rotation. While a proper number of theſe obliging retainers are in waiting, the others abſcond; but hold themſelves in a poſture of ſervice, ready to take their turn, and fill each his reſpective ſtation, the inſtant it becomes vacant.—The *ſnowdrop*, foremoſt of the lovely train, breaks her way through the frozen ſoil, in order to preſent her early compliments to her lord. Dreſſed in the robe of innocency, ſhe ſteps forth, fearleſs of danger; long before the trees have ventured to unfold their leaves, even while the icicles are pendent on our houſes.—Next, peeps out the *crocus*, but cautiouſly, and with an air of timidity. She hears the howling blaſts, and ſkulks cloſe to her low ſituation. Afraid ſhe ſeems to make large excurſions from her root, while ſo many ruffian winds are abroad, and ſcouring along the æther.—Nor is the *violet* laſt, in this ſhining embaſſy of the year; which, with all the embelliſhments that would grace a royal garden, condeſcends to line our hedges, and grow at the feet of briers. Freely, and without any ſolicitation, ſhe diſtributes the bounty of her emiſſive ſweets: while herſelf, with an exemplary humility, retires from ſight; ſeeking rather to adminiſter pleaſure, than to win admiration †. Emblem, expreſſive emblem, of thoſe *modeſt* virtues which delight to bloom in obſcurity; which extend a chearing influence to multitudes, who are ſcarce acquainted with the ſource of their comfort! Motive, engaging motive, to that *ever-active* beneficence, which ſtays not for the importunity of the diſtreſſed, but anticipates their ſuit, and prevents them with the bleſſings of its goodneſs!—The poor *polyanthus*, that lately adorned the border with her ſparkling beauties, and, tranſplanted into our windows, gave us a freſh entertainment, is now no more. I ſaw her complexion fade; I perceived her breath decay; till at length ſhe expired, and dropt into her grave.—Scarce have we ſuſtained this loſs, but in comes the *auricula*, and more than retrieves it. Arrayed ſhe comes, in a ſplendid variety of amiable forms; with an eye of cryſtal, and garments of the moſt gloſſy ſatin; exhaling perfume, and powdered with ſilver. A very diſtinguiſhed proceſſion this! The favourite care of the floriſt! Scarce one among them, but is dignified with a character of renown, or has the honour to repreſent ſome celebrated toaſt. But theſe alſo, notwithſtanding their illuſtrious titles, have exhauſted their whole ſtock of fragrance, and are mingled with the meaneſt duſt.—Who could forbear grieving at their departure, did not the *tulips* begin to raiſe themſelves on their fine wands, or ſtately ſtalks? They flaſh the parterre with one of the gayeſt dreſſes that blooming nature wears. Did ever *beau* or *belle* make ſo gaudy an appearance, in a birth-night ſuit? Here one may behold the innocent wantonneſs of beauty. Here ſhe indulges a thouſand freaks, and ſports herſelf in the moſt charming diverſity of colours. Yet I ſhould wrong her, were I to call her a *coquet*; becauſe ſhe plays her lovely changes, not to enkindle diſſolute affections, but to diſplay her Creator's glory.—Soon ariſes the *anemone*; encircled at the bottom with a ſpreading robe, and rounded at the top into a beautiful dome. In its looſely-flowing mantle, you may obſerve a noble negligence; in its gently-bending tufts, the niceſt ſymmetry. I would term it the *fine gentleman* of the garden; becauſe it ſeems to have learned the ſingular addreſs of uniting ſimplicity with refinement, of reconciling art and eaſe.—The ſame month has the merit of producing the *ranunculus*. All bold and graceful, it expands the riches of its foliage; and acquires, by degrees, the lovlieſt enamel in the world. As perſons of intrinſic worth diſdain the ſuperficial arts of recommendation, practiſed by *fops*; ſo this lordly flower ſcorns to borrow any of its excellence from powders and eſſences. It needs no ſuch attractives, to render it the darling of the curious; being ſufficiently engaging from the elegance of its figure, the radiant variety of its tinges, and a certain ſuperior dignity of aſpect. Methinks nature improves in her operations. Her lateſt ſtrokes are moſt maſterly. To crown the collection, ſhe introduces the *carnation*; which captivates every eye, with a noble ſpread of graces; and charms another ſenſe, with a profuſion of exquiſite odours. This ſingle flower has centered in itſelf, the perfections of all the preceding. The moment it appears, it ſo commands our attention, that we ſcarce regret the abſence of the reſt.——The *gillyflower*, like a real friend, attends you through all the viciſſitudes and alterations of the ſeaſon. While others make a tranſient viſit only, this is rather an inhabitant, than a gueſt in your gardens; adds *fidelity* to *complaiſance*.

It is in vain to attempt a catalogue of theſe amiable gifts. There is an endleſs *multiplicity* in their characters, yet an invariable *order* in their approaches. Every month, almoſt every week, has its peculiar ornaments; not ſervilely copying the works of its predeceſſor, but forming, ſtill forming, and ſtill executing ſome new deſign. So laviſh is the fancy, yet ſo exact the proceſs, of nature!

Here let me ſtand a while, to contemplate this *diſtribution* of flowers, through the ſeveral periods of the year.—Were they all to bloſſom together, there would be at once a promiſcuous throng, and at once a total *privation*. We ſhould ſcarce have an opportunity of adverting to the dainty qualities of half; and muſt ſoon loſe the agreeable company of them all. But now ſince every ſpecies has a ſeparate poſt to occupy, and a diſtinct interval for appearing, we can take a leiſurely and minute ſurvey of each ſucceeding ſet. We can view and review their forms; enter into a more intimate acquaintance with their charming accompliſhments; and receive all thoſe pleaſing ſervices, which they are commiſſioned to yield.—This remarkable piece of œconomy, is productive of another very valuable effect. It not only places in the moſt advantageous light, every particular community; but is alſo a ſure proviſionary reſource againſt the frailty of the whole nation.

* In ſome former editions, I expreſſed myſelf, on this point, *unguardedly* and *harſhly*. But my meaning, and real ſentiments, were no other than thoſe repreſented above.—The reader, from ſuch unguarded intimations, might too naturally be led to conclude, that the author avows, and would ſtir up, a ſpirit of *perſecution*. But this is a method of dealing with opponents in religious doctrines, which he diſclaims, as abſurd; and abhors, as iniquitous. He is for no force, but that of rational conviction; for no conſtraint, but that of affectionate perſuaſion. *Thus*, if you pleaſe, *compel them to come in*, Luke xiv. 23.

† *Prodeſſe quam conſpici.*

nation. Or, to ſpeak more truly, it renders the flowery tribes a ſort of * *immortal* corps. For though ſome are continually dropping; yet, by this expedient, others are as continually riſing, to beautify our borders, and prolong the entertainment.

WHAT *goodneſs* is this, to provide ſuch a ſeries of gratifications for mankind! both to diverſify, and perpetuate, the fine collation! to take care, that our paths ſhould be, in a manner, inceſſantly ſtrewed with flowers!—And what *wiſdom*, to bid every one of theſe inſenſible beings know the preciſe juncture for their coming forth! inſomuch that no actor on a ſtage can be more exact in performing his part; can make a more regular entry, or a more punctual exit.

WHO emboldens the *daffodil* to venture abroad in *February*, and to truſt her flowering gold with inclement and treacherous ſkies? Who informs the various tribes of *fruit-bearing bloſſoms*, that vernal ſuns, and a more genial warmth, are fitteſt for their delicate texture? Who teaches the *clove* to ſtay, till hotter beams are prepared, to infuſe a ſpicy richneſs into her odours, and tincture her complexion with the deepeſt crimſon?—Who diſpoſes theſe beautiful troops into ſuch orderly bodies, *retarding* ſome, and *accelerating* others? Who has inſtructed them to *file off*, with ſuch perfect regularity, as ſoon as the duty of their reſpective ſtation is over? And, when one detachment retires, who gives the ſignal for another immediately to *advance*? Who, but that unerring Providence, which, from the higheſt thrones of angels, to the very loweſt degrees of exiſtence, orders all things in "number, weight, "and meaſure!"

Theſe, O my ſoul, are the regulations of that moſt adorable, that moſt beneficient Being, who bowed the heavens; came down to dwell on earth; and united the *frailty* of thy mortal nature, to all the *glories* of his Godhead. All the honour of this admirable eſtabliſhment belongs to thy Ranſom, thy Surety, thy Saviour. To HIM it belongs, who ſuſtained the *vengeance*, which thou hadſt deſerved, and waſt doomed to ſuffer; who fulfilled the *obedience*, which thou waſt obliged but unable to perform; and who humbled himſelf (ſtupendous, ineffable loving-kindneſs!) humbled himſelf to death, even the death of the croſs.—HE formed this vaſt machine, and adjuſted its nice dependencies. The pillars that ſupport it, the embelliſhments that adorn it, and the laws that govern it, are the reſult of his unſearchable counſels. O! the *heights* of his majeſty, and the *depths* of his abaſement!

Which ſhall we admire moſt, his eſſential *greatneſs*, or his free *grace*? He created the exalted ſeraph, that ſings in glory; and every the minuteſt inſect, that flutters in air, or crawls in duſt. He marks out a path for all thoſe globes of light, which travel the circuit of the ſkies; and diſdains not to rear the violet from its lowly bed, or to plait the daiſy which dreſſes our plains. So *grand* are his operations; yet ſo *condeſcending* his regards!—If ſummer, like a ſparkling bride, is brilliant and glorious in her apparel; what is this, but a feeble reflection of his uncreated *effulgence*? If autumn, like a munificent hoſt, opens her ſtores, and gives us all things richly to enjoy; what is this but a little taſte of his inexhauſtible *liberality*? If thunders roar, you hear the ſound of his trumpet; if lightnings glare, you ſee the launching of his glittering ſpear: if "the perpetual hills be ſcattered, and the "everlaſting mountains bowed," you behold a *diſplay*;—no, ſays the prophet, you have rather *the hiding of his power* †. So immenſe is his power, ſo uncontrollable and inconceivable, that all theſe mighty works are but a *ſketch*, in which more is concealed than diſcovered.

Thus, I think, we ſhould always view the viſible ſyſtem, with an evangelical *teleſcope*, (if I may be allowed the expreſſion) and with an evangelical *microſcope*; regarding CHRIST JESUS as the great projector and architect; who planned, and executed, the amazing ſcheme. Whatever is magnificent or valuable, tremendous or amiable, ſhould ever be aſcribed to the Redeemer. This is the Chriſtian's *natural philoſophy*. With regard to this method of conſidering the things that are ſeen, we have an inſpired apoſtle for our preceptor and precedent. Speaking of CHRIST, he ſays, "Thou, LORD, in the beginning, haſt laid the "foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the "work of thy hands."—Did we carefully attend to this leading principle, in all our examinations of nature; it would, doubtleſs, be a moſt powerful means of *enkindling* our love, and † *ſtrengthening* our faith. When I look round upon millions of noble ſubſtances,

* In alluſion to the celebrated practice of the *Perſian* kings; "who maintained, for their lifeguard, a body of troops, called "*Immortal*; becauſe it perpetually ſubſiſted; for as ſoon as any "of the men died, another was immediately put into his place." ROLLIN'S *ancient hiſtory*, vol. II.

† *Hab.* iii. 4. Nothing can be more magnificently conceived, than the *imagery* of this whole chapter; and, upon the foot of our interpretation, nothing was ever more delicately and nobly turned, than the *ſentiment* of this clauſe. Other ſenſes of the paſſage, I acknowledge, may be aſſigned with equal propriety. But none, I think, can be imagined ſo *majeſtic* and *ſublime*. As the original will fairly admit of it; as it carries no diſagreement with the context; and expreſſes a moſt important, as well as undoubted truth; I hope, I may be permitted to uſe it, at leaſt by way of accommodation.—Eſpecially, as it ſuggeſts one of the fineſt *mottos* imaginable, wherewith to inſcribe all the viſible productions of the Creator's hand. When, ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, we conſider their grandeur, beauty, and conſummate perfections; let us, in juſtice to their author, apply the exalted reflection of this ſacred ode: "In all theſe *is the hiding*, rather than an adequate "diſplay, *of his* matchleſs *power*. Though they challenge our "praiſe, and ſurpaſs our comprehenſion; yet are they by no "means the utmoſt exertions, but rather ſome ſlighter eſſays, "of omnipotent ſkill."—*Milton*, relating the overthrow of the fallen angels, introduces a grand circumſtance, not much unlike the preceding. *Meſſiah*, unaided and alone, had routed an innumerable hoſt of apoſtate ſpirits. This was great and marvellous. But to create a juſter idea of the illuſtrious Conqueror, our poet beautifully adds,

Yet half his ſtrength he put not forth.

If we forget to make the ſame remark, when we contemplate GOD in his works; we muſt neceſſarily form very ſcanty conceptions of that SUPREME BEING, before whom all nations are as a "drop of a bucket, and are counted as the ſmall "duſt of the balance."

† The apoſtles, I obſerve, delight to uſe this method of diſplaying the *honours* of the Redeemer, and eſtabliſhing the *faith* of his people.—The beloved diſciple, teaching that moſt precious doctrine, "of a Lamb ſlain to take away the ſins of the "world;" in order to evince the ſufficiency of CHRIST'S ſacrifice for this bleſſed purpoſe, affirms, that *all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing*, no, not ſo much as one ſingle being, *made*, John i. 3.—St *Paul*, preaching the ſame glad tidings to the *Coloſſians*, and expreſsly maintaining, that we have redemption through his blood, ſeems to foreſee an objection of this kind. "To expiate tranſgreſſions againſt "an infinite Majeſty, is a moſt prodigious act. It muſt coſt "vaſtly more than any common ſurety can pay, to redeem a "ſinful world. What reaſon have we to believe, that JESUS "is equal to this mighty undertaking?" All poſſible reaſon, replies the apoſtle, from the dignity of his perſon, for he is *the image of the inviſible* GOD; and from the greatneſs of his works, for *by him all things were made*. Conſider the operations of his hands, and you cannot doubt the atoning efficacy of his death, *Col.* i. 15. 16.—The author of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews* falls exactly into the ſame train of arguing. Declaring, that CHRIST JESUS has purged our ſins by the ſacrifice of himſelf, he proves his ample ability for this tremendous office, from his eſſential excellence, becauſe he is the *brightneſs of his Father's glory*; and from his admirable works, becauſe *he made the worlds; and upholdeth all things by the word of*

and carry with me this transporting reflection, "The "Maker of them all expired on a cross for me!" how can I remain any longer indifferent? Must not the *coldeſt* heart begin to glow with gratitude?—When I ſurvey an immenſity of the fineſt productions imaginable, and remember, that the Author of them all is "my righteouſneſs and my redemption;" how can I chuſe but repoſe the moſt *chearful* confidence in ſuch a Mediator?

Let me add one more remark, upon the admirable *adjuſtment* of every particular relating to theſe fine colonies planted in the parterre.—With ſuch accuracy and correctneſs is their ſtructure finiſhed, that any the leaſt conceivable alteration would very much impair their perfection. Should you ſee, for inſtance, the nice diſpoſition of the *tulip*'s attire fly abroad, diſorderly and irregular, like the flaunting *woodbine*; ſhould the *jeſſamine* rear her diminutive head, on thoſe grand columns which ſupport the *hollyhock*; ſhould the erect and manly aſpect of the *piony* hang down with a penſive air, like the flexile bells of the *hyacinth*; ſhould that noble plainneſs which diſtinguiſhes the *lily*, be exchanged for the glittering fringes which edge the *pink*, or the gaudy ſtains which bedrop the *iris*; ſhould thoſe tapering pillars which ariſe in the middle of its vaſe, and, tipt with golden pendants, give ſuch a luſtre to the ſurrounding pannels of alabaſter,—ſhould thoſe ſink and diſappear, like the chives which cover the heart of the anemone—in many of theſe caſes, would not the tranſpoſition be fantaſtical and aukward? in all to the apparent *prejudice* of every individual?

Again, with regard to the *time* of their appearing, this circumſtance is ſettled, by a remarkable foreſight and precaution. What would become of the *ſailor*, if, in very ſtormy weather, he ſhould raiſe a lofty maſt, and croud it with all his canvaſs? Such would be the ill effect, if the moſt ſtately ſpecies of flowers ſhould preſume to come abroad, in the bluſtering months. Alas! how would they rue the imprudent boldneſs! Therefore thoſe only that ſhoot the ſhorteſt ſtems, and diſplay the ſmalleſt ſpread of leaves, or, (if you pleaſe) carry the leaſt ſail, are launched amidſt the blowing ſeaſons.—How injudiciouſly would the *perfumer* act, if he ſhould unſeal his fineſt eſſences, and expoſe them to the northern winds, or wintry rains! Our blooming artiſts, of the aromatic profeſſion, at leaſt the moſt delicate among them, ſeem perfectly aware of the conſequences of ſuch a procedure. Accordingly they poſtpone the opening of their odoriferous treaſures, till a ſerener air, and more * unclouded ſkies, grant a protection to their amiable traffic; till they are under no more apprehenſions of having their ſpicy cells rifled by rude blaſts, or drowned in inceſſant ſhowers.

What a ſtriking argument is here for *reſignation*; unfeigned reſignation, to all the diſpoſals of *Providence*! Too often are our diſſatisfied thoughts apt to find fault with divine diſpenſations. We tacitly arraign our Maker's conduct, or queſtion his kindneſs with regard to ourſelves. We fancy our lot not ſo commodiouſly ſituated, or our condition not ſo happily circumſtanced, as if we had been placed in ſome other ſtation of life.—But let us behold this exquiſitely nice regulation of the *minuteſt* plants, and be aſhamed of our *repining* folly. Could any fibre in their compoſition be altered, or one line in their features be tranſpoſed, without clouding ſome of their beauties? Could any fold in their veſtments be varied, or any link in their orderly ſucceſſion be broken, without injuring ſome delicate property? And does not that all-ſeeing eye, which preſerves ſo exact a harmony among theſe *pretty toys*, maintain as watchful a care over his *rational creatures*? Does he chuſe the propereſt ſeaſon for the cowſlip to ariſe, and drink the dews? And can he neglect the concerns, or miſjudge the conveniencies, of his ſons and daughters? He, who has ſo completely diſpoſed whatever pertains to the vegetable œconomy, that the leaſt diminution or addition would certainly hurt the finiſhed ſcheme, does, without all peradventure, preſide, with equal attention, over the intereſts of his own people.

Be ſtill, then, thou uneaſy mortal*; know, that GOD is unerringly wiſe; and be aſſured, that, amidſt the greateſt multiplicity of beings, he does not overlook thee. Thy Saviour has given me authority to aſſert, that thou art of far ſuperior value, in the eſtimate of Omnipotence, than all the herbage of the field.—If his ſacred will ordains *ſickneſs* for thy portion, never dare to imagine, that uninterrupted health would be more advantageous. If he pleaſes to with-hold, or take away, *children*; never preſume to conclude, that thy happineſs is blaſted, becauſe thy hopes of an increaſing family are diſappointed. He, that marſhals all the ſtarry hoſt, and ſo accurately arranges every the meaneſt ſpecies of herbs; HE orders all the *peculiarities*, all the *changes* of thy ſtate, with a vigilance that nothing can elude, with a goodneſs that endureth for ever.—Bow thy head, therefore, in humble acquieſcence. Reſt ſatisfied, That *whatever is* by the appointment of heaven †, *is right*, is beſt.

Come then, thou ſweetly-bluſhing flow'r;
Come, lovely ſtranger, come away.
The *ſun* is dreſs'd in beaming *ſmiles*,
To give thy beauties to the day:
Young *zephyrs* wait, with gentleſt *gales*,
To fan thy boſom, as they play.

* *Permittas ipſis expendere numinibus, quid*
Conveniat nobis, rebuſque ſit utile noſtris.
Nam pro jucundis aptiſſima *quæque dabunt dii:*
Carior eſt illis homo, quam ſibi.— JUV.

Since all the downward tracts of time
GOD's watchful eye ſurveys;
O! who ſo wiſe to chuſe our lot,
And regulate our ways?

Since none can doubt his equal love,
Unmeaſurably kind;
To his *unerring*, *gracious* will,
Be ev'ry wiſh reſign'd.

Good when he gives, ſupremely good;
Nor leſs, when he denies;
Ev'n croſſes, from his ſov'reign hand,
Are bleſſings in diſguiſe.

† *Whatever is, is right.*—If Mr *Pope* underſtands the maxim according to the *limitation* ſuggeſted above, he ſpeaks a moſt undeniable and glorious truth. But if that great poet includes whatever comes to paſs, through the wild and extravagant paſſions of men; ſurely no thinking perſon, at leaſt no Chriſtian, can accede to his opinion.—What GOD orders, is *wiſe*, beyond all poſſibility of correction; and *good*, above all that we can

of his power, Heb. i. 2. 3.—Which truth, as it is ſo important in itſelf; of ſuch ſignal comfort to Chriſtians, and ſo particularly inſiſted on by the inſpired writers, I hope, I ſhall need no apology for an attempt to illuſtrate and enforce it, in a kind of evangelical *Deſcant* upon *creation*, annexed to theſe reflections.

* *Coſmir*, in a very poetical manner, addreſſes himſelf to the dormant roſe, and moſt prettily invites her to *venture abroad*, by the mention of theſe two circumſtances:

Siderum ſacros imitata vultus,
Quid lates dudum, Roſa? Delicatum
Effer e terris caput, O repenti
Filia cœli.
Jam tibi nubes *fugiunt* aquoſæ,
Quas fugant albis Zephyri *quadrigis*;
Jam tibi mulcet Boream *jocantis*
Aura Favoni.

Child of the ſummer, charming Roſe,
No longer in confinement lie;
Ariſe to light; thy form diſcloſe;
Rival the ſpangles of the ſky.

The *rains* are gone; the ſtorms are o'er;
Winter retires to make thee way:

AMONG all the productions of the third creating-day, this of flowers seems to be peculiarly designed for man. Man has the *monopoly* of this savour; it is conferred on him by a sort of exclusive charter. See the *imperial crown*, splendid and beautifully grand! See the *tuberose*, delicate and languishingly fair! See all the pomp and glory of the parterre, where paint and perfume do wonders. Yet the inferior animals are neither smit with their beauties, nor regaled with their odours. The horse never stands still to gaze upon their charms; nor does the ox turn aside to browse upon their sweets. Senses they have to discern these curious objects in the *gross*, but no taste to *distinguish* or relish their fine accomplishments.—Just so, carnal and unenlightened men may understand the literal meaning of scripture, may comprehend the evidences of its divine inspiration; yet have no *relish* of the heavenly truths it teaches, no ardent *longing* for the spiritual blessings it offers; see "no form or comeliness" in the Saviour it describes, so as to render him the *supreme* desire of their souls.

The *chief* end of these beautiful appearances, philosophers say, is to unfold and cherish the embryo seed, or to swathe the tender body during its infant state.—But, whatever is the chief end of nature, 'tis certain, she never departs from the design of administering *delight* to mankind *. This is inseparably connected with her other views.——Were it only to secure a reproductive principle, what need of such *elegant complications*? why so much art employed, and so many decorations added? Why should vestments be prepared, richer than brocades, more delicate than lawns, and of a finer glow than the most admired velvets?—If the great mother had no other aim than barely to accommodate her little offspring, warm flannel, or homely fustian, would have served her turn; served it full as well as the most sumptuous tissues, or all the furniture of the mercer's shop.

Evident then it is, that flowers were endued with such enchanting graces for the *pleasure* of *man*. In pursuance of this original intention, they have always paid their court to the human race; they still seem particularly solicitous of recommending themselves to our regard. The finest of each species croud about our habitations, and are rarely to be seen at a distance from our abodes. They *thrive* under our cultivating hand, and observing eye; but degenerate, and *pine away*, if unregarded by their lord.—To win his attention, and deck his retreats, they hide their deformities under ground; and display nothing but the most *graceful* forms, and *engaging* colours, to his sight.—To merit a farther degree of his esteem, the generality of them dispense a delightful perfume. What is still more obliging, they † reserve their *richest* exhalations to embalm his morning and evening walks †. Because he usually chooses these cool hours to recreate himself among their blooming ranks; therefore, at those hours, they are most lavish of their fragrance, and breathe out their choicest spirits.

O MAN, greatly beloved by thy Creator! the darling of Providence! thou art distinguished by *his goodness*; distinguish thyself also by *thy gratitude*. Be it thy one undivided aim to glorify him, who has been at so much expence to gratify thee!—While all these inferior creatures, in *silent* eloquence, declare the glory of GOD, do thou lend them thy *tongue*. Be thou the high priest of the mute creation. Let their praise become vocal in thy songs.—Adore the supreme Benefactor, for the blessings he showers down upon every order of beings. Adore him for numberless mercies, which are appropriated to thyself. But, above all, adore him for that noble gift of a *rational* and *immortal* soul.—This constitutes us masters of the globe, and give us the real enjoyment of its riches. This discovers ten thousand beauties, which otherwise had been lost; and renders them both a source of delights, and a nursery of devotion.——By virtue of this exalted principle, we are qualified to admire our Maker's works, and capable of *bearing* his illustrious *image*; bearing his illustrious image, not only when these ornaments of the ground have resigned their honours, but when the great origin of day is extinguished in the skies, and all the flaming orbs on high are put out in obscure darkness.—*Then* to survive, to survive the ruins of one world, and to enjoy GOD,—to resemble GOD,—to be "filled with all the fulness of GOD," in another;—what a happiness, what an inestimable happiness, is this! Yet *this* is thy privilege, (barter it not for trifles of an hour!) this thy glorious prerogative, O man!

O! THE goodness, the *exuberant goodness*, of our GOD! I cannot forbear celebrating it once more, before I pass to another consideration.—How much should we think ourselves obliged to a generous friend, who should *build* a stately edifice ‡, purely for our abode! But how greatly would the obligation be increased, if

* "We find that the most important parts in the vegetable "world, are those which are the most beautiful. These are "the seeds by which the several races of plants are propagated "and continued, and which are always lodged in flowers or "blossoms. Nature seems to hide her principal design, and to "be industrious in making the earth gay and delightful, while she "is carrying on her great work, and intent upon her own pre"servation." *Spect.* vol. v. No. 387.

* ——The flow'rs,
That open *now* their choicest bosom'd smells,
Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.
MILT.

† The twining jasmine, and the blushing rose,
With lavish grace their *morning*-scents disclose;
The smelling tub'rose and jonquil declare
The stronger impulse of an *evening*-air.
PRIOR's *Sol.*

‡ I cannot persuade myself, that the comparison is stretched beyond proper bounds, when carried to this pitch. It is my stedfast opinion, that the world, at least this lower world, with its various appurtenances, was intended *purely* for man; that it is *appropriated* to him; and that he (in subordination to GOD's glory) is the *end* of its creation.—Other animals, 'tis true, partake of the Creator's benefits: but then they partake under the notion of man's domestics, or on the foot of retainers to him; as creatures which bear some relation to his service, and some way or other contribute to his good. So that still he is the *centre* of the whole; or, as our incomparable *Milton*, equally master of poetry and divinity, expresses himself, *All things live for man. Par. Lost*, b. XI. l. 161.

Mr *Pope*, in his Ethic Epistles, is pleased to explode this tenet, as the height of *pride*, and a gross *absurdity*.—For my part, I see no reason for such a charge. With all submission to so superior a genius, it seems very remote from pride, to be duly sensible of favours vouchsafed; to contemplate them in all the extent of their munificence, and acknowledge them accordingly. I should rather imagine, that to contract their size, when they are immensely large; to stint their number, when they are altogether innumerable; that such a procedure

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the hand that built ſhould alſo furniſh it! and not only furniſh it with all that is commodious and comfortable, but *ornament* it alſo with whatever is ſplendid and delightful? *This* has our moſt indulgent Creator done, in a manner infinitely ſurpaſſing all we could wiſh or imagine.

The *earth* is aſſigned us for a dwelling.—The *ſkies* are ſtretched over us like a magnificent canopy, dyed in the pureſt azure; and beautified, now with pictures of floating ſilver, now with colourings of reflected crimſon.—The *graſs* is ſpread under us, as a ſpacious carpet; wove with ſilken threads of green, and damaſked with flowers of every hue.—The *ſun*, like a golden lamp, is hung out in the ethereal vault; and pours his effulgence, all the day, to lighten our paths.—When night approaches, the *moon* takes up the friendly office; and the *ſtars* are kindled in twinkling myriads, to cheer the darkneſs with their milder luſtre, not diſturb our repoſe by too intenſe a glare.—The *clouds*, beſides the rich paintings they hang around the heavens, act the part of a ſhifting ſcreen; and defend us by their ſeaſonable interpoſition, from the ſcorching beams of ſummer. May we not alſo regard them as the great watering-pots of the globe; which, wafted on the wings of the wind, diſpenſe their moiſture * evenly through the univerſal garden; and fructify, with their ſhowers, whatever our hand plants.—The *fields* are our exhauſtleſs granary.—The *ocean* is our vaſt reſervoir.—The *animals* ſpend their ſtrength, to diſpatch our buſineſs; reſign their clothing, to repleniſh our wardrobe; and ſurrender their very lives, to provide for our tables.—In ſhort, every *element* is a ſtore-houſe of conveniencies; every *ſeaſon* brings us the choiceſt productions; all *nature* is our caterer.—And, which is a moſt endearing recommendation of theſe favours, they are all as lovely as they are uſeful. You obſerve nothing mean or inelegant. All is clad in *beauty*'s faireſt robe †, and regulated by *proportion*'s niceſt rule. The whole ſcene exhibits a fund of pleaſures to the imagination, at the ſame time that it more than ſupplies all our wants ‡.

Therefore thou art *inexcuſable*, O man, whoſoever thou art, that *rebelleſt* againſt thy Maker. He ſurrounds thee with unnumbered benefits, and follows thee with an effuſion of the richeſt, nobleſt gifts. He courts thy affections, he ſolicits thy gratitude, by liberalities which are never intermitted, by a bounty which knows no limits.—Moſt bleſſed LORD, let this thy goodneſs, thy unwearied goodneſs, lead us to repentance. *Win* us to thyſelf, thou Fountain of felicity, by theſe ſweet inducements. *Draw* us to our duty, thou GOD of our Salvation, by theſe "cords of love."

WHAT a living picture is here of the *beneficial* effects of *induſtry*! By induſtry and cultivation, this neat ſpot is an image of *Eden*. Here is all that can entertain the eye, or ‖ regale the ſmell. Whereas, without cultivation, this ſweet garden had been a deſolate wilderneſs. Vile thiſtles had made it loathſome, and tangling briers inacceſſible. Without cultivation, it might have been a neſt for ſerpents, and the horrid haunt of venomous creatures. But the ſpade and pruning-knife, in the hand of Induſtry, have improved it into a ſort of terreſtrial paradiſe.

How naturally does this lead our contemplation to the advantages which flow from a virtuous *education*, and the miſeries which enſue from the § *neglect* of it!—The mind, without early inſtruction, will, in all

ceduſe favours more of *inſenſibility*, than our hypotheſis of preſumption; and has more in it of *ingratitude*, than that of arrogance.

And how can it be deemed an abſurdity, to maintain that GOD gave us *a world* for our poſſeſſion, when it is our duty to believe, that he gave us his *only Son* for our propitiation? Sure, it can be neither difficult, nor extravagant, to ſuppoſe, that he deſigned the habitable globe, with its whole furniture, for our preſent uſe; ſince he with-held not his holy child JESUS, but freely delivered him up for our final ſalvation.

Upon the whole, I cannot but conclude, that the attempt of our famous poet is neither *kind* with regard to his fellow-creatures,—nor *grateful* with regard to his Creator,—neither is his ſcheme, in fact, *true*. The attempt not *kind*, with regard to man; becauſe it robs him of one of the moſt delightful and raviſhing contemplations imaginable. To conſider the great Author of exiſtence as having *me* in his eye, when he formed univerſal nature; as contriving all things with an immediate view to the exigencies of my particular ſtate; and making them all in ſuch a manner, as might be moſt conducive to my particular advantage; this muſt occaſion the ſtrongeſt ſatisfactions, whenever I caſt a glance on the objects that ſurround me.—Not *grateful* with regard to GOD; becauſe it has the moſt direct tendency to diminiſh our ſenſe of his kindneſs, and by that means to throw a damp upon our gratitude. It teaches us to look upon ourſelves as almoſt loſt among a croud of other beings, or regarded only with an occaſional and incidental beneficence; which muſt certainly weaken the diſpoſition, and indeed ſlacken the ties, to the moſt adoring thankfulneſs.—To which, I apprehend, we may juſtly add, Neither is the ſcheme, in fact, *true*. For, not to mention what might be urged from the ſure word of revelation, this one argument appears ſufficiently concluſive. The world began with man; the world muſt ceaſe with man; conſequently, the grand uſe, the principal end of the world, is, to ſubſerve the intereſt of man. It is on all ſides agreed, that the edifice was erected, when man was to be furniſhed with an habitation; and that it will be demoliſhed, when man has no farther need of its accommodations. When he enters into the houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, "the earth, and all the works that are "therein, ſhall be burnt up." From which it ſeems a very obvious and fair deduction, That man is the *final cauſe* of this inferior creation.

So that I think my readers and myſelf *privileged* (not to ſay, on the principles of gratitude, *obliged*) to uſe thoſe lovely lines of our author, with a propriety and truth equal to their elegance and beauty:

For me kind nature wakes her genial pow'r,
Suckles each herb, and ſpreads out ev'ry flow'r!
Annuals for me, the grape, the roſe renew
The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;
For me, the mine a thouſand treaſures brings;
For me, health guſhes from a thouſand ſprings.

Eth. Ep. I. *ver.* 129.

* This circumſtance, amidſt abundance of other delicate and edifying remarks upon the wonders of nature, is finely touched in the *Philoſophical Tranſactions* recorded in the book of *Job*, chap. xxxviii. ver. 15.—מי פלג לשטף התעלה *Who hath divided a water-courſe for the overflowing of waters?*—The *Hebrew* is ſo pregnant and rich with ſenſe, that no *tranſlation* can do it juſtice. The following *paraphraſe*, perhaps, may repreſent the principal ideas comprehended in the expreſſive original.—Who has *branched out*, and, with admirable judgment, *diſpoſed* a variety of *aqueducts*, for that immenſe collection of waters which float in the ſky? Who *diſtributes* thoſe pendulous floods through all the borders of the earth? diſtributes them, not in dreadful cataracts, or *promiſcuous* gluts of rain, but in kindly drops, and refreſhing ſhowers; with as much regularity and œconomy, as if they were conveyed by pipes from a conduit?—To WHOM ſhall we aſcribe that niceneſs of contrivance, which now emits, now reſtrains them; ſometimes derives their humid train to one place, ſometimes to another; diſpenſes them to *this* ſoil in larger, to *that* in ſmaller communications; and, in a word, ſo manages the mighty fluid, that every ſpot is *ſupplied*, in exact proportion to its wants; none *deſtroyed* by an undiſtinguiſhing deluge?

† Perhaps it was from ſuch an obſervation, that the *Greeks*, thoſe critical and refined judges of things, expreſſed the *mundane ſyſtem* by a word which ſignifies *beauty*,—κοσμος.

‡ "Thoſe ſeveral living creatures, which are made for our "ſervice or ſuſtenance, at the ſame time either fill the woods "with their muſic, furniſh us with game, or raiſe pleaſing "ideas in us by the delightfulneſs of their appearance. Foun-"tains, lakes, and rivers, are as refreſhing to the imagination, "as to the ſoil through which they paſs."

Spect. vol. v. No. 387.

‖ *Omnis copia narium.* HOR.

§ *Neglectis urenda ſilix innaſcitur agris.* HOR.

probability,

probability, become like the "vineyard of the ſluggard." If left to the propenſities of its own depraved will, what can we expect, but the moſt luxuriant growth of unruly appetites, which, in time, will break forth into all manner of ſcandalous irregularities? What!—but that *anger*, like a prickly thorn, arm the temper with an untractable moroſeneſs; *peeviſhneſs*, like a ſtinging nettle, render the converſation irkſome and forbidding; *avarice*, like ſome choking weed, teach the fingers to gripe, and the hands to oppreſs; *revenge*, like ſome poiſonous plant, replete with baneful juices, rankle in the breaſt, and meditate miſchief to its neighbour: while unbridled *luſts*, like ſwarms of noiſome inſects, taint each riſing thought; and render "every imagination of the heart, "only evil continually."—Such are the uſual products of ſavage nature! ſuch the furniture of the uncultivated ſoul!

Whereas, let the mind be put under the "nurture "and admonition of the LORD;" let holy diſcipline clear the ſoil; let ſacred inſtructions ſow it with the beſt ſeed; let ſkill and vigilance dreſs the riſing ſhoots, direct the young ideas how to ſpread, the wayward paſſions how to move:—then, what a different ſtate of the inner man will quickly take place! *Charity* will breathe her ſweets, and *Hope* expand her bloſſoms; the *perſonal* virtues diſplay their graces, and the *ſocial* ones their fruits *; the ſentiments become generous, the carriage endearing, the life honourable and uſeful †.

O! that governors of *families*, and maſters of *ſchools*, would watch, with a conſcientious ſolicitude, over the morals of their tender charge! What pity it is, that the advancing generation ſhould loſe theſe invaluable endowments, through any ſupineneſs in their inſtructors!—See! with what aſſiduity the *curious floriſt* attends his little nurſery! He viſits them early and late; furniſhes them with the propereſt mould; ſupplies them with ſeaſonable moiſture; guards them from the ravages of inſects; ſcreens them from the injuries of the weather; marks their ſpringing buds; obſerves them attentively, through their whole progreſs; and never intermits his anxiety, till he beholds them blown into full perfection.—And ſhall a range of *painted leaves*, which flouriſh to-day, and to-morrow fall to the ground;—ſhall theſe be tended with more zealous application, than the exalted faculties of an *immortal* ſoul!

Yet truſt not in cultivation *alone*. It is the bleſſing of the almighty Huſbandman which imparts *ſucceſs* to ſuch labours of love. If GOD "ſeal up the bot-"tles of heaven," and command the clouds to withhold their fatneſs, the beſt manured plot becomes a barren deſert. And if HE reſtrain the dew of his heavenly benediction, all human endeavours miſcarry; the rational plantation languiſhes; our moſt pregnant hopes, from youths of the moſt promiſing genius, prove abortive. *Their root will be as rottenneſs, and their bloſſom will go up as duſt* ‡.—Therefore let *parents* plant; let *tutors* water; but let both look up to the Father of *ſpirits*, for the deſired increaſe.

ON every ſide, I eſpy ſeveral *budding* flowers. As yet they are like bales of cloth from the packer's warehouſe. Each is wrapt within a ſtrong incloſure, and its contents are tied together by the firmeſt bandages; ſo that all their beauties lie concealed, and all their ſweets are locked up.—Juſt ſuch is the *niggardly* wretch, whoſe aims are all turned inward, and meanly terminated upon *himſelf*; who makes his own private intereſts, or perſonal pleaſures, the ſole centre of his deſigns, and the ſcanty circumference of his actions.

Ere long the ſearching beams will open theſe ſilken folds, and draw them into a graceful *expanſion*. Then, what a lovely bluſh will glow in their cheeks, and what a balmy odour exhale from their boſoms!—So, when divine grace ſhines upon the mind, even *the churl becomes bountiful*; the heart of ſtone is taken away; and a heart of fleſh, a heart ſuſceptible of the ſofteſt, moſt compaſſionate emotions, is introduced in its ſtead. O! how ſweetly do the ſocial affections dilate themſelves, under ſo benign an influence! Juſt like theſe diſcloſing gems, under the powerful eye of day. The tender regards are no longer *confined* to a ſingle object; but *extend* themſelves into a generous concern for mankind, and ſhed liberal refreſhments on all within their reach *.

Ariſe then, thou Sun of Righteouſneſs; ariſe, with healing under thy wings; and tranſfuſe thy gentle, but penetrating ray, through all our intellectual powers. Enlarge every *narrow* diſpoſition, and fill us with a *diffuſive* benevolence. Make room in our breaſts for the whole human race; and teach us to love all our fellow-creatures, for their amiable Creator's ſake. May we be pleaſed with their excellencies, and rejoice in their happineſs; but feel their miſeries as our own, and, with a brother's ſympathy, haſten to relieve them!

DISPOSED at proper diſtances, I obſerve a range of ſtrong and *ſtately ſtalks*. They ſtand like towers, along the walls of a fortified city; or riſe, like lofty ſpires, amidſt the group of houſes. They part, at the top, into ſeveral penſile ſpiky pods: from each of which we ſhall ſoon ſee a fine figure diſplaying itſelf; *rounded* into a form, which conſtitutes a perfect circle; *ſpread* wide open, into the moſt frank and communicative air; and tinged with the colour, which is ſo peculiarly captivating to the miſer's eye.

But the property I chiefly admire, is its paſſionate *fondneſs* for the *ſun*. When the evening-ſhades take place, the poor flower droops, and folds up its leaves. It mourns all the long night, and pines amidſt the gloom, like ſome forlorn lover, baniſhed from the object of his affections. No ſooner does Providence open "the eyelids of the morning," but it meets † and welcomes the returning light; courts and careſſes it, all the day; nor ever loſes ſight of the refulgent charmer,

* This tranſformation of the *heart*, and renewal of the *life*, are repreſented, in ſcripture, by ſimilitudes very nearly allied to the images uſed above.—GOD, by his ſanctifying Spirit, *will make the ſoul as a watered garden*. Under the operation of this divine principle, *the deſert ſhall rejoice, and bloſſom as the roſe*. Where-ever it exerts the refining and ennobling energy, *inſtead of the thorn, ſhall come up the fir-tree; and, inſtead of the brier, the myrtle-tree*. Jer. xxxi. 12. Iſ. xxxv. 1. & lv. 13.

† ——*A teneris aſſueſcere multum eſt!* VIRG.

——— ε γαρ μικρον διαφερει, το ηθος η εθος τυθεν εκ παιδος ενθιζεσθαι, αλλα παμπολυ, μαλλον δε το πανυ. ARISTOT. The principles we imbibe, and the habits we contract, in our early years, are not matters of *ſmall moment*, but of the *utmoſt conſequence* imaginable. They not only give a tranſient or ſuperficial tincture to our *firſt* appearance in life, but moſt commonly ſtamp the form of our *whole* future conduct, and even of our *eternal* ſtate.

‡ Iſ. v. 24.

* The prophet, deſcribing the *charitable* temper, very beautifully ſays, *If thou draw out thy ſoul to the hungry!*—This, I think, may not improperly be illuſtrated by the circumſtances obſerved above. The opening of thoſe buds into a large and extenſive ſpread, is a pretty portrait of the *amplitude* of a *generous* heart; which cannot ſhut up its compaſſion, or remain unconcerned at any human calamity. The freeneſs and copiouſneſs, with which the expanded flowers are continually pouring out their choiceſt eſſences, may repreſent the various acts of an unwearied liberality; together with thoſe endearing words, and that cordial affection, which *enhance*, as it were, a gift, double its value; and conſtitute what the ſacred penman ſtyles, *drawing out the ſoul*. תוציא נפשך *depromſerit animam tuam*. Iſ. lviii. 10.

† ——*Illo ſuum, quamvis radice tenetur,*
Vertitur ad ſolem. OVID.

charmer, ſo long as he continues above the horizon.—In the morning, you may perceive it preſenting a golden boſom to the eaſt; at noon, it points upward to the middle ſky; in the evening follows the ſame attractive influence to the weſt.

Surely, Nature is a book, and every page rich with ſacred hints. To an attentive mind, the *garden* turns *preacher*, and its blooming tenants are ſo many lively ſermons. What an engaging pattern, and what an excellent leſſon, have we here!—*So*, let the redeemed of the LORD *look unto* JESUS *, and be conformed to their Beloved. Let us all be *heliotropes* (if I may uſe the expreſſion) to the *Sun of Righteouſneſs*. Let our paſſions riſe and fall; take this courſe or that; as his word determines, as his holy example guides. Let us be ſo accommodated, both to his commanding and providential will, as the wax is turned to the imprinted ſeal; or as the aſpect of this enamoured flower, to the ſplendid ſtar, which creates our day.

In every *enjoyment*, O thou watchful Chriſtian, look unto JESUS; receive it as proceeding from his love, and purchaſed by his agonies †.——In every *tribulation* look unto JESUS; mark his gracious hand, managing the ſcourge, or mingling the bitter cup; attempering it to a proper degree of ſeverity; adjuſting the time of its continuance; and ready to make theſe ſeeming diſaſters productive of real good.——In every infirmity and *failing*, look unto JESUS, thy merciful High Prieſt, pleading his atoning blood, and making interceſſion for tranſgreſſors.——In every *prayer* look unto JESUS, thy prevailing Advocate, recommending thy devotions, and "bearing the iniquity of thy holy "things ‡."——In every *temptation* look unto JESUS, the Author of thy ſtrength, and Captain of thy ſalvation; who alone is able to lift up the hands which hang down, to invigorate the enfeebled knees, and make thee more than conqueror over all thy enemies.——But eſpecially, when the *hour* of thy *departure* approaches; when "thy fleſh and thy heart fail;" when all the ſprings of life are irreparably breaking; *then* look unto JESUS with a believing eye ‖. Like expiring *Stephen*, behold him ſtanding at the right hand of GOD, on purpoſe to ſuccour his people, in this their laſt extremity. Yes, my Chriſtian friend, when thy journey through life is finiſhed, and thou art arrived on the very verge of mortality; when thou art juſt launching out into the inviſible world, and all before thee is vaſt eternity; then, O then, be ſure to look ſtedfaſtly unto JESUS! "See by faith the LORD'S "CHRIST." View him as the only *Way* § to the everlaſting manſions; as the only *Door* ¶ to the abodes of bliſs.

YONDER tree, which faces the ſouth, has ſomething too remarkable to paſs without obſervation.—Like the fruitful, though feeble vine, ſhe brings forth a large family of branches; but, unable to ſupport them herſelf, commits them to the tuition of a ſunny wall. As yet the tender twigs have ſcarce gemmed their future bloſſoms. However, I may anticipate the well-known productions, and picture to myſelf the *paſſion-flower*; which will, in due time, with a long and copious ſucceſſion, adorn the boughs.

I have read, in a *Latin* author, of flowers inſcribed with the names of kings **: but here is one emblazoned with the marks of the bleeding Prince of life. I read, in the inſpired writings, of apoſtolic men, who bore about in their bodies, the dying of the LORD JESUS *: but here is a *blooming religioſo*, that carries apparent memorials of the ſame tremendous and fatal cataſtrophe.——Who would have expected to find ſuch a tragedy of woe exhibited in a collection of the moſt delicate delights? or to ſee *Calvary*'s horrid ſcene pourtrayed on the ſofteſt ornaments of the garden?—Its nature then actuated by the noble ambition of paying *commemorative* honours to her agonizing Sovereign? Is ſhe kindly officious to *remind* forgetful mortals of that miracle of mercy, which it is their duty to contemplate, and their happineſs to believe?——Or is a *ſportive* imagination my interpreter; and all the ſuppoſed reſemblance no more than the precarious gloſs of fancy? Be it ſo: yet even fancy has her merit, when ſhe ſets forth, in ſuch pleaſing imagery, the crucified JESUS. Nor ſhall I refuſe a willing regard to Imagination herſelf, when ſhe employs her creative powers to revive the ſenſe of ſuch unparalelled love, and prompt my gratitude to ſo divine a friend.

That *ſpiral tendril*, ariſing from the bottom of the ſtalk, is it a repreſentation of the *ſcourge*, which laſhed the Redeemer's unſpotted fleſh; and inflicted thoſe ſtripes, by which our ſouls are healed? or, is it twiſted for the *cord*, which bound his hands in painful and ignominious confinement; thoſe beneficent hands, which were inceſſantly ſtretched out to unlooſe the heavy burdens, and to impart bleſſings of every choice kind? Behold the *nails*, which were drenched in his ſacred veins, and rivetted his feet to the accurſed tree; thoſe beautiful † feet, which always went about doing good; and travelled far and near, to ſpread the glad tidings of everlaſting ſalvation. See the *hammer*, ponderous and maſſy, which drove the rugged irons through the ſhivering nerves; and forced a paſſage for thoſe dreadful wedges, between the diſlocated bones.——View the *thorns*, which encircled our Royal Maſter's brow, and ſhot their keen afflictive points into his bleſſed head. O the ſmart! the racking ſmart! when, inſtead of the triumphal laurel, or the odoriferous garland, that pungent and ragged wreath was planted on the meek Meſſiah's forehead! When violent and barbarous blows of the ſtrong eaſtern cane ‡, ſtruck the prickly crown, and fixed every thorn deep in his throbbing temples ‖!—There ſtand the *diſciples*, ranged in the green impalement, and forming a circle round the inſtruments of their great Commander's death. They appear like ſo many faithful adherents, who breathe a gallant reſolution, either of defending their LORD to the laſt extremity, or of dropping honourably by his ſide. But did they give ſuch proofs of zeal and fidelity in their conduct, as their ſteady poſture, and determined aſpect, ſeem to promiſe? Alas! what is all human firmneſs,

* Heb. xii. 2.

† He ſunk beneath our heavy woes,
To raiſe us to his throne;
There's not a gift his hand beſtows,
But coſt his heart a groan. WATTS.

‡ Exod. xxviii. 38.

‖ *Look unto ME, and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth.* Iſa. xlv. 22.

§ John xiv. 6. ¶ John x. 9.

** *Dicy quibus in terris inſcripti nomina regum,*
Naſcantur flores?— VIRG.

* 2 Cor. iv. 10.

† *How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publiſheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publiſheth ſalvation!* Iſ. lii. 7.

‡ *They took the reed*, ſays the ſacred hiſtorian, *and ſmote him on the head*; "and ſo, as it were, nailed down the thorns in-"to his forehead and temples, and occaſioned thereby exqui-"ſite pain, as well as a great effuſion of blood." *Family-expoſitor*, vol. II. ſect. 188.—"It is moſt probable," adds the ſame judicious critic, "this was a walking-ſtaff, which they put into his hand as "a ſceptre; for a *blow* with a *ſlight reed* would ſcarce have been "felt, or have deſerved a mention in a detail of ſuch dreadful "ſufferings."

‖ The ſmart attending this unparalelled piece of contempt and barbarity, muſt be *inexpreſſibly ſevere*; not only on account of the many painful punctures made in the fleſh, but principally, becauſe the *periоſtium*, an exquiſitely ſenſible tegument of the bones, lying, in thoſe parts, very near the external ſkin, muſt receive a *multitude* of terrible wounds. The anguiſh of which could not fail of being inflamed to an exceſs of rage, by the *continuance* of ſo many thorny lancets in that extremely tender membrane; which, in ſuch a caſe,

—trembling ly alive all o'er,
Muſt ſmart and agonize at ev'ry pore.

when

when deſtitute of ſuccours from above, but an expiring *vapour*? What is every taint, if unſupported by powerful grace, but an abandoned *traitor*?—Obſerve the *glory*, deſcended in double rays, grand with imperial purple, and rich with æthereal blue. But ah! how incapable are threads, though ſpun by ſummer's fineſt hand, though dyed in ſnows or dipped in heaven, to diſplay the immaculate excellency of his human, or the ineffable majeſty of his divine nature! Compared with theſe ſublime perfections, the moſt *vivid* aſſemblage of colours fades into an *unmeaning* flatneſs; the moſt charming effects of light and ſhade are not only mere daubings, but an abſolute blank.

Among all the beauties which ſhine in ſunny robes, and ſip the ſilver dews, this, I think, has the *nobleſt import*, if not the *fineſt preſence*. Were they all to paſs in review, and expect the award of ſuperiority from my deciſion, I ſhould not heſitate a moment. Be the prize aſſigned to this amiable candidate, which has ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed, and ſo highly dignified herſelf, by bearing ſuch a remarkable reſemblance to "the "righteous Branch; the Plant of Renown *." While others appoint it a place in the parterre, I would tranſplant the paſſion-flower, or rather tranſfer its ſacred ſignificancy, to my heart. *There* let it bloom, both in ſummer and in winter; bloom, in the moſt impreſſive characters, and with an undecaying luſtre: that I alſo may wear,—wear on my very ſoul, the traces of IMMANUEL, pierced for my ſins, and bruiſed for my tranſgreſſions; that I alſo may *be crucified with* CHRIST †, at leaſt in penitential remorſe, and affectionate ſympathy: that I may *know the fellowſhip of his ſufferings* ‡; and feel all my evil affections, wounded by his agonies, mortified by his death.

THERE is another ſubject of the verdant kingdom, which, on account of its very uncommon qualities, demands my particular notice: one ſo extremely diffident in her diſpoſition, and delicate in her conſtitution, that ſhe dares not venture herſelf abroad in the open air, but is nurſed up in the warmth of a *hot-bed*, and lives cloiſtered in the cells of a *green-houſe*. But the moſt curious peculiarity is, that, of all her kindred-ſpecies, ſhe alone partakes of *perceptive* life; at leaſt advances neareſt to this more exalted ſtate of being, and may be looked upon as the link which connects the animal and the vegetable world. A ſtranger, obſerving her motions, would almoſt be induced to ſuſpect, that ſhe is endued with ſome inferior degrees of conſciouſneſs and caution. For, if you offer to handle this *ſenſitive plant*, ſhe immediately takes an alarm; haſtily contracts her fibres; and, like a perſon under apprehenſions of violence, *withdraws* from your finger, in a kind of precipitate *diſorder*. Perhaps, the beauty of her aſpect might be ſullied, or the niceneſs of her texture diſcompoſed, by the human touch. Therefore, like a coy virgin, ſhe recedes from all unbecoming familiarities; and will admit no ſuch improper, if not pernicious, freedoms.

Whatever be the cauſe of this unuſual effect, it ſuggeſts an inſtructive admonition to the Chriſtian. *Such* ſhould be our apprehenſive, timorous care, with regard to ſin, and all, even the moſt diſtant, approaches of vice. So ſhould we avoid the very appearance of evil, and ſtand aloof from every occaſion of falling.—If ſinners entice, if forbidden pleaſures tempt, or if opportunity beckon, with the gain of injuſtice in her hand; O! turn from the gilded ſnare; touch not the beauteous bane; but fly, fly with haſte, fly without any delay, from the bewitching ruin.—Does *Anger* draw near with her lighted torch, to kindle the flame of reſentment in our breaſts? does *Flattery* ply our ears, with her enchanting and intoxicating whiſpers? would *Diſcontent* lay her leaden hand upon our temper, and mould into our minds her ſour leaven, in order to make us a burden to ourſelves, and unamiable to others? Inſtantly let us divert our attention from the dangerous objects; and not ſo much endeavour to *antidote*, as to *ſhun*, the moral contagion. Let us revolve in our meditations, that wonderful *meekneſs* of our diſtreſſed Maſter, which, amidſt the moſt abuſive and provoking inſults, maintained an uniform tenor of unſhaken ſerenity. Let us contemplate that prodigious *humiliation*, which brought him, from an infinite height above all worlds, to make his bed in the duſt of death. Let us ſooth our jarring, our uneaſy paſſions, with the remembrance of that *chearfulneſs* and *reſignation*, which rendered him, in the deepeſt poverty, unfeignedly thankful; and, under the heavieſt tribulations, moſt ſubmiſſively patient.

Harbour not, on any conſideration, the betrayer of your virtue. Be deaf, inflexibly deaf, to every beguiling ſolicitation. If it obtrude into the unguarded heart, give it entertainment, no, not for a moment. To parley with the enemy, is to open a door for deſtruction. Our ſafety conſiſts in flight: and, in this caſe, *ſuſpicion* is the trueſt *prudence*; *fear*, the greateſt *bravery*.—Play not on the brink of the precipice. Flutter not round the edges of the flame. Dally not with the ſtings of death. But reject, with a becoming mixture of ſolicitude and abhorrence, the very firſt inſinuations of iniquity; as cautiouſly, as the *ſmarting ſore* ſhrinks even from the ſofteſt hand; as conſtantly, as this *jealous plant* recoils at the approaching touch *.

NOT long ago, theſe curious productions of the ſpring were *coarſe* and miſ-ſhapen *roots*. Had we opened the earth, and beheld them in their ſeed, how uncouth and contemptible had their appearance been!——But now they are the boaſt of nature, the delight of the ſons of men, finiſhed patterns for enamelling and embroidery, outſhining even the happieſt ſtrokes of the pencil. They are taught to bloom, but with a very inferior luſtre †, in the richeſt tapeſtries, and moſt magnificent ſilks. Art never attempts to *equal* their incomparable elegancies; but places all her merit in *copying* after theſe delicate originals. Even thoſe who glitter in ſilver, or whoſe clothing is of wrought gold, are deſirous to borrow additional ornaments from a ſprig of jeſſamine, or a little aſſemblage of pinks.

What a fine idea may we form, from hence, of the

* So the bleſſed JESUS is deſcribed, *Jer.* xxiii. 5. *Ezek.* xxxiv. 29.

† Gal. ii. 20. ‡ Phil. iii. 10.

* The prophet *Iſaiah*, in an elegant and lively deſcription of the *upright man*, ſays, *He ſhaketh his hands from holding of bribes*; and, I may add, from practiſing any kind of iniquity. The image, exceedingly beautiful, and equally expreſſive, both illuſtrates and enforces the doctrine of this whole ſection.—*Shaketh his hands*; juſt as a perſon would do, who happens to have *burning coals* fall into his lap, or ſome *venomous creature* faſtening upon his fleſh. In ſuch a caſe, none would ſtand a moment to conſider, or to debate with himſelf the expediency of the thing. He would inſtantly fling off the pernicious incumbrance; inſtantly endeavour to diſengage himſelf from the clinging miſchief.—*Iſ.* xxxiii. 15.

I have repreſented the danger of not extinguiſhing immediately the *very firſt* ſparks of temptation, in a variety of views. Becauſe a proper behaviour, in this conjuncture, is of ſuch vaſt importance to the purity, the ſafety, and the comfort of our minds.—Becauſe I had the *royal moraliſt* in my eye; who, deterring his pupils from the path of the wicked, cries, with an air of deep concern, and in the language of vehement importunity, cries; *Avoid it; paſs not by it; turn from it; and paſs away.* How ſtrongly is the counſel urged, by being ſo *frequently* repeated; in ſuch a remarkable *diverſity* of conciſe and abrupt, conſequently of forcible and preſſing admonitions! *Prov.* iv. 15.

† The cowſlip ſmiles in *brighter yellow* dreſt,
Than that which veils the nubil virgin's breaſt:
A *faireſted* ſtands bluſhing in the roſe,
Than that which on the bridegroom's veſtments glows.
PRIOR's *Sol.*

reſurrection of the *juſt*, and the ſtate of their re-animated bodies! As the roots even of our choiceſt flowers, when depoſited in the ground, are rude and ungraceful; but, when they ſpring up into blooming life, are moſt elegant and ſplendid; ſo the fleſh of a ſaint, when committed to the duſt, alas! what is it? A heap of corruption; a maſs of putrefying clay. But, when it obeys a great archangel's call, and ſtarts into a new exiſtence; what an aſtoniſhing change enſues! what a moſt ennobling improvement takes place!—That which was ſown in *weakneſs*, is raiſed in all the vivacity of *power*. That which was ſown in *deformity*, is raiſed in the bloom of celeſtial *beauty*. Exalted, refined, and glorified, it will ſhine "as the brightneſs of the "firmament," when it darts the inimitable blue through the fleeces—the ſnowy fleeces of ſome cleaving cloud.

Fear not, then, thou faithful Chriſtian; fear not, at the appointed time, to deſcend into the tomb. Thy *ſoul* thou mayſt truſt with thy omnipotent Redeemer, who is LORD of the unſeen world; "who has the "keys of hell, and of death." Moſt ſafely mayſt thou truſt thy better part, in thoſe beneficent hands, which were pierced with nails, and faſtened to the ignominious tree, for thy ſalvation.—With regard to thy *earthly tabernacle*, be not diſmayed. It is taken down, only to be built upon a diviner plan, and in a more heavenly form. If it retires into the ſhadow of death, and lies immured in the gloom of the grave; it is only to return, from a ſhort confinement, to endleſs liberty. If it falls into diſſolution, it is in order to riſe more illuſtrious from its ruins; and wear an infinitely brighter face of perfection, and of glory *.

HAVING now made my *panegyric*, let me next take up a *lamentation*, for theſe loveliеſt productions of the vegetable world.—For I foreſee their approaching doom. Yet a little while, and all theſe pleaſing ſcenes vaniſh. Yet a little while, and all the ſweets of the breathing, all the beauties of the blooming ſpring, are no more. Every one of theſe amiable forms muſt be ſhrivelled to deformity, and trodden to the earth.—Significant reſemblance this of all created beauty. *All fleſh is graſs*; like the green herbage, liable and prone to fade. Nay, *all the goodlineſs thereof*, its fineſt accompliſhments, and what the world univerſally admires, *is as the flower of the field* †, which loſes its gloſs, decays and periſhes, more ſpeedily than the graſs itſelf.—Behold then, ye brighteſt among the daughters of *Eve*; behold yourſelves, in this glaſs. See the charms of your *perſon* eclipſed, by the luſtre of theſe little flowers; and the frailty of your *ſtate* repreſented, ‡ by their tranſient glories. A fever may ſcorch thoſe poliſhed veins; a conſumption may emaciate the dimpling cheeks; and a load of unexpected ſorrows depreſs thoſe lively ſpirits. Or ſhould theſe diſaſters, in pity, ſpare the tender frame; yet age, inexorable age and wrinkles, will aſſuredly come at laſt; will wither all the fine features, and blaſt every ſprightly grace.

Then, ye *fair*, when thoſe ſparkling eyes are darkened, and ſink in their orbs; when they are rolling in agonies, or ſwimming in death; how will you ſuſtain the affliction? how will you repair the loſs?—Apply your thoughts to *religion*. Attend to the *one thing needful*. Believe in, and imitate, the bleſſed JESUS. Then ſhall your ſouls mount up to the realms of happineſs, when the well-proportioned clay is mingling with its mean original. The light of GOD's countenance will irradiate, with matchleſs and conſummate perfection, all their exalted faculties. Cleanſed entirely from every dreg of corruption, like ſome unſullied mirror, they will reflect the complete image of their Creator's holineſs.—O! that you would thus *dreſs* your *minds*, and prepare for the immortal ſtate! Then, from ſhining among your fellow-creatures on earth, you ſhall be tranſlated, to ſhine around the throne of GOD. Then, from being the ſweeteners of our life, and the delight of our eyes here below; you ſhall paſs, by an eaſy tranſition, into angels of light; and become "an everlaſting excellency, the joy of all "generations."

YES; *ye flowery nations, ye muſt all decay.*—Yonder *lily*, that looks like the queen of the gay creation,—ſee, how gracefully it erects its majeſtic head! What an air of dignity and grandeur ennobles its aſpect! For elevated mien, as well as for incomparable luſtre, juſtly may it be preferred to the magnificent monarch of the Eaſt *. But, all ſtately and charming as it is, it will hardly ſurvive a few more days. That unſpotted whiteneſs muſt quickly be tarniſhed, and the ſnowy form defiled in the duſt.

As the lily pleaſes, with the noble ſimplicity of its appearance; the *tulip* is admired, for the gaiety and multiplicity of its colours. Never was cup either painted or enamelled with ſuch a profuſion of dyes. Its tinges are ſo glowing, its contraſts ſo ſtrong, and the arrangement of them both ſo elegant and artful!—'Twas lately the pride of the border, and the reigning beauty of the delightful ſeaſon; as exquiſitely fine as the rainbow, and almoſt as extremely tranſient. It ſpread, for a little moment, its glittering plumage; but has, now, laid all its variegated and ſuperior honours down. Thoſe radiant ſtripes are blended, alas! rudely blended with common mould.

To a graceful ſhape, and blooming complexion, the *roſe* adds a moſt agreeable perfume. Our noſtrils make it repeated viſits, and are never weary of drinking in its ſweets. A fragrance, ſo peculiarly rich and reviving, tranſpires from its opening tufts, that every one covets its acquaintance. How have I ſeen even the accompliſhed *Chariſſa*, for whom ſo many votaries languiſh, fondly careſſing this little flower! That lovely boſom, which is the ſeat of innocence and virtue; whoſe leaſt excellency it is, to rival the delicacy of the pureſt

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The wiſe, the juſt, the pious, and the brave,
Live in their deaths, and flouriſh from the grave.
Grain hid in earth, repays the peaſant's care,
And ev'ning-ſuns but ſet to riſe more fair.

† Iſ. xl. 6.

‡ Και το ροδον καλον εϛι, και ο χρινος αυτο μαραινει·
Και το ιον καλον εϛιν εν ϛαρι, και ταχυ γηρα.
Λευκον το κρινον εϛι, μαραινεται ανικα πιπτη·
Α δε χιων λευκα, και ταυτας ανικα παχθη·
Και καλλος καλον εϛι το παιδικον, αλλ' ολιγον ξη.

The reader will excuſe me, if I *imitate*, rather than *tranſlate* theſe lines from *Theocritus*; if I vary one image, add another, and give a new turn to the whole.

When ſnows deſcends and robe the fields
In *winter*'s bright array;
Touch'd by the ſun, the luſtre fades,
And weeps itſelf away.

When *ſpring* appears; when violets blow,
And ſhed a rich perfume;
How ſoon the fragrance breathes its laſt!
How ſhort-liv'd is the bloom!

Freſh in the morn, the *ſummer*-roſe
Hangs with 'ning 'ere 'tis noon;
We ſcarce enjoy the balmy gift,
But mourn the pleaſure gone.

With gliding fire, an evening-ſtar
Streaks the *autumnal* ſkies;
Shook from the ſphere, it darts away,
And, in an inſtant, dies.

Such are the charms that flaſh the cheek,
And ſparkle in the eye:
So, from the lovely finiſh'd form
The tranſient graces fly.

To this the *ſeaſons*, as they roll,
Their atteſtation bring:
They warn the fair; their ev'ry round
Confirms the truth I ſing.

* Matth. vi. 29.

purest snows; among a thousand charms of its own, thinks it possible to adopt another from the damask rose-bud. Yet even this universal favourite must fail. Its native balm cannot preserve it from putrefaction. Soon, soon, must it resign all those endearing qualities; and hang neglected on its stem, or drop despised to the ground.

One could wish, methinks, these most amiable of the inanimate race, a longer existence: but in vain. They *fade* almost as soon as they *flourish*. Within less than a month their glories are extinct. Let the sun take a few more journeys through the sky; then visit this enchanting walk; and you will find nothing but a wretched wilderness of ragged or naked stalks.—But (my soul exults in the thought) the *garment* of celestial *glory*, which shall 'ere long array the re-animated body, will never wax old. The illustrious *robes* of a Saviour's consummate *righteousness*, which even now adorn the justified spirit, are incorruptible and immortal. No moth can corrode their texture; no number of ages sully their brightness. The light of day may be quenched, and all the stars sink in obscurity; but the honours of "just men made perfect" are subject to no diminution. Inextinguishable and unfading is the lustre of their crown.

YES; ye flowery nations, ye must all decay.——Winter, like some enraged and irresistible conqueror, that carries fire and sword where-ever he advances; that demolishes towns; depopulates countries; spreads slaughter and desolation on every side;——so, just so, will *Winter*, with his savage and unrelenting blasts, invade this beautiful prospect. The storms are gathering, and the tempests mustering their rage, to fall upon the vegetable kingdoms. They will ravage through the dominions of nature; and plunder her *riches*, and lay waste her *charms*.——Then, ye trees, must you stand stript of your verdant apparel; and, ye fields, be spoiled of your waving treasures. Then, the earth, disrobed of all her gay attire, must sit in sables, like a disconsolate widow. The sun too, who now rides in triumph round the world, and scatters gaiety from his radiant eye, will then look faintly from the windows of the south; and, casting a short glance on our dejected world, will leave us to the uncomfortable gloom of tedious nights.—Then, these pretty *chorísters* of the *air* will chant no more to the gentle gales; the lark, the linnet, and all the feathered songsters, abandon their notes, and indulge their woes. The harmony of the woods is at an end; and silence, (unless it be interrupted by howling winds), a sullen silence, sits brooding upon the boughs; which are now made vocal, by a thousand warbling throats.

But (sweet recollection! ravishing expectation!) the *songs* of *saints* in light never admit a pause for sadness. All heaven will resound with the melody of their gratitude; and all eternity echo to their triumphant acclamations. The *Hallelujahs* of that world, and the harmonious joy of its inhabitants, will be as lasting as the divine perfections they celebrate.——Come then, holy love, and *tune* my *heart*; descend, celestial fire, and *touch* my *tongue*; that I may stand ready to strike up, and bear my part, in that great hosanna, that everlasting hymn.

YES; yes: ye flowery nations, ye must all decay.—— And, indeed, could you add the strength of an oak, or the stability of a pyramid *, to all the delicacy of your texture; yet short, exceeding short, even then would your duration be. For *I see that all things come to an end*. The pillars of nature are tottering. The foundations of the round world are falling away. "The heavens themselves wax old like a garment."—But, amidst these views of general ruin, here is our refuge; this is our consolation; *We know that our Redeemer liveth*. Thy years, blessed JESUS, shall not fail. From everlasting to everlasting, thou art still the same? the same most excellent and adorable person; the same omnipotent and faithful friend; the same all-sufficient and inestimable portion. O! may we but partake of thy merits; be sanctified by thy grace; and received into thy glory!—Then perish, if ye will, all inferior delights. Let all that is *splendid* in the skies expire; and all that is *amiable* in nature be expunged. Let the whole extent of creation be turned again into one undistinguishable void, one universal blank.—Yet, if GOD be ours, we shall have *enough*. If GOD be ours, we shall have *all*, and abound †; all that our circumstances can want, or our wishes crave, to make us inconceivably blessed and happy; blessed and happy, not only through this little interval of time, but through the unmeasurable revolutions of eternity.

THE *sun* is now come forth in his strength, and beats fiercely upon my throbbing pulse.——Let me retire to yonder inviting *arbour*. There the woodbines retain the lucid drop; there the jessamines, which line the verdant alcove, are still impearled, and deliciously wet with dews.——Welcome, ye *refreshing shades!* I feel, I feel, your chearing influence. My languid spirits revive; the slackened sinews are new strung; and life bounds brisker through all her crimson channels.

Reclined on this mossy couch, and surrounded by this fragrant coldness, let me renew my aspirations to the ever-present Deity. Here let me remember, and imitate, the pious *Augustine*, and his mother *Monica*; who, being engaged in discourse, on the beauties of the visible creation, rose, by these ladders, to the glories of the invisible state; till they were inspired with the most *affecting sense* of their super-eminent excellency, and actuated with the most *ardent breathings* after their full enjoyment: insomuch that they were almost rapt up into the bliss they contemplated; and scarce "knew, whether they were in the body, or out of the body."

WHEN *tempests* toss the ocean; when plaintive signals of distress are heard from the bellowing deep; and melancholy tokens of shipwreck come floating on the foaming surge; then how delightful to stand safe on shore, and hug one's self in conscious security!†!—— When a *glut* of *waters* bursts from some mighty torrent, rushes headlong over all the neighbouring plains, sweeps away the helpless cattle, and drives the affrighted shepherd from his hut; then, from the top of a distant

* I know not any performance, in which the *transitory* nature of these most *durable* monuments of human grandeur, is hinted with such a modest air of instruction, or their hideous ruin described in such a pomp of pleasing horror, as in a small, but solemn, picturesque, and majestic poem, entitled——THE RUINS OF ROME, written by the Rev. Mr DYER: whom the reader (if he has the pleasure of perusing that beautiful piece) will easily perceive to have taken his draughts from the *originals* themselves; as nothing but the *sight* of those magnificent remains, could have inspired his lines with such vivacity.——As a specimen of the work, and a confirmation of the remark suggested above, I take leave to transcribe the following passage:

——The pilgrim oft,
At dead of night, mid his oraison hears
Aghast the voice of time, disparting tow'rs,
Tumbling all precipitate down dash'd,
Rattling around, loud thund'ring to the moon.

* His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
And bids earth roll, nor feels the idle whirl.
Night-Thoughts, No. IV.

† As *Lucretius* gave the hint for these observations, so he assigns the reason of the pleasure specified. It arises, not from the considerations of *another's misery*; this would argue the rankest malevolence: but from the agreeable contemplation of our *own* personal *safety*; which, while we view circumstances that are pernicious to others, but harmless to ourselves, is not a little heightened by the contrast. *Suave mari magno*, &c.

eminence,

eminence, to descry the danger we need not fear; how pleasing is such meditation, in my *present situation*. For now the sun blazes from on high: the air glows with his fires: the fields are rent with chinks: the roads are scorched to dust: the woods seem to contract a sickly aspect, and a russet hue: the traveller, broiled as he rides, hastens to his inn, and intermits his journey: the labourer, bathed in sweat, drops the scythe, and desists from his work: the cattle flee to some shady covert, or else pant and toss under the burning noon. Even the stubborn rock, smit with the piercing beams, is ready to cleave. All things *languish* beneath the dazzling deluge. ——While I shall enjoy a *cool* hour, and *calm* reflection, amidst the gloom of this bowery recess, which scarce admits one speck of sunshine.

Thus, may both the flock, and their shepherd, *dwell beneath the defence of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty* *. Then, though † the *pestilence* walketh in darkness, and the *sickness* destroyeth at noonday; though thousands fall beside us, and ten thousands at our right hand; we need fear no evil. Either the destroying angel shall pass over our houses; or else he shall dispense the corrections of a friend, not the scourges of an enemy; which, instead of hurting us, shall work for our good.—Then, though *profaneness* and *infidelity*, far more malignant evils, breathe deadly contagion, and taint the morals of multitudes around us; yet, if the great Father of spirits "hide us in the hollow of his "hand," we shall hold fast our integrity, and be faithful unto death.

Let then, dearest LORD, O! let thy servant, and the people committed to his care, be received into thy protection. Let us take sanctuary under that *Tree of Life*, erected in thy ignominious cross. Let us fly for safety to that *City of Refuge*, opened in thy bleeding wounds. These shall be a sacred hiding-place, not to be pierced by the flames of divine wrath, or the fiery darts of temptation. Thy dying merits, and perfect obedience, shall be to our souls, *as rivers of water in a dry place*, or *as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land* ‡.

BUT most of all, in that *last tremendous* day, when the heavens are rent asunder, and wrapped up like a scroll; when thy almighty arm shall arrest the sun in his career, and dash to pieces the structure of the universe; when the dead, both small and great, shall be gathered before the throne of thy glory; and the fates of all mankind hang on the very point of a final, irreversible decision: —then, blessed JESUS, let us be owned by thee, and we shall not be *ashamed*; defended by thee, and we shall not be *afraid*. O! may we, at that awful, that unutterably important juncture, be covered with the wings of thy redeeming love, and we shall behold all the horrible convulsions of expiring nature, with composure, with comfort! We shall even welcome the dissolution of all things, as the *times of refreshing from the presence of the* LORD ‖.

THERE are, I perceive, who still attend the flowers; and, in defiance of the sun, ply their work on every expanded blossom. The *bees* I mean; that nation of chymists! to whom nature has communicated the rare and valuable secret of enriching themselves, without impoverishing others; who extract the most delicious syrup from every fragrant herb, without wounding its substance, or diminishing its odours.——I take the more notice of these ingenious operators, because I would willingly make them my pattern §. While the gay *butterfly* flutters her painted wings, and sips a little fantastic delight, only for the present moment; while the gloomy *spider*, worse than idle, busily is preparing his insidious nets for destruction, or sucking venom even from the most wholesome plants; this frugal community are wisely employed in providing for futurity, and collecting a copious stock of the most balmy treasures.——And O! might these meditations sink into my soul! would the GOD, who suggested each heavenly thought, vouchsafe to convert it into an *established principle*, to determine all my inclinations, and regulate my whole conduct! I should then gather advantages from the same blooming objects, more precious than your golden stores, ye industrious insects. I also should go home, laden with the *richest sweets*, and the *noblest spoils*, though I crop not a leaf, nor call a single flower my own.

HERE I behold, assembled in *one view*, almost all the various beauties which have been severally entertaining my imagination. The *vistas*, struck through an ancient wood, or formed by rows of venerable elms; conducting the spectator's observation to some remarkable object; or leading the traveller's footsteps to this delightful seat:—The *walls*, enriched with fruit-trees, and faced with a covering of their leafy extensions; I should rather have said, hung with different pieces of nature's noblest tapestry:——The *walks*, neatly shorn, and lined with verdure; or finely smoothed, and coated with gravel:—The *alleys*, arched with shades, to embower our noon-tide repose; or thrown open for the free accession of air, to invite us to our evening-recreation:——The decent *edgings* of box, which inclose, like a plain selvage, each beautiful compartment, and its splendid figures:——The shapely *ever-greens*, and *flowering shrubs*, which strike the eye, and appear with peculiar dignity in this distant situation:——The *bason*, with its crystal fount, floating in the centre, and diffusing an agreeable freshness through the whole:—The waters, falling from a remote *cascade*, and gently murmuring, as they flow along the pebbles:——*These*, added to the rest, and all so disposed, that each recommends and endears each, render the *whole* a most sweet ravishing scene of order and variety, of elegance and magnificence.

From so many lovely prospects, clustering upon the sight, it is impossible not to be reminded of *heaven*, that world of bliss, those regions of light, where the Lamb that was slain manifests his beatific presence, and his saints live for evermore.——But O! what pencil can sketch out a draught of that goodly land? What colours, or what style, can express the splendors of IMMANUEL's kingdom! Would some celestial hand draw aside the veil, but for one moment; and permit us to throw a single glance on those divine abodes; how would all sublunary possessions become tarnished in our eyes, and grow flat upon our taste! A glimpse, a transient glimpse of those unutterable beatitudes, would captivate our souls, and engross all their faculties. *Eden* itself, after such a vision, would appear a chearless *desert*; and all earthly charms intolerable *deformity*.

Very *excellent things are spoken of thee, thou city of* GOD *. Volumes have been written, and those by inspired men, to display the wonders of thy perfections. All that is rich and resplendent in the visible creation, has been called in to aid our conceptions, and elevate our ideas. But, indeed, no tongue can utter, no pen can describe, no fancy can imagine, what GOD, of his unbounded munificence, has prepared for them that love him.—Seeing then that all terrestrial things must come to a speedy end; and there remaineth a rest, a blissful and everlasting rest, for the people of GOD; let me never be too fondly attached to any present satisfactions. Weaned from whatever is temporal, may

* Psal. xci. i.

† This was written, when a very infectious and mortal distemper raged in the neighbourhood.

‡ Is. xxxii. 2.

‖ Acts iii. 19.

§ —— *Ego apis matinæ*
More modoque
Grata carpentis thyma. HOR.

* Psal. lxxxvii. 2.

I maintain a superior indifference for such transitory enjoyments; but long, long earnestly, for the mansions that are above; the paradise, "which the LORD hath planted, and not man." Thither may I transmit the chief of my *conversation*; and from thence expect the whole of my *happiness*. Be that the sacred, powerful magnet, which ever influences my heart, ever attracts my affections. *There* are such transcendent glories, as eye has not seen; *there* are such transporting pleasures as ear has not heard; *there* is such a fulness of joys, as the thought of man cannot conceive.

INTO that consummate felicity, those eternal fruitions, permit me, Madam, to wish you, in due time, an *abundant entrance*; and to assure you, that this wish is breathed, with the same sincerity and ardor, for my honoured correspondent, as it is,

Your most obedient, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

A DESCANT UPON CREATION.

With joy, with grief, that healing hand I see;
The skies it form'd, and yet it bled for me.

Night-Thoughts, No. IV.

IF the reader pleases to look back on page 44, he will find me engaged by a *promissory* note, to subjoin a *DESCANT* upon *CREATION*.

To *know the love of* CHRIST; to have such a deep apprehension of his unspeakable kindness, as may produce in our hearts an adoring gratitude, and an unfeigned faith; this, according to St *Paul*'s estimate, is the highest and happiest attainment in the sacred science of Christianity *. What follows, is an attempt to assist the attentive mind, in learning a line or two of that best and greatest lesson. It introduces the most conspicuous parts of the visible system, as so many *prompters* to our dull affections; each suggesting a *hint*, adapted to the important occasion, and suited to its respective character.

Can there be a more powerful incentive to devout *gratitude*, than to consider the magnificent and delicate scenes of the universe, with a particular reference to CHRIST, as the Creator?—Every object, viewed in this light, will surely administer incessant recruits to the languishing lamp of divine love. Every production in nature will strike a spark into the soul; and the whole creation concur to raise the smoking flax into a flame.

Can any thing impart a stronger *joy* to the believer, or more effectually confirm his *faith* in the crucified JESUS, than to behold the heaven declaring his glory, and the firmament shewing his handy-work? Surely, it must be matter of inexpressible consolation to the poor sinner, to observe the honours of his Redeemer, written with sun-beams, over all the face of the world.

We delight to read an account of our incarnate JEHOVAH, as he is revealed in the books of *Moses* and the prophets, as he is displayed in the writings of the evangelists and apostles. Let us also endeavour to see a sketch of his perfections, as they stand delineated in that stately volume, where every *leaf* is a spacious plain,—every *line*, a flowing brook,—every *period*, a lofty mountain.

Should any of my readers be unexercised in such speculations, I beg leave (in pursuance of my promise) to present them with a *specimen*; or to offer a clue, which may possibly lead their minds into this most improving and delightful train of thinking.

Should any be inclined to suspect the solidity of the following observations, or to condemn them, as the voice of rant, and the lawless flight of fancy; I must entreat such persons to recollect, that the grand doctrine, the hinge on which they all turn, is warranted and established by the unanimous testimony of the inspired penmen; who frequently celebrate IMMANUEL, or CHRIST JESUS, as the great almighty cause of all; assuring us, that *all things were created by him, and for him; and that in him all things consist* *.

On such a subject, what is wonderful, is far from being *extravagant*. To be wonderful, is the inseparable characteristic of GOD and his works; especially of that most distinguished and glorious event of the divine works, REDEMPTION; so glorious, that "all the miracles in *Egypt*, and the marvellous acts in "the field of *Zoan*;" all that the *Jewish* annals have recorded, or the human ear has heard; all dwindle into *trivial events*, are scarce worthy to be *remembered* †, in comparison of this infinitely grand and infinitely gracious transaction.—Kindled, therefore, into pleasing astonishment, by such a survey, let me give full scope to my meditations. Let me pour out my whole

* *Col.* i. 16. 17. Before my reader enters upon the following Descant, he is desired to peruse the note, page 43.

† Is. xliii. 18.

* Eph. iii. 19.

soul

ſoul on the boundleſs ſubject; not much regarding the limits, which cold criticiſm, or colder unbelief, might preſcribe.

O YE *angels*, that ſurround the throne; ye princes of heaven, "that excel in ſtrength," and are clothed with tranſcendent brightneſs; He, who placed you in thoſe ſtations of exalted honour, and dignified your nature with ſuch illuſtrious endowments; He, whom you all obey, and all adore: HE took not on him the angelic form, but was made fleſh, and found in faſhion as a man. Like us wretched mortals, He was ſubject to wearineſs, pain, and every infirmity, ſin only excepted;——that we might, one day, be raiſed to your ſublime abodes; be adopted into your bliſsful ſociety; and join with your tranſported choir, in giving glory to HIM that ſitteth upon the throne, and to the LAMB for ever and ever *.

O YE *heavens*, whoſe azure arches riſe immenſely high, and ſtretch unmeaſurably wide; ſtupendous amphitheatre! amidſt whoſe vaſt expanſive circuit, orbs of the moſt dreadful grandeur are perpetually running their amazing races: unfathomable depths of æther! where worlds unnumbered float; and, to our limited ſight, worlds unnumbered are loſt:—He, who adjuſted your dimenſions with his ſpan, and formed the magnificent ſtructure with his word; HE was once wrapt in ſwaddling-cloaths, and laid in a manger:——that the benefits accruing to his people, through his moſt meritorious humiliation, might have no other meaſure of their value than immenſity; might run parallel, in their duration, with eternity.

YE *ſtars*, that beam with inextinguiſhable brilliancy, through the midnight-ſky; oceans of flame, and centres of worlds, though ſeemingly little points of light! ——He, who ſhone, with eſſential effulgence, innumerable ages, before your twinkling tapers were kindled; and will ſhine with everlaſting majeſty and beauty, when your places in the firmament ſhall be known no more: HE was involved, for many years, in the deepeſt obſcurity; lay concealed in the contemptible city *Nazareth*; lay diſguiſed under the mean habit of a carpenter's ſon:——that he might plant the heavens †, as it were, with new conſtellations; and array theſe clods of earth, theſe houſes of clay, with a radiancy far ſuperior to yours; a radiancy, which will adorn the very heaven of heavens, when you ſhall vaniſh away like ſmoke ‡; or expire as momentary ſparks from the ſmitten ſteel.

COMETS, that ſometimes ſhoot into the illimitable tracts of æther, farther than the diſcernment of our eye is able to follow; ſometimes return from the long, long excurſion, and ſweep our affrighted hemiſphere with your enormous fiery train; that ſometimes make near approaches to the ſun, and burn almoſt in his immediate beams; ſometimes retire to the remoteſt diſtance, and freeze, for ages, in the exceſſive rigours of winter:——He, who, at his ſovereign pleaſure, withdraws the blazing wonder; or leads forth the portentous ſtranger, to ſhake terror over guilty kingdoms; HE was overwhelmed with the moſt ſhocking amazement, and plunged into the deepeſt anxiety; was chilled with apprehenſions of fear, and ſcorched by the flames of avenging wrath:——that I, and other depraved rebellious creatures, might not be eternally agitated with the extremes of jarring paſſions; oppoſite, yet, on either ſide, tormenting; far more tormenting to the ſoul, than the ſevereſt degrees of your heat and cold to the human ſenſe.

YE *planets*, that, winged with unimaginable ſpeed, traverſe the regions of the ſky; ſometimes climbing millions and millions of miles above, ſometimes deſcending as far below, the great axle of your motions: ye, that are ſo minutely faithful to the viciſſitudes of day and night; ſo exactly punctual in bringing on the changes of your reſpective ſeaſons:—He, who launched you, at firſt, from his mighty arm; who continually impels you with ſuch wonderful rapidity, and guides you with ſuch perfect regularity; who fixes "the habitation of his holineſs, and his glory," infinite heights above your ſcanty rounds: HE once became a helpleſs infant, ſojourned in our inferior world, fled from the perſecutors' ſword, and wandered as a vagabond in a foreign land:—that he might lead our feet into the way of peace; that he might bring us aliens near to GOD, bring us exiles home to heaven.

THOU *ſun*, inexhauſted ſource of light, and heat, and comfort! without whoſe preſence an univerſal gloom would enſue, and horror inſupportable; who, without the aſſiſtance of any other fire, ſheddeſt day through a thouſand realms; and, not confining thy munificence to realms only, extendeſt thy enlightening influences to ſurrounding worlds: prime chearer of the animal, and great enlivener of the vegetable tribes! ſo beautiful in thyſelf, ſo beneficial in thy effects, that erring Heathens addreſſed thee with adorations, and miſtook thee for thy Maker!—He, who filled thy orb with a profuſion of luſtre; luſtre, in its direct emanations, unſufferably bright, but, rebated by thy reflection, delightfully mild: He, before whom thy meridian ſplendors are but a ſhade; whoſe love tranſfuſed into thy heart, is infinitely more exhilirating, than even the ſweet and clear ſhining after the rain:—HE diveſted himſelf of his all-tranſcending diſtinctions, and drew a viel over the effulgence of his divinity; that, by ſpeaking to us, face to face, as a man ſpeaketh unto his friend, he might diſpel our intellectual darkneſs. His "viſage was marred *," and he became the ſcorn of men, the outcaſt of the people; that, by this manifeſtation of his unutterably tender regard for our welfare, he might diffuſe many a gleam of joy through our dejected minds: that, in another ſtate of things, he might clothe even our fallen nature, with the honours of that magnificent luminary; and give all the righteous to ſhine forth as the ſun, in the kingdom of their Father.

THOU *moon*, that walkeſt among the hoſt of ſtars, and, in thy lucid appearance, art ſuperior to them all; fair ruler of the night! ſometimes half-reſtoring the day, with thy waxing brightneſs; ſometimes waning into dimneſs, and ſcarcely ſcattering the nocturnal gloom; ſometimes covered with ſackcloth, and alarming the gazing nations!—He, who dreſſes thy opake globe, in beaming, but borrowed ſilver; He, whoſe dignity is unchangeable, underived, and all his own: He vouchſafed to wear a body of clay: HE was content to appear as in a bloody eclipſe, ſhorn of his reſplendent beams, and ſurrounded with a night of horror, which knew not one reviving ray.——Thus has he impowered his church, and all believers, to tread the moon under their feet †. Hence, inſpired with the hope of brighter glory, and of more enduring bliſs, are they enabled to triumph over all the vain anxieties,

* Rev. v. 13. † Iſ. li. 16.

‡ Alluding to a paſſage in *Iſaiah*, which is, I think, grand and elevated beyond all compariſon.—*Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens ſhall vaniſh away like ſmoke, and the earth ſhall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein ſhall die* like the feeble inſect: *but my righteouſneſs ſhall be for ever, and my ſalvation ſhall not be aboliſhed*, Iſ. li. 6.——With the great *Vitringa*, I tranſlate the words כמו בן not, *in like manner*: but, *like the feeble inſect*. Which renders the period more complete; the ſenſe more emphatical; and is more agreeable to the genius of the ſacred original.

* Iſ. lii. 14. † Rev. xii. 1.

and

and vainer amuſements, of this ſublunary, precarious, mutable world.

YE *thunders*, that, awfully grumbling in the diſtant clouds, ſeem to meditate indignation, and form the firſt eſſays of a far more frightful peal; or, ſuddenly burſting over our heads, rend the vault above, and ſhake the ground below, with the hideous, horrid crack: ye, that ſend your tremendous vollies from pole to pole, ſtartling the ſavage herds *, and aſtoniſhing the human race:—HE, who permits terror to ſound her trumpet, in your deep, prolonged, enlarging, aggravated roar: HE uttered a feeble infantile cry in the ſtable, and ſtrong expiring groans on the accurſed tree:——that he might, in the gentleſt accents, whiſper peace to our ſouls; and, at length, tune our voices to the melody of heaven.

O YE *lightnings* that brood, and lie couchant, in the ſulphureous vapours; that glance, with forked fury, from the angry gloom, ſwifter and fiercer than the lion ruſhes from his den; or open into vaſt, expanſive ſheets of flame, ſublimely waved over the proſtrate world, and fearfully lingering in the frighted ſkies: ye, that formerly laid in aſhes the licentious abodes of luſt and violence; that will, ere long, ſet on fire the elements, and co-operate in the conflagration of the globe:—HE, who kindles your flaſh, and directs you when to ſally, and where to ſtrike; He, who commiſſions your whirling bolts, whom to kill, and whom to ſpare: HE reſigned his ſacred perſon to the moſt barbarous indignities; ſubmitted his beneficent hands to the ponderous hammer, and the piercing nail; yea, with-held not his heart, his very heart, from the ſtab of the executioner's ſpear: and, inſtead of flaſhing confuſion on his outrageous tormentors; inſtead of ſtriking them dead to the earth, or plunging them to the depths of hell, with his frown; He cried——in his laſt moments, and with his agonizing lips, He cried, FATHER, FORGIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO!—O! what a pattern of patience for his ſaints! What an object of admiration for angels! What a conſtellation of every mild, amiable, and benign virtue, ſhining, in this hour of darkneſs, with ineffable ſplendor and beauty †!——Hence, hence it is, that we

* Pſal. xxix. 8.

† One can hardly forbear animadverting upon the *diſingenuous* temper, and perverſe taſte of *Celſus*, who attempts to turn this moſt diſtinguiſhing and ornamental part of our LORD's life, into ridicule and reproach.——Having ſpoken of CHRIST, as deſpitefully uſed, and arrayed in a purple robe; crowned with thorns; and holding, by way of mock majeſty, a reed inſtead of a ſceptre, (for he enters into all theſe circumſtances, which is a teſtimony to their truth even from the mouth of an enemy) he adds,—Τι δε ουκ επεδειξεν, αλλα τον γε Διονυσον, και τον Ηρακλεα παρελαβε τι ειλοδορησας; και τον μεν ουκ αν ισως ηξιωσας ὑβρεως ενεγκειν, ει παρην, ουτως ευλαβες και δικαιος; Orig. contra CELS. p. 81. i. e. *Why, in the name of wonder, does he not, on this occaſion, at leaſt, aſſiſt the* GOD? *Why does he not deliver himſelf from this ſhocking ignominy: or execute ſome ſignal vengeance on the authors of ſuch injurious and abuſive inſults, both of himſelf and his Father?*——Why, *Celſus?* Becauſe HE was pureneſs and gentleneſs itſelf; whereas *your* deities were ſlaves to their own turbulent and reſentful paſſions. Becauſe *they* were little better than ſavages in human ſhape; who too often made a merit of ſlaughter, and took a horrid pride in ſpilling blood:——While CHRIST was the Prince of peace, and came not to deſtroy men's lives, but to ſave. Becauſe any madman on earth, or fury from hell, is capable of venting his rage: but who, amidſt ſuch unſufferable provocations and barbarities, who, having in his own hand the power to reſcue himſelf, the power to avenge himſelf, could ſubmit to all, with an unruffled ſerenity of patience; and not only not be exaſperated, but *overcome*, in ſo triumphant a manner, *evil with good?* None but CHRIST! none but CHRIST! This was compaſſion worthy of GOD; clemency and charity *truly divine*.

Therefore, the calumny raiſed by the ſame virulent objector in another place, carries its own confutation; or rather, falls with a weight of *infamy* on his dunghill deities; while it bears a moſt *honourable* teſtimony to the majeſtic and invincible meekneſs of our Saviour. Ει μη, ſays he to the Chriſtian, τα αγαλματα τουτων λοιδορων καταγελας, και ου γε τον Διονυσον η τον Ηρακλεα παρελθε τι ειλοδορησας, ουκ αν ισως ηξιωσας ανεχεσθαι την γε τον Θεον παρελθε καλλιπληξ και κολαζουσης, ωσπερ οι τυραννοι δορυφοροι πεποιηκασιν, ibid. p. 404. i. e. *You, indeed, take upon you to deride the images of our deities; but if* Bacchus *himſelf, or* Hercules *had been preſent, you would not have dared to offer ſuch an affront; or if you had been ſo preſumptuous, would have ſeverely ſmarted for your inſolence! Whereas, they who tormented the very perſon of your* GOD, *and even extended him with mortal agony on the croſs, ſuffered no effects of his diſpleaſure.*

* *Juvenal* ſeems to conſider the clouds, under this ſame character, in that beautiful line,

Quicquid habent telorum armamentaria cæli.

† *Job* has informed us, for what purpoſe the magazines of the firmament are ſtocked with hail. That they may be ready *againſt the day of battle and war.* Job xxxvii. 23.—*Joſhua* has recorded, what terrible ſlaughter has been made, by thoſe *miſſive weapons* of the Almighty, *Joſh.* x. 11.—Modern hiſtorians relate, that, when *Edward* III. invaded *France*, a ſhower of hailſtones deſcended, of ſuch a prodigious ſize, that ſix thouſand horſes, and one thouſand men, were ſtruck dead inſtantaneouſly.—But the moſt dreadful deſcription of this *great ordinance* of the heavens, is given us in *Rev.* xvi. 21. *There fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every ſtone about the weight of a talent.*

are not trembling under the lightnings of mount Sinai, that we are not blaſted by the flames of divine vengeance; or doomed to dwell with everlaſting burnings.

YE frowning *wintry clouds*, oceans pendent in air, and burdening the winds: He, in whoſe hand you are an overflowing ſcourge; or, by whoſe appointment an arſenal * of warlike ſtores: He, who opens your ſluices, and a flood guſhes forth, to deſtroy the fruits of the earth, and drown the huſbandman's hopes; who moulds you into frozen balls, and you are thunderlinked with death †, on the troops of his enemies: HE, inſtead of diſcharging the furiouſneſs of wrath upon this guilty head, poured out his prayers, poured out his ſighs; poured out his very ſoul, for me and my fellow-tranſgreſſors:——that, by virtue of his ineſtimable propitiation, the overflowings of divine good-will might be extended to ſinful men; that ſkies might pour down righteouſneſs; and peace on her downy wings, peace with her balmy bleſſings, deſcend to dwell on earth.

YE *vernal clouds!* furls of finer air, folds of ſofter moiſture: He, who draws you, in copious exhalations, from the briny deep; bids you leave every diſtaſteful quality behind, and become floating fountains of ſweeteſt waters: He, who diſſolves you into gentle rain, and diſmiſſes you in fruitful ſhowers; who kindly commiſſions you to drop down fatneſs, as you fall, and to ſcatter flowers over the field:——HE, in the unutterable bitterneſs of his ſpirit, was without any comforting ſenſe of his almighty Father's preſence: He, when his bones were burnt up like a firebrand, had not one drop of that ſacred conſolation, which, on many of his afflicted ſervants, has been diſtilled as the evening-dews, and has "given ſongs in the night" of diſtreſs:—that, from this unallayed and inconſolable anguiſh of our all-gracious Maſter, we, as from a well of ſalvation, might derive large draughts of ſpiritual refreſhment.

THOU grand *ethereal bow*; whoſe beauties flouriſh the firmament, and charm every ſpectator: He, who paints thee on the fluid ſkirts of the ſky; who decks thee with all the pride of colours, and bends thee into that graceful and majeſtic figure; at whoſe command, thy vivid ſtreaks ſweetly riſe, or ſwiftly fade:——HE, through all his life, was arrayed in the humble garb of poverty; and, at his exit, wore the gorgeous garment of contempt: inſomuch that even his own familiar friends, aſhamed or afraid to own him, "hid as it

"were their faces from him *."—to teach us a becoming disdain for the unsubstantial and transitory glitter of all worldly vanities: to introduce us, in robes brighter than the tinges of thy resplendent arch; even in the robes of his own immaculate righteousness, to introduce us, before that august and venerable throne, which the peaceful rainbow surrounds; surrounds, as a pledge of inviolable fidelity, and infinite mercy.

Ye *storms* and *tempests*, which vex the continent, and toss the seas; which dash navies on the rocks, and drive forests from their roots: He, whose breath rouses you into such resistless fury, and whose nod controls you in your wildest career: He, who holds the rapid and raging hurricane in streightened reins; and walks, dreadfully serene, on the very wings of the wind: HE went, all meek and gentle, like a lamb to the slaughter for us; and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.—Thus are we instructed to bear, with decent magnanimity, the various assaults of adversity; and to pass, with a becoming tranquillity of temper, through all the rude blasts of injurious treatment. Thus are we delivered from the unutterably fiercer storms of incensed and inexorable justice; from the "fire, the "brimstone, and the horrible tempest, which will be "the final portion of the ungodly."

Thou *pestilence*, that scatterest ten thousand poisons from thy baleful wings; tainting the air, and infecting the nations; under whose malignant influence, joy is blasted, and nature sickens; mighty regions are depopulated, and once crouded cities are left without inhabitants: He, who arms thee with inevitable destruction, and bids thee march before † his angry countenance, to spread desolation among the tents of the wicked, and be the forerunner of far more fearful indignation: HE, in his holy humanity, was arraigned as a criminal; and, though innocence itself, yea, the very pattern of perfection, was condemned to die, like the most execrable miscreant. As a nuisance to society, and the very bane of the public happiness, he was hurried away to execution, and hammered to the gibbet:——that, by his blood, he might prepare a sovereign medicine, to cure us of a more fatal distemper, than the pestilence which walketh in darkness, or the sickness which destroyeth at noon-day: that he might himself say to our last enemy, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, "I will be thy destruction ‡."

HEAT, whose burning influence parches the *Libyan* wilds; tans into soot the *Ethiopian*'s complexion; and makes every species of life pant, and droop, and languish: *Cold*, whose icy breath glazes yearly the *Russian* seas; often glues the frozen sailor to the cordage; and stiffens the traveller into a statue of rigid flesh:——HE, who sometimes blends you both, and produces the most agreeable temperature; sometimes suffers you to act separately, and rage with intolerable severity: that King of heaven, and controller of universal nature, when dwelling in a tabernacle of clay, was exposed to chilling damps, and smitten by sultry beams. The stars, in their midnight-watches, heard him pray; and the sun, in his meridian fervours, saw him toil.——Hence are our frozen hearts dissolved into a mingled flow of wonder, love, and joy; being conscious of a deliverance from those insufferable flames, which, kindled by divine indignation, burn to the lowest hell.

* *Is.* liii. 3. נמסתר ממנו כמסי *Fuit tanquam aliquis, a quo quisque faciem occultaret. He was as some* flagitious and *abandoned wretch, from whom every one*, disdaining such a character, and disclaiming such an acquaintance, studiously *hid his face.*

† *Before him went the pestilence*, Heb. iii. 5.

‡ Hos. xiii. 14.

Thou *ocean*, vast world of waters! He, who sunk that capacious bed for thy reception, and poured the liquid element into unfathomable channels; before whom, all thy foaming billows, and floating mountains, are as the small drop of a bucket: who, by the least intimation of his will, swells thy fluid kingdoms, in wild confusion, to mingle with the clouds; or reduces them in calm composure, to slumber on the shores: He, who once gave thee a warrant to overwhelm the whole earth, and bury all its degenerate inhabitants in a watery grave; but has now laid an everlasting embargo on thy boisterous waves; and bound thee, all fierce and madding as thou art, in chains stronger than adamant, yet formed of despicable sand;—all the waves of vengeance and wrath, of tribulation and anguish, passed over HIS crucified body, and HIS agonizing soul: that we might emerge from those depths of misery, from that abyss of guilt, into which we were plunged by *Adam*'s fall, and more irretrievably sunk by our own transgressions: that, at the last, we might be restored to that happy world, which is represented, in the vision of God, as having "no sea *;" to denote its perpetual stability, and undisturbed serenity.

Ye *mountains*, that overlook the clouds and project a shade into distant provinces; everlasting pyramids of nature, not to be shaken by conflicting elements; not to be shattered by the bolts of thunder; nor impaired even by the ravages of time:—He, who bid your ridges rise so high, and your foundations stand so fast: He, in whose scale you are lighter than dust; in whose eye you are less than nothing:—HE sunk beneath a load of woes; woes insupportable, but not his own; when he took our iniquities upon himself, and heaved the more than mountainous burden from a guilty world.

Ye verdant *woods*, that crown our hills, and are crowned yourselves with leafy honours: Ye humble *shrubs*, adorned, in spring, with opening blossoms; and fanned, in summer, by gentle gales: Ye, that in distant climes, or in cultivated gardens, breathe out spicy odours, and embalm the air with delightful perfumes:—your all-glorious and ever-blessed Creator's head was encircled with the thorny wreath; his face was defiled with contumelious spitting; and his body bathed in a bloody sweat: that we might wear the crown, the crown of glory, which fadeth not away; and live for evermore, surrounded with delights, as much surpassing yours, as yours exceed the rugged desolations of winter.

Thou mantling *vine*; He who hangs on thy slender shoots, the rich, transparent, weighty cluster; who, under thy unornamented foliage, and amidst the pores of thy otherwise worthless bough, prepares the liquor,—the refined and exalted liquor, which chears the nations, and fills the cup of joy: *trees*, whose branches are elevated and waving in air; or diffused in easy confinement, along a sunny wall: He, who bends you with a lovely burden of delicious fruits; whose genial warmth beautifies their rind, and mellows their taste:—HE, when voluntarily subject to our wants, instead of being refreshed with your generous juices, or regaled with your luscious pulp, had a loathsome potion of vinegar, mingled with gall, addressed to his lips:—that we might sit under the shadow of his merits, with great tranquillity and the utmost complacency: that, ere long, being admitted into the paradise of God, we might eat of the Tree of Life †, and drink new wine with him in his Father's kingdom.

Ye luxuriant *meadows*; He who, without the feedman's industry, replenishes your irriguous lap with ne-

* Rev. xxi. 1. † Rev. ii. 7.

ver-failing crops of herbage; and enamels their chearful green with flowers of every hue:—Ye fertile *fields*; He, who bleſſes the labours of the huſbandman; enriches your well-tilled plains with waving harveſts, and calls forth the ſtaff of life from your furrows: He, who cauſes both meadows and fields to laugh and ſing, for the abundance of plenty:—HE was no ſtranger to corroding hunger, and parching thirſt; he, alas! ate the bitter bread of woe, and had "plenteouſneſs of tears to drink:"—that we might partake of richer dainties, than thoſe which are produced by the dew of heaven, and proceed from the fatneſs of the earth: that we might feed on "the hidden manna," and eat the bread which giveth life, eternal life, unto the world.

Ye *mines*, rich in yellow ore, or bright with veins of ſilver; that diſtribute your ſhining treaſures, as far as winds can waft the veſſel of commerce; that beſtow your alms on monarchs, and have princes for your penſioners:——Ye beds of *gems*, toy-ſhops of nature! which form, in dark retirement, the glittering ſtone: *diamonds*, that ſparkle with a brilliant water; *rubies*, that glow with a crimſon flame: *emeralds*, dipped in the freſheſt verdure of ſpring; *ſapphires*, decked with the faireſt drapery of the ſky: *topaz*, emblazed with a golden gleam; *amethyſt*, impurpled with the bluſhes of the morning:—He, who tinctures the metallic duſt, and conſolidates the lucid drop; HE, when ſojourning on earth, had no riches, but the riches of diſintereſted benevolence; had no ornament, but the ornament of unſpotted purity. Poor he was in his circumſtances, and mean in all his accommodations; that WE might be rich in grace, "and obtain ſalvation with eternal glory:" that we might inhabit the new *Jeruſalem*; that ſplendid city! whoſe ſtreets are paved with gold; whoſe gates are formed of pearl; and the walls garniſhed with all manner of precious ſtones *.

Ye guſhing *fountains*, that trickle potable ſilver through the matted graſs: ye fine tranſparent *ſtreams*, that glide, in cryſtal waves, along your fringed banks: ye deep and ſtately *rivers*, that wind and wander in your courſe, to ſpread your favours wider; that gladden kingdoms in your progreſs, and augment the ſea with your tribute:——He, who ſupplies all your currents from his own ever-flowing and inexhauſtible liberality: HE, when his nerves were racked with exquiſite pain, and his blood inflamed by a raging fever, cried, I THIRST; and was denied (unparalleled hardſhip!) in this his great extremity, was denied the poor refreſhment of a ſingle drop of water:—that we, having all ſufficiency in all things, might abound to every good work; might be filled with the fulneſs of ſpiritual bleſſings here, and hereafter be ſatisfied with that fulneſs of joy, which is at GOD's right hand for evermore.

Ye *birds*, chearful tenants of the bough, gaily dreſſed in gloſſy plumage; who wake the morn, and ſolace the groves, with your artleſs lays: inimitable architects! who, without rule or line, build your penſile ſtructures, with all the nicety of proportion: you have each his commodious neſt, roofed with ſhades, and lined with warmth, to protect and cheriſh the callow brood.—But He, who tuned your throats to harmony, and taught you that curious ſkill; HE was a man of ſorrows, and had not where to lay his head; had not where to lay his head, till he felt the pangs of diſſolution, and was laid in the ſilent grave;—that we, dwelling under the wings of Omnipotence, and reſting in the boſom of infinite love, might ſpend an harmonious eternity, in "ſinging the ſong of *Moſes* and of the "LAMB."

BEES, induſtrious workmen! that ſweep, with buſy wing, the flowery garden; and ſearch the blooming heath; and ſip the melliſluous dews! ſtrangers to idleneſs! that ply, with inceſſant aſſiduity, your pleaſing taſk; and ſuffer no opening bloſſom to paſs unexplored, no ſunny gleam to ſlip away unimproved: moſt ingenious artificers! that cling to the fragrant buds; drain them of their treaſured ſweets; and extract (if I may ſo ſpeak) even the odoriferous ſouls of herbs, and plants, and flowers:—you, when you have completed your work; have collected, refined, and ſecurely lodged the ambroſial ſtores; when you might reaſonably expect the peaceful fruition of your acquiſitions; you, alas! are barbarouſly deſtroyed, and leave your hoarded delicacies to others; leave them to be enjoyed by your very murderers. I cannot but pity your hard deſtiny!—How then ſhould my bowels melt with ſympathy, and my eyes flow with tears *, when I remember, that *thus*, *thus* it fared with your and our incarnate Maker! After a life of the moſt exemplary and exalted piety; a life filled with offices of beneficence, and labours of love; HE was by wicked hands, crucified and ſlain. He left the honey of his toil, the balm of his blood, and the riches of his obedience, to be ſhared among others; to be ſhared even among thoſe, who too often crucify him afreſh, and put him to open ſhame.

SHALL I mention the animal, which *ſpins* her ſoft, her ſhining, exquiſitely fine *ſilken* thread †? whoſe matchleſs manufactures lend an ornament to grandeur, and make royalty itſelf more magnificent.——Shall I take notice of the cell, in which, when the gaiety and buſineſs of life are over, the little recluſe immures herſelf, and ſpends the remainder of her days in retirement?—Shall I rather obſerve the ſepulchre, which, when cloyed with pleaſure and weary of the world, ſhe prepares for her own interment? Or how, when a ſtated period is elapſed, ſhe wakes from a death-like inactivity; breaks the incloſure of her tomb; throws off the duſky ſhroud; aſſumes a new form; puts on a more ſumptuous array; and, from an inſect creeping on the ground, becomes a winged inhabitant of the air?—No: this is a poor *reptile*; and therefore unworthy to ſerve as an illuſtration, when any character of the Son of GOD comes under conſideration. But let me correct myſelf. Was not CHRIST (to uſe the language of his own bleſſed Spirit) *a worm, and no man* ‡? in appearance ſuch, and treated as ſuch. Did he not alſo bequeath the fine linen of his own moſt perfect righteouſneſs, to compoſe the marriage-garment §, for our diſarrayed and defiled

* Canſt thou, ungrateful man, his torments ſee,
Nor *drop a tear* for HIM, who *pour'd his blood* for thee?
PITTS's *Poems*.

† No one, I hope, will be offended at my introducing, on *ſuch* an occaſion, creatures of ſo low a rank. Since even the volumes of inſpiration ſeem to lend me the ſanction of their ſacred authority; as they diſdain not to compare the bleſſed JESUS to a *door*, a *highway*, &c. And, perhaps, all compariſons which reſpect a Being of *infinite* dignity, are not only mean, but *equally* mean and unworthy.

I am ſenſible, likewiſe, that in this paragraph, and ſome others, *all* the circumſtances are not completely correſpondent. But if, in *ſome* grand particulars, the reddition anſwers to the deſcription; this, I truſt, will be ſufficient for my purpoſe, and ſatisfactory to my readers.—Perhaps, it would be no miſtaken caution, to apply the ſame obſervation to many of the beautiful ſimilitudes, parables, and allegories, uſed by our LORD; ſuch as the *brazen ſerpent*, the *unjuſt* ſteward, the *thief* in the night, &c. which, if ſcrupulouſly ſifted, or rigorouſly ſtrained, for an entire coincidence in *every* circumſtance, muſt appear to great diſadvantage, and lead into palpable inconveniences.

‡ Pſal. xxii. 6.

§ This, and ſeveral other hints, interſperſed in the Meditations refer to the *active* and *paſſive* righteouſneſs of CHRIST, *imputed* to believers, for their juſtification: which, in the opinion of many great expoſitors, is the myſtical and the moſt ſublime meaning of the *wedding-garment*, ſo emphatically and forcibly

* Rev. xxi. 19. 21.

souls? Did he not, before his flesh saw corruption, emerge triumphant from the grave; and not only mount the lower firmament, but ascend the heaven of heavens; taking possession of those sublime abodes, in our name, and as our forerunner.

YE *cattle*, that rest in your inclosed pastures; ye *beasts*, that range the unlimited forest; ye *fish*, that rove through trackless paths of the sea: *sheep*, clad in garments, which, when left by you, are wore by kings: *kine*, who feed on verdure, which, transmuted in your bodies, and strained from your udders, furnishes a repast for queens: *lions*, roaring after your prey; *leviathan*, taking your pastime in the great deep; with all that wing the firmament, or tread the soil, or swim the wave: —He, who spreads his ever-hospitable board; who admits you all to be his continual guests; and suffers you to want no manner of thing that is good:—HE was destitute, afflicted, tormented: He endured all that was miserable and reproachful; in order to exalt a degenerate race, who had debased themselves to a level with the beasts that perish, unto seats of distinguished and immortal honour; in order to introduce the slaves of sin, and heirs of hell, into mansions of consummate and everlasting bliss.

SURELY, the contemplation of such a subject, and the distant anticipation of such a hope, may almost turn earth into heaven, and make even inanimate nature vocal with praise. Let it then break forth from every creature. Let the *meanest* feel the inspiring impulse; let the *greatest* acknowledge themselves unable, worthily to express the stupendous goodness.

Praise HIM, ye *insects* that crawl on the ground; who, though high above all height, humbled himself to dwell in dust. *Birds* of the air, waft on your wings, and warble in your notes, HIS praise; who, though LORD of the celestial abodes; while sojourning on earth, wanted a shelter commodious as your nests.—Ye rougher world of *brutes*, join with the gentle songsters of the shade, and howl to HIM your hoarse applause; who breaks the jaw-bones of the infernal lion; who softens into mildness the savage disposition; and bids the wolf lie down, in amicable agreement, with the lamb. *Bleat* out, ye hills; let broader *lows* be responsive from the vales; ye forests catch, and ye rocks retain, the inarticulate hymn; because MESSIAH the Prince *feeds his flock, like a shepherd. He gathers the lambs with his arm; he carries them in his bosom; and gently leads those that are with young* *.——Wave, ye stately *cedars*, in sign of worship, wave your branching heads to HIM, who meekly bowed his own, on the accursed tree. Pleasing *prospects*, scenes of beauty, where nicest art conspires with lavish nature, to form a paradise below; lay forth all your charms, and in all your charms confess yourselves a mere blank, compared with his amiableness, who is "faireſt among ten thousand, and altogether "lovely."——Drop down, ye *showers*; and testify, as you fall; testify of HIS grace, which descends more copiously than the rain, distils more sweetly than the dew. Let sighing *gales* breathe, and murmuring *rivulets* flow; breathe and flow in harmonious consonance to HIM; whose Spirit is far more reviving than the cooling breeze; who is himself the fountain of living waters.

YE *lightnings*, blaze to HIS honour; ye *thunders*, sound HIS praise; while reverberating *clouds* return the roar, and bellowing *oceans* propagate the tremendous anthem.——*Meanest* of creatures, add your silent oratory, and display the triumphs of HIS meekness; who, though he maketh the clouds his chariot, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea; though the thunder is his voice, and the lightning his sword of justice; yet, amidst the most abusive and cruel injuries, was submissive and lifted not his hand, was "dumb and "opened not his mouth."——Great *source of day*, address thy radiant homage to a far sublimer sun. Write, in all thy ample round, with every lucid beam, O! write a testimony to HIM, who is the brightness of his Father's glory; who is the Sun of righteousness to a sinful world; and is risen, never to go down; is risen, to be our everlasting light.—Shine clear, ye *skies*; look gay, thou *earth*; let the *floods* clap their hands, and let *every* creature wear a smile: for he cometh, the CREATOR himself cometh, to be manifested in the flesh; and with him comes pardon, peace, and joy; every virtue and all felicity comes in his train.—*Angels* and *archangels*, let your songs be of JESUS, and teach the very heavens to echo with his adored and majestic name. Ye beheld him, with greater transports of admiration, when you attended his agony in the garden, and saw him prostrate on the ground, than when you beheld universal nature rising at his call, and saw the wonders of his creating might. Tune to loftiest notes your golden harps, and waken raptures unknown before even in heavenly breasts: while all that has *breath* swells the concert of harmony; and all that has *being* unites in the tribute of praise.

Chiefly, let *man* exalt his voice; let man, with distinguished hosannas, hail the REDEEMER. For man, he was stretched on the racking cross; for man,

* Is. xl. 11.

he

forcibly recommended by the Teacher sent from GOD, *Matth.* xxii. 11. A doctrine, which some of those who honour my Meditations with a perusal, probably may not receive with much, if any, approbation. I hope, the *whole* performance will not be cashiered, for *one* difference in sentiment. And I beg, that the sentiment itself may not hastily be rejected, without a serious hearing. For I have the pleasure of being intimately acquainted with a gentleman of good learning, and distinguished sense, who had *once* as strong prepossessions against this tenet, as can well be imagined. Yet *now* he not only admits it, as a truth; but embraces it, as the joy of his heart; and cleaves to it, as the rock of his hopes.

A clear and cogent treatise, entitled, *Submission to the righteousness of* GOD; was the instrument of removing his prejudices, and reducing him to a better judgment.——In which he has been happily confirmed, by the authority of the most *illustrious* names, and the works of the most *eminent* pens, that have ever adorned our church and nation.——In this number are, Bishop *Jewel*, one of our great reformers; and the other venerable compilers of our homilies;—Archbishop *Usher*, that oracle of universal learning;—Bishop *Hall*, the devout and sprightly orator of his age;—the copious and fervent Bishop *Hopkins*;—the singularly good and unaffected Bishop *Beveridge*;—that everlasting honour of the bench of judicature, Lord Chief Justice *Hales*;—the nervous, florid, and persuasive Dean *Stanhope*;—the practical and perspicuous Mr *Burkitt*;—and, to summon no other evidence, that *matchless* genius *Milton*; who, in various parts of his divine poem, inculcates this *comfortable* truth; and, in *one* passage, represents it under the very same image, which is made use of above, *book* X. *l.* 222.

I had almost forgot to mention, that the treatise entitled, *Submission*, &c. was written by Mr *Benjamin Jenks*;—whose book of *devotions* has deservedly passed through *eleven* editions; is truly admirable for the sublimity, spirituality, and propriety of the sentiments; as well as for the concise form, and pathetic turn of the expression:—Whose book of *meditations*, though no less worthy of general acceptance, has for a considerable time, been almost unknown and extinct. But it is now revived, and is lately published, in two octavo volumes, by Mr *James Rivington*. For which service he has my thanks; I flatter myself, he will have the thanks of the public: as I am persuaded, could religion and virtue speak, he would have *their* acknowledgments also. Since few treatises are more happily calculated, to represent religion in its native beauty, and to promote the interests of genuine virtue.—On which account, I trust, the *candid* will excuse me, and the *judicious* will not condemn me, even though the recommendation of those devotions and of these meditations may appear to be a digression from my subject.

N. B. *Should the reader be inclined to examine the aforementioned tenet, he will find it stated, discussed, and applied to its due improvement, in a piece entitled* THERON *and* ASPASIO, *which follows immediately after the Meditations.*

he was conſigned to the gloomy ſepulchre; for man, he procured grace unmeaſurable, and bliſs inconceivable.——However *different*, therefore, in your age, or more different in your circumſtances, be *unanimous*, O men, in magnifying a Saviour, who is no reſpecter of perſons, who gave himſelf a ranſom for all.——Bend, ye *kings*, from your thrones of ivory and gold; in your robes of imperial purple, fall proſtrate at HIS feet; who forſook a nobler throne, and laid aſide more illuſtrious enſigns of majeſty, that you might reign with GOD for ever and ever.——*Children* of *poverty*, meaneſt of mortals, (if any can be called poor, who are thus enriched; if any can be accounted mean, who are *thus* ennobled), rejoice, greatly rejoice, in GOD your Saviour; who choſe to be indigent, was willing to be contemned, that you might be entitled to the treaſures, and be numbered with the princes in heaven.——*Sons* of *affliction*, though harraſſed with pain, and inured to anguiſh, O change your groans into ſongs of gratitude. Let no complaining voice, no jarring ſtring be heard in the univerſal ſymphony; but *glorify* the LAMB even *in the fires* *; who himſelf bore greater torment, than you feel; and has promiſed you a ſhare in the joy which he inherits; who has made your ſufferings ſhort, and will make your reſt eternal.——*Men* of *hoary* locks, bending beneath a weight of years, and tottering on the brink of the grave, let CHRIST be your ſupport under all infirmities, lean upon CHRIST, as the rock of your ſalvation. Let his name, his precious name, form the laſt accents, which quiver on your pale expiring lips.——And let this be the firſt, that liſps on your tongues, ye tender *infants*. Remember your REDEEMER, in your earlieſt moments. Devote the choice of your hours to the learning of his will, and the chief of your ſtrength to the glorifying of HIS name; who, in the perfection of health, and the very prime of manhood, was content to become a motionleſs and ghaſtly corpſe, that you might be girt with the vigour, and clothed with the bloom, of eternal youth.

——*Spirits* of *juſt* men made *perfect*, who are releaſed from the burden of the fleſh; and freed from all the vexatious ſolicitations of corruption in yourſelves; delivered from all the injurious effects of iniquity in others; who ſojourn no longer in the tents of ſtrife, or the territories of diſorder; but are received into that pure, harmonious, holy ſociety, where every one acts up to his amiable and exalted character; where GOD himſelf is pleaſed *graciouſly* and *immediately* to preſide.——You find, not without pleaſing aſtoniſhment, your hopes improved into actual enjoyment, and your faith ſuperſeded by the beatific viſion. You feel all your former ſtyneſs of behaviour, happily loſt in the overflowings of unbounded love; and all your little differences of opinion entirely bore down by tides of invariable truth. Bleſs, therefore, with all your enlarged powers, bleſs *his* infinitely larger goodneſs; who, when he had overcome the ſharpneſs of death, opened the gates of paraduſe, opened the kingdom of heaven, to all generations, and to every denomination of the faithful.

——*Men* of *holy* converſation, and *humble* tempers, think of HIM, who *loved you, and waſhed you from your ſins in his own blood*. Think of him, on your ſilent couch; talk of him, in every ſocial interview. Glory in his excellencies; make your boaſt of his obedience; and add, ſtill continue to add, the incenſe of a dutiful life, to all the oblations of a grateful tongue.—*Weakeſt* of *believers*, who go mourning under a ſenſe of guilt, and conflicting with the ceaſeleſs aſſaults of temptation; put off your ſackcloth, and be girded with gladneſs. Becauſe JESUS is as merciful to hear, as he is mighty to help. Becauſe he is touched with the tendereſt ſympathizing concern, for all your diſtreſſes; and he lives, ever lives, to be your *Advocate* with the FATHER. Why then ſhould uneaſy doubts ſadden your countenances? why ſhould deſponding fears oppreſs your ſouls? Turn, turn thoſe diſconſolate ſighs into chearful hymns; ſince you have his *powerful interceſſion*, and his *ineſtimable merits*, to be your anchor in all tribulations, to be your paſſport into eternal bleſſedneſs.

MOST of all, ye *miniſters* of the *ſanctuary*, heralds commiſſioned from above; lift, every one, his voice like a trumpet, and loudly proclaim the REDEEMER. Get ye up, ye ambaſſadors of peace, get ye up into the high mountains; and ſpread far and wide the honours of the LAMB, "that was ſlain, but is alive "for evermore." Teach every ſacred roof, to reſound with his fame; and every human heart, to glow with his love. Declare, as far as the force of words will go, declare the inexhauſtible fulneſs of that great atonement, whoſe merits are commenſurate with the glories of the DIVINITY *. Tell the ſinful wretch, what pity yearns in IMMANUEL's bowels; what blood he has ſpilt, what agonies he has endured, what wonders he has wrought, for the ſalvation of his enemies. Invite the indigent, to become rich; entreat the guilty, to accept of pardon; becauſe with the crucified JESUS is plenteous redemption, and all-ſufficiency to ſave.——While you, placed in conſpicuous ſtations, pour the joyful ſound; may I, as I ſteal through the vale of humble life, catch the pleaſing accents! For *me* the Author of all bleſſings became a curſe; for *me*, his bones were diſlocated, and his fleſh was torn; he hung with ſtreaming veins, and an agonizing ſoul, on the croſs, for *me*. O may I, in my little ſphere, and amidſt the ſcanty circle of my acquaintance, at leaſt whiſper theſe glad tranſporting tidings; whiſper them from my own heart, that they may ſurely reach, and ſweetly penetrate theirs.

But, when men and angels raiſe the grand hymn; when all worlds, and all beings, add their *collective* acclamations; this full, fervent, and univerſal chorus will be ſo *inferior* to the riches of the REDEEMER's grace; ſo *diſproportionate* to the magnificence of his glory, that it will ſeem but to *debaſe* the unutterable ſubject it attempts to exalt. The loud Hallelujah will *die away*, in the ſolemn mental eloquence of proſtrate, rapturous *ſilent* adoration.

O goodneſs infinite! goodneſs immenſe!
And love that paſſeth knowledge!——*Words are vain;*
Language is loſt in wonders ſo divine.
"Come then, expreſſive Silence, *muſe his praiſe."*

* If in this place and others I have ſpoken magnificently of the blood of CHRIST, and its inſuperable efficacy to expiate guilt; I think, it is no more than is expreſſed in a very celebrated hymn, written by one of the greateſt *wits*, who had alſo been one of the greateſt *libertines*, and afterwards commenced one of the moſt remarkable *penitents* in *France*: A hymn, which even Mr *Boyle* confeſſes to be a *very fine* one; which another great critic calls an *admirable* one; and which a genius ſuperior to them both recommends as a *noble* one. (See *Spect.* vol. VII. No. 513.)

'The author, having acknowledged his crimes to be beyond meaſure heinous, and almoſt beyond forgiveneſs provoking; ſo provoking, as to render tears from ſuch eyes offenſive, and prayers from ſuch lips abominable;—compoſes himſelf to ſubmit, without the leaſt repining ſentiment; to ſubmit, even with praiſe and adoration, to the moſt dreadful doom. Accordingly, he ſtands in unfeigned expectation of being inſtantly ſtruck by the bolts of vengeance: but—with a turn of thought equally ſurpriſing and frightful; with a faith properly founded, and happily firm; he adds,

Yet where! O where! *can* ev'n thy thunders fall?
CHRIST's blood o'erſpreads and ſhields me from them *all*.

* If. xxiv. 15.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART II.

To PAUL ORCHARD, of *Stoke-Abbey*, in *Devonshire*, Esq.

Dear SIR,

AS your honoured father was pleased to make choice of me to answer in your name at the font, and to exercise a sort of *guardianship* over your spiritual interests; permit me, by putting these little treatises into your hand, to fulfil some part of that solemn obligation.

GRATITUDE for many signal favours, and a conscientious regard to my sacred engagement, have long ago inspired my breast with the warmest wishes, both for your true *dignity*, and real *happiness*. Nor can I think of a more endearing, or a more effectual way, of advancing either the one or the other, than to set before you a sketch of your excellent *father's* character.—Illustrious examples are the most winning incitements to virtue. And none can come attended with such particular recommendations to YOU, Sir, as the pattern of that worthy person, from whom you derive your very being.

A MOST cordial and reverential esteem for the *divine word*, was one of his remarkable qualities. Those oracles of heaven were his principal delight, and his inseparable companions. Your gardens, your solitary walks, and the hedges of your fields, can witness *, with what an unwearied assiduity he exercised himself in the law of the LORD. From hence he fetched his maxims of wisdom, and formed his judgment of things. The sacred *precepts* were the model of his temper, and the guide of his life; while the precious *promises* were the joy of his heart, and his portion for ever.

IMPROVING company was another of his most relishing pleasures. Few gentlemen were better furnished, either with richness of fancy, or copiousness of expression, to bear a shining part in conversation. With these talents, he always endeavoured to give some *useful*, generally some *religious*, turn to the discourse. Nor did he ever reflect, with greater complacency, on his social hours, than when he tended to glorify the eternal Majesty; and to awaken, in himself and others, a more lively spirit of devotion.

To project for the good of others, was his frequent *study*; and to carry those benevolent contrivances into execution, his favourite *employ*. When visited by the young persons of the neighbourhood, far from taking an ungraceful pride to initiate them in debauchery, or confirm them in a riotous habit; it was his incessant aim, by finely adapted persuasives, to encourage them in *industry*, and establish them in a course of *sobriety*; to *guard* them against the allurements of vice, and *animate* them with the principles of piety. A noble kind of hospitality this! which will probably transmit its beneficial influence to their earthly possessions, to their future families, and even to their everlasting state.

A CONVICTION of human indigence, and a thorough persuasion of the divine all-sufficiency, induced him to be *frequent in prayer*. To prostrate himself, in profound adoration, before that infinitely exalted Being, who dwells in light inaccessible, was *his glory*; to implore the continuance of the almighty favour, and the increase of all Christian graces was *his gain*. In those moments, no doubt, he remembered YOU, Sir, with a particular earnestness; and lodged many an ardent petition in the court of heaven, for his infant-son. Cease not to second them with your own devout supplications, that they may descend upon your head "in the fulness of the "blessings of the gospel of peace."

To give their genuine lustre to all his other endowments, he was careful to maintain an *humble mind*. Though his friends might admire his superior abilities, or his acquaintance applaud his exemplary behaviour, he saw how far he *fell short* of the mark of his high calling; saw, and lamented his defects; saw, and renounced himself; relying, for final acceptance, and endless felicity, on a *better righteousness* than his own; even on the transcendently perfect righteousness, and inconceivably precious death, of JESUS the Redeemer. This was the rock of his hope, and the very crown of his rejoicing.

THESE, Sir, are some of the *distinguishing* characteristics of your deceased parent. As you had the misfortune to lose so valuable a relative, before you was capable of forming any acquaintance with his person; I flatter myself, you will the more attentively observe his picture: this his *moral picture*; designed, not to be set in gold, or sparkle in enamel, but to breathe in your spirit, and to live in all your conduct.—Which, though it be entirely your own, calculated purely for yourself, may possibly (like the family-pieces in your parlour) that glance an eye upon as many as enter the room, make *pleasing* and *useful* impression on every beholder.—May every one, charmed with the beautiful image, catch its resemblance; and each, in his respective sphere, "go and do likewise."

BUT you, Sir, are peculiarly concerned to copy the amiable original. As the order of an indulgent Providence has made you heir of the *affluent circumstances*, let not a gay and thoughtless inadvertence cut you off from the *richer inheritance* of these noble qualifications.—These will be your security, amidst all the glittering dangers which are inseparable from blooming years, and an elevated situation in life. These are your path, your sure and only path, to true greatness, and solid happiness.—Tread in these steps, and you cannot fail to be the darling of your friends, and the favourite of heaven. Tread in these steps, and you will give inexpressible joy to one of the best of mothers; you will become an extensive blessing to your fellow-creatures; and which, after such most engaging motives, is scarce worthy to be mentioned, you will be the delight, the honour, and the boast of,

Dear SIR,

Your very affectionate godfather,

And most faithful humble servant,

JAMES HERVEY.

Weston-Favell *near* Northampton,
July 14, 1747.

* Josh. xxiv. 27.

PREFACE.

WE have already exercised our speculations on the tombs and flowers; surveying nature, covered with the deepest horrors, and arrayed in the richest beauties. *Allegory* taught many of the objects to speak the language of virtue, while *Imagination* lent her colouring to give the lessons an engaging air.—And this, with a view of imitating that *divine* Instructor; who commissioned the *lily* *, in her silver suit, to remonstrate in the ear of unbelieving reason; who sent his disciples (men ordained to *teach* the universe) to *learn* maxims of the last importance, from the most *insignificant* birds *, that wander through the paths of the air; from the very *meanest* herbs *, that are scattered over the face of the † ground.

Emboldened by the kind acceptance of the preceding sketches, I beg leave to confide in the same *benevolence* of *taste*, for the protection and support of the two remaining essays; which exhibit a prospect of *still life*, and *grand operation*; which moralize on the most composed and most magnificent appearances of things.—In which, *Fancy* is again suffered to introduce her imagery, but only as the handmaid of *Truth*, in order to dress her person, and display her charms; to engage the attention, and win the love, even of the *gay*, and of the *fashionable*. Which is more likely to be effected, by forming agreeable pictures of nature, and deriving instructive observations, than by the laborious method of long-deduced arguments, or close connected reasonings.—The contemplation of the heavens and the earth, of their admirable properties and beneficial changes, has always afforded the most exalted gratification to the human mind. In compliance with this prevailing taste, I have drawn my serious admonitions from the stupendous theatre, and variegated scenery, of the universe: that the reader may learn his duty, from his very pleasures;—may gather *wisdom*, mingled with *virtue*, from the most refined *entertainments*, and noblest *delights*.

The *Evening*, drawing her sables over the world, and gently darkening into *Night*, is a season peculiarly proper for sedate consideration. All circumstances concur to hush our passions, and soothe our cares; to tempt our steps abroad, and prompt our thoughts to serious reflection.

> ——Then is the time,
> For those whom wisdom, and whom nature charm,
> To steal themselves from the degen'rate croud,
> And soar above this little scene of things;
> To tread low-thoughted vice beneath their feet;
> To soothe the throbbing passions into peace;
> And woo lone quiet in her silent walks *.

The favour I would solicit for the *first* of the following compositions, is, That it may be permitted to attend, in such retired and contemplative excursions; to attend, if not under the character of a friend, at least, in the humble capacity of a servant, or a page:—as a *servant*, to open the door of meditation, and remove every impediment to those best exercises of the mind; which blend advantage with amusement, and improve while they delight:—as a *page*, to gather up the unstable fluctuating train of Fancy; and collect her fickle powers into a constant, regular, and useful habit of thinking.

The *other*, conversant among the *starry regions*, would lead the imagination through those beautiful tracts of unclouded azure; and point out to the judgment some of those astonishing particulars, which so eminently signalize the celestial worlds. A prospect this, to which curiosity attracts our eyes, and to which scripture itself often directs our study: A prospect beyond all others most excellently calculated to *enlarge* the soul, and *ennoble* its conceptions;—to give the grandest apprehensions of the *everlasting* GOD, and create sentiments of becoming superiority, with relation to all *transitory* interests;—in a word, to furnish *faith* with the surest foundation for a steady affiance, and true magnanimity of spirit; to afford *piety* the strongest motives both for a lively gratitude, and profound veneration.

While *Galileo* lifts his tube, and discovers the prodigious magnitude of those radiant orbs;—while *Newton* measures their amazing distances, and unites the whole system in harmonious order, by the subtile influences of attraction;—I would only, like the herald before that illustrious *Hebrew* †, proclaim at every turn, "*Bow the* "*knee*, and adore the almighty Maker; magnify his eter-"nal name, *and make his praise*, like all his works, *to be* "*glorious*."

* Matth. vi. 26. 28. 29. 30.

† Celebrated writers, as *Demosthenes* and *Cicero*, *Thucydides* and *Livy*, are observed to have a style peculiar to themselves.—Now, whoever considers the discourses of *Christ*, will find him distinguishing himself by a style, which may properly be called HIS OWN. Majestic, yet familiar; happily uniting dignity with condescension; it consists in teaching his followers the *sublimest* truths, by spiritualizing on the most *common* occurrences: which, besides its being level to the lowest apprehensions, and admirably adapted to steal into the most inattentive heart, is accompanied with this very singular advantage, that it turns even the *sphere of business* into a *school of instruction*; and renders the most ordinary objects a set of monitors, ever soliciting our regard, because ever present to our senses.—So that, I believe, it may be said of this *suitable method* in which our LORD conveyed, as well as that of *powerful energy* which attended his doctrines, that *never man spake like this man*.—The *harvest* approaching, he reminds his disciples of a far more important harvest, *John* iv. 35. *Matth.* xiii. 30. when immortal beings shall be *reaped* from the grave, and *gathered in* from all the quarters of the earth; when every human creature shall sustain the character of valuable *wheat*, or despicable *tares*; and accordingly be lodged in mansions of everlasting security, or consigned over to the rage of unquenchable fire.—In his charge to *fishermen*, when they are commencing preachers, *Matth.* iv. 19. he exhorts them, conformably to the nature of their late occupation, to use the same *assiduity* and *address* in winning souls, as they were wont to exercise in catching the finny prey.—For the farther illustration of this no less useful, than curious subject, I would refer my reader to a valuable note, in Sir *Isaac Newton*'s observations on the prophecies, p. 148. 4to edition.

* THOMS. Autumn, l. 973. last edit.

† Gen. xli. 43.

CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE NIGHT.

Night *is fair* Virtue's *immemorial friend:*
The conscious Moon, *through ev'ry distant age,*
Has held a lamp to Wisdom.

Night-Thoughts, No. V.

THE business of the day dispatched, and the sultry heats abated, invited me to the recreation of a walk; a walk in one of the *finest recesses* of the country, and in one of the most *pleasant evenings* which the summer-season produced.

The limes and elms, uniting their branches over my head, formed a *verdant canopy*, and casta most refreshing shade. Under my feet lay a *carpet* of nature's *deliest*; grass intermingled with moss, and embroidered with flowers. Jessamines, in conjunction with woodbines, twined around the trees, displaying their *artless beauties* to the eye, and diffusing their *delicious sweets* through the air. On either side, the boughs, rounded into a set of regular arches, opened a view into the *distant fields*, and presented me with a prospect of the *bending skies*. The little birds, all joyous and grateful for the favours of the light, were paying their acknowledgments in a *tribute* of *harmony*, and soothing themselves to rest with songs. While a French-horn, from a neighbouring seat, sent its melodious accents, softened by the length of their passage, to complete the *concert* of the *grove!*

Roving in this agreeable manner, my thoughts were exercised on a subject still more agreeable than the season, or the scene. I mean, our late *signal victory* over the united forces of intestine treason, and foreign invasion: a victory, which pours joy through the present age, and will transmit its influence to generations yet unborn.—Are not all the blessings, which can endear society, or render life itself desirable, centred in our present happy constitution, and auspicious government? Were they not *all* struck at, by that impious and horrid blow, meditated at *Rome*, levelled by *France*, and seconded by factious spirits at *home?* Who then can be sufficiently thankful for the gracious interposition of Providence, which has not only averted the impending ruin, but turned it, with aggravated confusion, on the authors of our troubles?

Methinks, every thing *valuable* which I possess, every thing *charming* which I behold, conspire to enhance this ever-memorable event. To this it is owing, that I can ramble unmolested along the vale of private life, and taste all the innocent satisfactions of a *contemplative* retirement.—Had Rebellion * succeeded in her detestable designs; instead of walking with security and complacence in these flowery paths, I might have met the *assassin* with his *dagger*; or have been obliged to abandon my habitation, and "embrace the rock for a shelter."—Farewell then, ye fragrant shades; seats of meditation, and calm repose! I should have been driven from your loved retreats, to make way for some barbarous, some *insulting victor*.—Farewell then, ye pleasing toils, and wholesome amusements of my rural hours! I should no more have reared the tender flower to the sun; no more have taught the espalier to expand her boughs; not have fetched, any longer, from my kitchen-garden, the purest supplies of health.

Had Rebellion succeeded in her detestable designs; instead of being regaled with the *music* of the *woods*, I might have been alarmed with the sound of the trumpet, and all the thunder of war. Instead of be-

* Referring to the rebellion, set on foot in the year 1745; which, for several months, made a very alarming progress in the north;—but was happily extinguished by the glorious and decisive victory at *Culloden*.

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ing entertained with this *beautiful landſcape*, I might have beheld our houſes ranſacked, and our villages plundered: I might have beheld our fenced cities encompaſſed with armies, and our fruitful fields "clothed with deſo-"lation;" or have been ſhocked with the more frightful images of "garments rolled in blood," and of a ruffian's blade reeking from a brother's heart. Inſtead of Peace, with her chearing olives, ſheltering our abodes; inſtead of Juſtice, with her impartial ſcale, ſecuring our goods; *Perſecution* had brandiſhed her ſword, and *Slavery* clanked her chains.

Nor are theſe miſeries imaginary only, or the creatures of a groundleſs panic. There are, in a neighbouring kingdom, who very lately experienced them in all their rigour *. And, if the *malignant* ſpirit of *Popery* had forced itſelf into our church; if an *abjured pretender* had cut his way to our throne; we could have no reaſon to expect a mitigation of their ſeverity, on our behalf.—But, ſuppoſing the tender mercies of a bigotted uſurper to have been ſomewhat leſs cruel; where, alas! would have been the encouragement to cultivate our little portion; or what pleaſure could ariſe from an improved ſpot; if both the one and the other lay, every moment, at the mercy of *lawleſs* power? This embittering circumſtance would ſpoil their reliſh; and by rendering them a *precarious*, would render them a *joyleſs* acquiſition.—In vain might the vine ſpread her purple cluſters; in vain be laviſh of her generous juices; if *Tyranny*, like a ravenous harpy, ſhould be always hovering over the bowl, and ready to ſnatch it from the lip of Induſtry, or to wreſt it from the hand of Liberty.

LIBERTY, that deareſt of names; and *Property*, that beſt of charters, give an additional, an inexpreſſible charm, to every delightful object.——See, how the declining ſun has beautified the *weſtern clouds*; has arrayed them in crimſon, and ſkirted them with gold. Such a refinement of our domeſtic bliſs is property; ſuch an improvement of our public privileges is liberty.——When the lamp of day ſhall withdraw his beams, there will ſtill remain the ſame collection of floating vapours; but O! how changed, how gloomy! The carnation-ſtreaks are faded; the golden edgings are worn away; and all the lovely tinges are loſt, in a *leaden-coloured lowring* ſadneſs. *Such* would be the aſpect of all theſe ſcenes of beauty, and all theſe abodes of pleaſure, if expoſed continually to the caprice of arbitrary ſway, or held in a ſtate of abject and cringing dependence.

The ſun has almoſt finiſhed his daily race, and haſtens to the goal. He deſcends lower and lower, till his chariot-wheels ſeem to hover on the utmoſt verge of the ſky. What is ſomewhat remarkable, the orb of light, upon the point of ſetting, grows conſiderably *broader*. The ſhadows of objects, juſt before they become blended in undiſtinguiſhable darkneſs, are exceedingly *lengthened* †.—Like bleſſings, little prized, while *poſſeſſed*; but highly eſteemed, the very inſtant they are preparing for their flight; bitterly regretted, when once they are gone, and to be ſeen no more.

The radiant globe is, now, half-immerſed beneath the duſky earth; or, as the ancient poets ſpeak, is ſhooting into the ocean, and ſinks in the weſtern ſea.——And could I view the ſun at this juncture, it would yield a moſt amuſing and curious ſpectacle. The rays, ſtriking horizontally on the liquid element, give it the appearance of floating glaſs; or, reflected in many a different direction, form a beautiful multiplicity of colours.——A ſtranger, as he walks along the ſandy beach, and, loſt in penſive attention, liſtens to the murmurings of the reſtleſs flood, is agreeably alarmed by the *gay decoration* of the ſurface. With entertainment, and with wonder, he ſees the curling waves, here glittering with white, there glowing with purple; in one place wearing an azure tincture; in another, glancing a caſt of undulating green; in the whole, exhibiting a piece of *fluid ſcenery*, that may vie with yonder penſile tapeſtries, though wrought in the loom, and tinged with the dyes of heaven.

While I am tranſported by fancy to the ſhores of the ocean, the great luminary is ſunk beneath the horizon, and totally diſappears. The whole face of the ground is overſpread with ſhades; or, with what one of the fineſt painters of nature calls, a *dun obſcurity*. Only a few very ſuperior eminences are tipt with ſtreaming ſilver. The tops of groves, and lofty towers, catch the *laſt ſmiles* of day *; are ſtill irradiated by the departing beams.—But, O! how tranſient is the diſtinction! how momentary the gift! Like all the bleſſings, which mortals enjoy below, it is *gone*, almoſt as ſoon as *granted*. See! how languiſhingly it trembles on the leafy ſpire; and glimmers, with a dying faintneſs, on the mountain's brow. The little vivacity that remains, decays every moment. It can no longer hold its ſtation. While I ſpeak, it expires; and reſigns the world to the gradual approaches of night.

——*Now* twilight *gray*
Has in her ſober livery all things clad †.

Every object, a little while ago, glared with light; but now all appears under a more qualified influx. The animals harmonize with the inſenſible creation; and what was *gay* in thoſe, as well as *glittering* in this, gives place to an univerſal *gravity*. In the meadows, all was jocund and ſportive; but now the gameſome lambs are grown weary of their frolics, and the tired ſhepherd has impoſed ſilence on his pipe. In the branches all was ſprightlineſs and ſong: but now the lively green is wrapt in the deſcending glooms; and no tuneful airs are heard, only the plaintive ſtock-dove, cooing mournfully through the grove.——Should I now be vain and trifling, the heavens and the earth would rebuke my unſeaſonable levity. Therefore, be theſe moments devoted to thoughts *ſedate* as the cloſing day, *ſolemn* as the face of things. And, indeed, however my ſocial hours are enlivened with innocent pleaſantry, let every evening, in her ſable habit, toll the bell to ſerious conſideration. Nothing can be more proper, for a perſon who walks on the borders of eternity, and is haſtening continually to his final audit; nothing more proper, than daily to ſlip away from the circle of amuſement, and frequently to relinquiſh the hurry of buſineſs, in order to conſider and adjuſt "the things that belong to "his peace."

SINCE the ſun is departed, from whence can it proceed, that I am not involved in pitchy darkneſs? Whence theſe remainders of *diminiſhed brightneſs*? which, though ſcarcely forming a refulgence, ſoften and ſoothe the horrors of night. I ſee not the ſhining ruler, yet am cheared with a real, though faint communication of his ſplendor.——Does he remember us, in his progreſs through other climes? Does he ſend a *detachment* of his rays to *eſcort* us during his perſonal abſence; or to *cover* (if I may uſe the military term) our *retreat* from the ſcene of action? Has he bequeathed us a dividend of his beams, ſufficient to render our circumſtances eaſy, and our ſituation agreeable, till ſleep pours its ſoft oppreſſion on the organs of ſenſe; till ſleep ſuſpends all the operations of our

* See a pamphlet, entitled, *Popery always the ſame*;—which contains a narrative of the *perſecutions*, and ſevere hardſhips lately ſuffered by the *Proteſtants* in the ſouthern parts of *France*; and cloſes with a moſt ſeaſonable, alarming, and ſpirited addreſs to the inhabitants of *Great-Britain*. Printed 1746.

† *Majoreſque cadunt altis de montibus umbræ.* VIRG.

* See this remarkable appearance delicately deſcribed, and wrought into a compariſon, which, in my opinion, is one of the moſt juſt, beautiful, and noble pieces of imagery, to be found in modern poetry; *Night-Thoughts*, No II. p. 42. 4to edit.

† MILT. *Par. Loſt*, b. IV. l. 598.

hands,

hands, and entirely supersedes any farther occasion for the light.

No: it is ill-judged and unreasonable, to ascribe this beneficent conduct to the sun. Not unto him, not into him, but unto his *almighty Maker*, we are obliged, for this pleasing attendant, this valuable legacy. The gracious Author of our being has so disposed the collection of the circumambient air, as to make it productive of this fine and wonderful effect. The sun-beams, falling on the higher parts of the aerial fluid, instead of passing on in strait lines, are bent inward, and conducted to our sight. Their natural course is over-ruled, and they are bidden to wheel about, on purpose to favour us with a welcome and salutary visit.—By which mean, the blessing of light, and the season of business, are considerably prolonged; and, what is a very endearing circumstance, prolonged most considerably, when the vehement heats of summer incline the *student* to postpone his walk, till the temperate evening prevails; when the important labours of the harvest call the husbandman abroad, before the day is fully risen.

AFTER all the ardors of the sultry day, how reviving is this *coolness*!—This gives new verdure to the fading plants, new vivacity to the withering flowers, and a more exquisite fragrance to their mingled scents.—By this the *air* also receives a new force, and is qualified to exert itself with greater activity; qualified to brace our limbs; to heave our lungs; and co-operate, with a brisker impulse, in perpetuating the circulation of our blood.—This I might call the grand *alembic* of nature; which distils her most sovereign *cordial*, the refreshing *dews*. Incessant heat would rob us of their beneficial agency; and oblige them to evaporate, in imperceptible exhalations. Turbulent winds, or even the gentler motions of *Aurora*'s fan, would dissipate the rising vapours, and not suffer them to form a coalition. But, favoured by the stillness, and condensed by the coolness of the night, they unite in pearly drops, and create that *finely-tempered* humidity, which chears the vegetable world, as sleep exhilarates the animal.

Not unlike to these are the advantages of *solitude*. The world is a troubled ocean; and who can erect stable purposes on its fluctuating waves? The world is a school of wrong; and who does not feel himself warping to its pernicious influences *? On this sea of glass †, how insensibly we slide from our own stedfastness! Some sacred *truth*, which was struck in lively characters on our souls, is obscured, if not obliterated. Some worthy *resolution*, which heaven had wrought in our breasts, is shaken, if not overthrown. Some enticing *vanity*, which we had solemnly renounced, again practises its wiles, and again captivates our affections. How often has an unwary glance kindled a fever of irregular desire in our hearts? How often has a word of applause dropt luscious poison into our ears; or some disrespectful expression raised a gust of passion in our bosoms? Our innocence is of so *tender* a constitution, that it suffers in the promiscuous croud. Our purity is of so *delicate* a complexion, that it scarce touches on the world, without contracting a stain. We see, we hear, with peril.

But here *safety* dwells. Every meddling and intrusive avocation is secluded. Silence holds the door against the strife of tongues, and all the impertinencies of idle conversation. The busy swarm of vain images, and cajoling temptations, which beset us, with a buzzing importunity, amidst the gaieties of life, are chased by these thickening shades.——Here I may, without disturbance, commune with my own heart; and learn that best of sciences, to *know myself*. Here the soul may rally her dissipated powers, and grace recover its native energy. This is the opportunity to rectify every evil impression; to expel the poison, and guard against the contagion, of corrupting examples. This is the place where I may, with advantage, apply myself to subdue the *rebel within*: and be master, not of a sceptre, but of myself.—Throng then, ye ambitious, the levees of the powerful: I will be punctual in my assignations with solitude. To a mind intent upon its own improvement, solitude has charms incomparably more engaging, than the *entertainments* presented in the theatre, or the *honours* conferred in the drawing-room.

I SAID, solitude.—Am I then *alone*?—'Tis true, my acquaintance are at a distance. I have stole away from company, and am remote from all *human* observation.—But that is an alarming thought,

Millions of spiritual *creatures walk the earth,*
Unseen, *both when we wake, and when we sleep* *.

Perhaps, there may be numbers of those *invisible beings*, patrolling this same retreat; and joining with me, in contemplating the Creator's works. Perhaps, those *ministering spirits*, who rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, and hold up the goings of the righteous, may follow us to the lonely recess; and, even in our most solitary moments, be our constant *attendants*.—What a pleasing awe is awakened by such a reflection! How venerable it renders my retired walks! I am struck with reverence, as under the roof of some *sacred edifice*, or in the *presence-chamber* of some mighty monarch.—O! may I never bring any pride of imagination, nor indulge the least dissolute affection, where such refined and exalted intelligences exercise their watch!

'Tis possible, that I am encompassed with such a cloud of witnesses; but it is certain, that GOD, the *infinite eternal* GOD, is now and ever with me. The great JEHOVAH, before whom all the angelic armies bow their heads, and veil their faces, surrounds me; supports me; pervades me. "In HIM I live, move, and have my "being."—The whole world is his august temple; and, in the most sequestered corner, I appear before his adorable Majesty, no less than when I worship in his house, or kneel at his altar. In every place, therefore, let me pay him the homage of a heart, cleansed from idols, and devoted to his service. In every circumstance, let me feel no *ambition*, but to *please* him; nor covet any *happiness*, but to *enjoy* him.

How sublime is the description, and how striking the sentiment, in that noble passage of the psalms! *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I climb up into* the heights of *heaven, thou art there* enthroned in light. *If I go down to the* depths of the *grave, thou art there also* in thy pavillion of darkness. *If I retire* to the remotest eastern climes, *where the morning first takes wing: if*, swifter than the darting ray, I pass to the opposite regions of the west, and *remain in the uttermost parts of the sea*; shall I, in *that* distant situation, be beyond thy reach; or, by *this* sudden transition, escape thy notice! So far from it, that could I, with one glance of thought, transport myself beyond all the bounds of creation; I should still be encircled with the immensity of thy essence; or rather, still be inclosed in the hollow of thy hand.—Awful, yet delightful truth! Let it be inter-

* MILT. *Par. Lost*, b. IV. l. 677.

* *Nunquam a turba mores, quos extuli, refero. Aliquid, ex eo quod composui, turbatur; aliquid, ex his quæ fugavi, redit. Quinam est malorum conversatio!* SENEC.

† Rev. xv. 2.

† *Psal.* cxxxix. 7. 8. 9. There is, I think, an additional strength and beauty in the thought, if, with the learned Mr *Mudge*, we suppose an *antithesis* between the two clauses of the last verse, as there evidently is between those of the preceding; and that they express, in a poetical style, the extremities of the *east* and the *west*.

woven with every thought! and become one with the very conſciouſneſs of my exiſtence! that I may continually *walk with GOD*, and conduct myſelf, in every ſtep of my behaviour, "as *ſeeing HIM that is inviſible*."

They are the happy perſons; felicity, true felicity, is *all their own*, who live under an habitual ſenſe of GOD's omnipreſence, and a ſweet perſuaſion of his ſpecial love! If dangers threaten, their impregnable defence is at hand. Nothing can be ſo near to terrify, as their almighty Guardian to ſecure them.—To theſe the hours can never be *tedious*, and it is impoſſible for them to be *alone*. Do they ſtep aſide from the occupations of animal life? A more exalted ſet of employments engage their attention. They addreſs themſelves, in all the various acts of devotion, to their heavenly Father; *who now ſees in ſecret, and will* hereafter *reward them openly*. They ſpread all their wants before his indulgent eye, and diſburden all their ſorrows into his compaſſionate boſom. Do they withdraw from human ſociety? They find themſelves under the more immediate regards of their Maker. If they reſign the ſatisfactions of ſocial intercourſe, it is to cultivate a correſpondence with the condeſcending DEITY, and taſte the pleaſures of divine friendſhip.—What is ſuch a *ſtate*, but the very ſuburbs of heaven? What is ſuch a *conduct*, but an antepaſt of eternal bleſſedneſs?

Now, my ſoul, the day is *ended*. The hours are all fled. They are fled to the ſupreme Judge, and have given in their evidence; an evidence regiſtered in heaven! and to be produced at the great audit.—Happy *they* whoſe improvement has kept pace with the fleeting minutes; who have ſeized the important fugitives, and engaged them in the purſuit of *wiſdom*, or devoted them to the ſervice of *virtue*!

Fugitives indeed they are. Our moments ſlip away ſilently and inſenſibly. The thief ſteals not more unperceived from the pillaged houſe.—And will the runagates never ſtop? No: where-ever we are, however employed, time purſues his inceſſant courſe. Though *we* are liſtleſs and dilatory; the great meaſurer of our days preſſes on; ſtill preſſes on, in his unwearied career*; and whirls our weeks, and months, and years away.—Is it not then ſurpriſingly ſtrange, to hear people complain of the *tediouſneſs* of their time, and how *heavy* it hangs upon their hands? to ſee them contrive a variety of amuſing artifices, to accelerate its flight, and get rid of its burden?—Ah! thoughtleſs mortals! Why need you urge the headlong torrent? Your days are ſwifter than a *poſt*; which, carrying diſpatches of the laſt importance, with unremitted ſpeed ſcours the road. They paſs away like the nimble *ſhips*; which have the wind in their wings, and ſkim along the watery plain. They haſten to their deſtined period, with the rapidity of an *eagle*; which leaves the ſtormy blaſt behind her, while ſhe cleaves the air, and darts upon her prey †.

Now the day is gone, how *ſhort* it appears! When my fond eye beheld it in *perſpective*, it ſeemed a very conſiderable ſpace. Minutes crouded upon minutes, and hours ranged behind hours, exhibited an extenſive draught, and flattered me with a long progreſſion of pleaſures. But, upon a *retroſpective* view, how wonderfully is the ſcene altered! The landſcape, large and ſpacious, which a warm fancy drew, brought to the teſt of cool experience, ſhrinks into a ſpan. Juſt as the ſhores vaniſh, and mountains dwindle to a ſpot, when the ſailor, ſurrounded by ſkies and ocean, throws his laſt look on his native land.—How clearly do I now diſcover the cheat! May it never impoſe upon my unwary imagination again! I find there is nothing abiding on this ſide eternity. A *long* duration, in a ſtate of *finite* exiſtence, is mere illuſion.

Perhaps, the *healthy*, and the *gay*, may not readily credit the ſerious truth; eſpecially from a young pen, and new to its employ. Let us then refer ourſelves to the deciſion of the *ancient*. Aſk ſome venerable old perſon, who is juſt marching off the mortal ſtage, *How many have been the days of the years of thy life* *? It was a monarch's queſtion, and therefore can want no recommendation to the faſhionable world.—Obſerve, how he ſhakes his hoary locks, and from a deep-felt conviction replies: "*Fourſcore years* have finiſhed their rounds, to "furrow theſe cheeks, and clothe this head in ſnow. "Such a term may ſeem long and large to inconſiderate "youth. But O! how ſhort, how ſcanty, to one that "has made the experiment! *Short*, as a gleam of tranſient ſunſhine; *ſcanty*, as the ſhadow that departeth. "Methinks it was but yeſterday that I exchanged my "childiſh ſports for manly exerciſes; and now I am "reſigning them both, for the ſleep of death. As ſoon "as we are *born*, we begin to draw to our *end*; and how "ſmall is the interval between the cradle and the tomb!"—O! may we believe this teſtimony of mature age! May every evening bring it, with clearer evidence, to our minds! And may we form ſuch an eſtimate of the little pittance, while it is upon the advancing hand, as we ſhall certainly make, when the ſands are all run down!

Let me add one reflection on the *work* to be *done*, while this ſhuttle is flying through the loom †. A work of no ſmall difficulty, yet of the utmoſt conſequence!—Haſt thou not ſeen, haſt thou not known, the excellent of the earth, who were living images of their Maker? His *divine likeneſs* was tranſfuſed into their hearts, and beamed forth in all their conduct; beamed forth in meekneſs of wiſdom, and purity of affection; in all the tender offices of love, and all the noble efforts of zeal. To be ſtamped with the ſame beautiful ſignature, and to be followers of them, as they were of CHRIST; *this, this* is thy *buſineſs*. On the accompliſhment of this, thy eternal all depends. And will an affair of ſuch unſpeakable weight admit of a moment's delay, or conſiſt with the leaſt remiſſneſs?—Eſpecially, ſince much of thy appointed time is already elapſed; and the remainder is *all uncertainty*, ſave only that it is in the very act to fly.—Or ſuppoſe, thou hadſt made a covenant with the grave, and waſt aſſured of reaching the age of *Methuſelah*; how ſoon would even ſuch a leaſe expire!—Extend it, if you pleaſe, ſtill farther; and let it be *co-exiſtent* with nature itſelf. How inconſiderable is the addition! For yet a very little while, and the commiſſioned archangel liſts up his hand to heaven, and ſwears by the almighty name, *That time ſhall be no longer* ‡. Then *abuſed* opportunities will never return; and *new* opportunities will never more be offered. Then, ſhould

* *Sed fugit interea, fugit irreparabile tempus.* VIRG.

† *Job* ix. 25, 26. By theſe three very expreſſive images, the inſpired poet repreſents the *unintermitted* and *rapid* flight of time. The paſſage is illuſtrated with great judgment, and equal delicacy, in Dr Grey's moſt ingenious abridgment of *Schultens*.—*Quæ tribus in elementis velociſſima, hic admirabili cum emphaſi congeruntur. In terris, nil pernicius curſore, et quidem fati quid ferente. Rapiuntur tamen adhuc undas, non ſecant, ſed ſuper volant, navigiola papyro contexta. Omnium rapidiſſime aerem grandibus alis permetitur aquila, præcipiti lapſu ruens in prædam.*

* Gen. xlvii. 8. *Heb. Bib.*

† *My days are ſwifter than a weaver's ſhuttle.* Job. vii. 6.

‡ This alludes to the beginning of *Revelations* the xth; which, abſtracted from its ſpiritual meaning, and conſidered only as a ſtately *piece* of *machinery*, well deſerves our attention; and, I will venture to ſay, has not its ſuperior, perhaps not its equal, in any of the moſt celebrated maſters of *Greece* and *Rome*.—All that is gloomy or beautiful in the atmoſphere, all that is ſtriking or magnificent in every element, is taken to heighten the idea. Yet nothing is diſproportionate; but an uniform air of ineffable majeſty greatens, exalts, ennobles the whole.

negligent mortals wish—wish ever so passionately—for a few hours—a few moments only—to be thrown back from the opening eternity; *thousands* of worlds would not be able to procure the grant.

Shall I now be industrious to shorten what is no longer than a span, or to quicken the pace of what is ever on the wing? Shall I squander away what is *unutterably important*, while it lasts; and, when once departed, is *altogether irrevocable*? O! my soul, forbear the folly; forbear the desperate extravagance. Wilt thou chide as a loiterer, the arrow that boundeth from the string; or sweep away diamonds, as the refuse of thy house?—Throw time away! Astonishing, ruinous, irreparable profuseness! Throw empires away, and be blameless. But O! be parsimonious of thy days; husband thy precious hours. They go connected, indissolubly connected, with heaven or hell *. *Improved*, they are a sure pledge of everlasting glory; *wasted*, they are a sad preface to never-ending confusion and anguish.

WHAT a *profound silence* has composed the world! So profound is the silence, that my very breath seems a noise; the ticking of my watch is distinctly heard; if I do but stir, it creates a disturbance.——There is now none of that confused din from the tumultuous city; no voice of jovial rustics from the neighbouring meadow; no chirping melody from the shady thicket.——Every lip is sealed. Not the least whisper invades the air; nor the least motion rustles among the boughs. *Echo* herself sleeps unmolested. The expanded ear, though all attention, catches no sound, but the liquid lapse of a distant murmuring stream.

All things are hush'd, as nature's self lay dead.

If, in the midst of this deep and universal composure, ten thousand bellowing thunders should burst over my head, and rend the skies with their united volleys; how should I bear so *unexpected* a *shock*? It would stun my senses, and confound my thoughts. I should shudder in every limb; perhaps sink to the earth with terror.——Consider then, O mortals! consider the much more *prodigious* and *amazing* call, which will, 'ere long, alarm your sleeping bones. When the tenants of the tomb have slumbered, in the most undisturbed repose, for a multitude of ages; what an inconceivable consternation must the *shout* of the *archangel*, and the *trump* of GOD occasion! Will it not wound the ear of the ungodly, and affright, even to distraction, the impenitent sinner? The stupendous peal will sound through the vast of heaven; will shake the foundations of nature; and pierce even the deepest recesses of the grave. And how—O! how will the prisoners of divine justice be able to endure that tremendous *summons* to a far more tremendous tribunal?——Do thou, my soul, listen to the *still voice* of the gospel. Attend, in this thy day, to the gracious invitations of thy Saviour. Then shall that great midnight-cry lose its *horror*, and be *music* in thy ears. It shall be welcome to thy reviving clay, as the tidings of liberty to the dungeon-captive; as the year of jubilee to the harassed slave. This, this shall be its charming import; "*Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in dust.*" ¶

WHAT a general *cessation* of *affairs* has this dusky hour introduced! A little while ago, all was hurry, hurry. Life and activity exerted themselves in a thousand busy forms. The city swarmed with passing and repassing multitudes. All the country was sweat and dust. The air floated in perpetual agitation, by the flitting birds, and humming bees. *Art* sat prying with her piercing eyes; while *Industry* plied her restless hands.——But see, how all this fervent and impetuous bustle is fled with the setting sun. The beasts are slunk to their grassy couch; and the winged people are retired to their downy nests. The hammer has resigned its sounding task, and the file ceases to repeat its flying touches. Shut is the well-frequented shop, and its threshold no longer worn by the feet of numerous customers. The village-swain lies drowned in slumbers; and even his trusty dog, who, for a considerable time, stood centry at the door, is extended at his ease, and snores with his master.—In every place *Toil* reclines her head, and *Application* folds her arms. All interests seem to be forgot; all pursuits are suspended; all employment is sunk away, sunk away with those fluttering myriads, which lately sported in the sun's departing rays.—'Tis like the sabbath of universal nature; or as though the pulse of life stood still.

Thus will it be with our infinitely momentous concerns, when once *the shadows of the evening* (that long evening which follows the footsteps of death †) *are stretched over us*. The dead cannot seek unto GOD; the living, the living alone, are possessed of this inestimable opportunity†. "There is no work or de-"vice, no repentance or amendment, in the grave‡,

¶ Is. xxvi. 19.

† *Behold! now is the accepted time. Behold! now is the day of salvation.* 2 Cor. vi. 2.

Haste, haste, he lies in wait, he's at the door,
Insidious death! shou'd his strong hand arrest,
No composition sets the pris'ner free.

‡ They who are gone down to the grave, are represented (*Is.* xxxviii. 11.) by the phrase, חדל דמי—rendered by *Vitringa*, *Those that inhabit the* land of *intermission* or *cessation*.—Which prevents all appearance of *tautology* in the sentence; and is, I think, a valuable *improvement* of the translation; as it conveys an idea, not only distinct from the preceding, but

of

whole.—Be pleased to observe the *aspect* of this august personage. All the brightness of the sun shines in his countenance; and all the rage of the fire burns in his feet.—See his *apparel*. The clouds compose his robe, and the drapery of the sky floats upon his shoulders. The rainbow forms his diadem; and that which "compasseth the heaven with a glorious circle," is the ornament of his head.—Behold his *attitude*. One foot stands on the ocean, the other rests on the land. The wide extended earth, and the world of waters, serve as pedestals for those mighty columns.—Consider the *action*. His hand is lifted up to the height of the stars. He speaks; and the regions of the firmament echo with the mighty accents, as the midnight-desert resounds with the lion's roar. The artillery of the skies is discharged at the signal; a peal of seven-fold thunders spreads the alarm, and prepares the universe to receive his orders.—To finish all, and give the highest grandeur, as well as the utmost solemnity, to the representation, hear the *decree* that issues from his mouth. He *sweears by* HIM that *liveth for ever and ever*. In whatever manner so majestic a person had expressed himself, he could not fail of commanding universal attention. But when he confirms his speech by a most sacred and inviolable oath, we are not only wrapt in silent suspense, but overwhelmed with the profoundest awe.—He swears, *That time shall be no longer*. Was ever voice so full of terror; so big with wonder? It proclaims, not the fall of empires, but the final period of things. It strikes off the wheels of nature; bids ages and generations cease to roll; and, with one potent word, consigns a whole world over to dissolution.—This is one among a multitude of very sublime and *masterly strokes*, to be found in that too much neglected book—the BIBLE.

* I remember to have seen, upon a sun-dial, in a physician's garden at *Northampton*, the following *inscription*; which, I think, is the most *proper motto* for the instrument that measures our time, and the most *striking admonition* that can possibly be presented to every eye.

AB HOC MOMENTO PENDET ÆTERNITAS.

The weighty sense of which, I know not how to express in *English*, more happily than in those words of Dr *Watts*:

Good God! on what a *slender thread*
[Or, on what a *moment* of time]
Hang everlasting things!

"whither we all are haſting!" When once that *cloſing ſcene* is advanced, we ſhall have no other part to act on this *earthly theatre*. Then, the miſer, who has ſlumbered away life in a criminal inactivity, muſt lie down in hopeleſs diſtreſs, and everlaſting ſorrow. Then that awful doom will take place, "He that is *holy*, let "him be holy ſtill; and he that is *filthy*, let him be filthy for ever."

Is it ſo, my ſoul? Is this the *only, only* time allotted for obtaining the great reward, and making thy ſalvation ſure? And art thou lulled in a *vain ſecurity*, or dreaming in a *ſupine inadvertency*? Start, O! ſtart from thy trance. Gird up the loins of thy mind, and work while it is day. Improve the preſent ſeed-time, that eternity may yield a joyful harveſt.—We eſpecially, who are watchmen in *Iſrael*, and miniſters of the glorious goſpel; may *we* be awakened, by this conſideration, to all aſſiduity in our holy office. Some or other of *our people* are ever and anon departing into the inviſible ſtate; all *our friends* are making inceſſant approaches to their long home; and *we ourſelves* ſhall very ſhortly be tranſmitted to the confinement of the tomb. *This* is the favourable juncture, wherein alone we can contribute to their endleſs welfare. This is the criſis, the all-important *criſis*, of their final felicity. Inſtantly, therefore, let us pour in our wholeſome inſtructions; inſtantly let us ply them with our earneſt exhortations. A moment's delay may be an irreparable loſs; may be irretrievable ruin. While we procraſtinate, a fatal ſtroke may intervene; and place *us* beyond the power of adminiſtering, or place *them* beyond all poſſibility of receiving any ſpiritual good*.

How frequently is the face of nature *changed*! and, by changing, made more *agreeable*!——The long-continued glitter of the day, renders the ſoothing ſhades of the evening doubly welcome. Nor does the morn ever purple the eaſt with ſo engaging a luſtre, as after the gloom of a dark and diſmal night.——At preſent, a *calm* of tranquility is ſpread through the univerſe. The weary winds have forgot to blow. The gentle gales have fanned themſelves aſleep. Not ſo much as a ſingle leaf bows. Even the quivering aſpin reſts. *And not one breath curls o'er the ſtream.*——Sometimes, on the contrary, the *tempeſt* ſummons all the forces of the air; and pours itſelf, with reſiſtleſs fury, from the angry north. The whole atmoſphere is toſſed into tumultuous confuſion, and the watery world is heaved to the clouds. The aſtoniſhed mariner, and his ſtraining veſſel, now ſcale the rolling mountain, and hang dreadfully viſible on the broken ſurge; now ſhoot, with headlong impetuoſity, into the yawning gulf; and neither hulk nor maſt is ſeen. The ſtorm ſweeps over the continent; raves along the city-ſtreets; ſtruggles through the foreſt-boughs; and terrifies the ſavage nations with a howl, more wildly horrid than their own. The knotty oaks bend before the blaſt; their iron trunks groan; and their ſtubborn limbs are daſhed to the ground. The lofty dome rocks; and even the ſolid tower totters on its baſis.

Such variations are kindly contrived, and with an evident condeſcenſion to the fickleneſs of our taſte. Becauſe a perpetual repetition of the *ſame* objects would create ſatiety and *diſguſt*; therefore the indulgent father of our race has diverſified the univerſal ſcene, and bid every appearance bring with it the charm of novelty.——This circumſtance is *beneficial*, as well as *intertaining*. Providence, ever gracious to mortals, ever intent upon promoting our felicity, has taken care to mingle, in the conſtitution of things, what is pleaſing to our imagination, with what is ſerviceable to our intereſts. The piercing winds, and rugged aſpect of winter, render the balmy gales, and flowery ſcenes of ſpring, peculiarly delightful. At the ſame time, the keen froſts mellow the ſoil, and prepare it for the hand of Induſtry. The ruſhing rains impregnate the glebe, and fit it to become a magazine of plenty. The earth is a great *laboratory*; and *December*'s cold collects the groſs materials, which are *ſublimated* by the refining warmth of *May*. The air is a pure elaſtic fluid; and were it always to remain in *this* motionleſs ſerenity, it would loſe much of its active ſpring; was it never agitated by *thoſe* wholeſome concuſſions, it would contract a noiſome, perhaps, a peſtilential taint. In which caſe, our reſpiration, inſtead of purifying, would corrupt the vital juices; inſtead of ſupplying us with refreſhment, would be a ſource of diſeaſes; or every gaſp we draw, might be unavoidable death*.——How then ſhould we admire, how ſhould we adore, that happy union of benignity and wiſdom; which, from a *variety* of diſpoſitions, produces an *uniformity* of good! produces a perpetual ſucceſſion of delights, and an uninterrupted ſeries of advantages!

The *darkneſs* is now at its height; and I cannot but admire the obliging manner of its taking place. It comes not with a blunt and abrupt incivility, but makes gentle and reſpectful advances. A *precipitate* tranſition, from the ſplendors of day, to all the horrors of midnight, would be inconvenient and frightful. It would bewilder the traveller in his journey; it would ſtrike the creation with amazement; and, perhaps, be pernicious to the organs of ſight. Therefore the gloom ruſhes not upon us inſtantaneouſly, but increaſes by ſlow degrees; and, ſending *twilight* before as its *harbinger*, decently advertiſes us of its approach. By this means, we are neither alarmed, nor incommoded, by the change; but are able to take all ſuitable and timely meaſures for its reception.——Thus graciouſly has Providence regulated, not only the *grand viciſſitudes* of the ſeaſons, but alſo the *common interchange* of light and darkneſs, with an apparent reference to our comfort.

* Conſidering the immenſe quantity of coals, and other combuſtible materials, which are daily conſumed, and evaporate into the air; conſidering the numberleſs ſteams, and clouds of ſmoke, which almoſt continually overwhelm populous cities;—the noiſome exhalations, which ariſe from thronged infirmaries and loathſome jails, from ſtagnating lakes and putrid fens;—the variety of offenſive and unwholeſome effluvia, which proceed from other cauſes;—it is a very remarkable inſtance of a Providence, at once tenderly kind, and infinitely powerful, that mankind is not *ſuffocated* with ſtench; that the air is not *choked* with filth.—The air is the *common ſewer*, into which ten thouſand times ten thouſand nuiſances are inceſſantly diſcharged; yet it is preſerved ſo *thoroughly clear*, as to afford the moſt tranſparent medium for viſion; ſo *delicately undulatory*, as to tranſmit, with all imaginable diſtinctneſs, every diverſity of ſound; ſo *perfectly pure*, as to be the conſtant reliever of the fluids, in every animal that breathes.

* The caſe repreſented by the prophet (1 *Kings* xx. 40.) ſeems perfectly applicable on this occaſion. *As thy ſervant was buſy here and there, he was gone.* So, while we are either *remiſs* in our functions, or laying ourſelves out upon *inferior* cares, the people of our charge may be gone;—gone beyond the influence of our counſels, beyond the reach of our prayers;—gone into the *unchangeable* and eternal ſtate.

Now the fierce *inhabitants* of the *forest* forlake their dens. A thousand grim forms, a thousand growling monsters, pace the defert. Death is in their jaws, while, ſtung with hunger, and athirſt for blood, they roam their nightly rounds.—Unfortunate the *traveller*, who is overtaken by the night, in thoſe diſmal wilds! How muſt he ſtand aghaſt at the mingled yell of ravenous throats, and lions roaring after their prey! Defend him, propitious heaven! or elſe he muſt ſee his endearing ſpouſe, and hail his native home no more!——Now the prowling wolf, like a murderous ruffian, dogs the ſhepherd's footſteps, and beſets his bleating charge.—The fox, like a crafty felon, ſteals to the thatched cottage, and carries off the feathered booty.

Happy for the world, were theſe the only deſtroyers that walk in darkneſs. But, alas! there are ſavages in human ſhape, who, muffled in ſhades, infeſt the abodes of civilized life. The ſons of *violence* make choice of this ſeaſon *, to perpetrate the moſt outrageous acts of wrong and robbery. The *adulterer* waiteth for the twilight; and, baſer than the villain on the highway, betrays the honour of his boſom-friend. Now *Faction* forms her cloſe cabals, and whiſpers her traiterous inſinuations. Now *Rebellion* plans her accurſed plots, and prepares the train to blow a nation into ruin. Now crimes which hide their odious heads in the day, haunt the ſeats of ſociety, and ſtalk through the gloom with audacious front. Now the *vermin* of the *ſtreets* crawl from their lurking-holes, to wallow in ſin, and ſpread contagion through the night: each ſoothing himſelf with the fond notion, that all his ſafe; that no eye ſees.

Are they then concealed? Prepoſterous madmen! to draw the curtain between their infamous practices, and a little ſet of mortals; but lay them open to all theſe chaſte and *wakeful eyes* of heaven †! as though the moon and ſtars were made to light men to their revels, and not to GOD.——Are they then concealed? No, truly. Was every one of theſe vigilant luminaries cloſed; an eye *keener* than the lightning's flaſh, an eye *brighter* than ten thouſand ſuns, beholds their every motion. Their thickeſt ſhades are beaming day ‡, to the jealous Inſpector, and ſupreme Judge of human actions. Deluded creatures! have ye not heard, have ye not read, "that clouds and darkneſs "are HIS majeſtic reſidence ‖?" In that very gloom, to which you fly for covert, he erects his throne. What you reckon your *ſcreen*, is the bar of his tribunal. O! remember this! ſtand in awe, and ſin not. Remember, that the great and terrible GOD *is about your path* †, when you take your midnight range; *is about your bed*, when you indulge the looſe deſire; *and ſpies out all your ways*, be they ever ſo ſecretly conducted, or artfully diſguiſed.

SOME minutes ago, a paſſenger croſſed along the road. His horſe's foot ſtruck the ground, and fetched fire from a flint. My eye, tho' at a diſtance, catched the view; and law, with *great clearneſs*, the tranſient ſparkles: of which, had I been ever ſo near, I ſhould not have diſcerned the *leaſt glimpſe*, under the blaze of day.—So * when ſickneſs has drawn a *veil* over the gaiety of our hearts; when misfortunes have eclipſed the ſplendor of our outward circumſtances; how many *important convictions* preſent themſelves with the brighteſt evidence! Under the ſunſhine of proſperity, they lay undiſcovered; but, when ſome intervening cloud has darkened the ſcene, they emerge from their obſcurity, and even glitter upon our minds. Then, the *world*, that deluſive cheat, confeſſes her emptineſs; but JESUS, the bright and Morning-ſtar beams forth with animitable luſtre. Then, *vice* loſes all her fallacious allurements; that painted ſtrumpet is horrible, as the hags of hell; but *virtue*, deſpiſed virtue, gains lovelineſs from a louring providence, and treads the ſhades with more than mortal charms.—May this reconcile me, and all the *ſons of ſorrow*, to our appointed ſhare of ſuffering! If tribulation tend to diſſipate the inward darkneſs, and pour heavenly day upon our minds; welcome diſtreſs; welcome diſappointment; welcome whatever our froward fleſh, or peeviſh paſſions, would *miſcall* calamities. *Theſe light afflictions, which are but for a moment*, ſhall lie eaſy upon our ſpirits; ſince they befriend our knowledge; promote our faith; and ſo "*work out for us a ſon* "*more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*."

How has this darkneſs ſnatched every ſplendid and graceful object from my ſight! It has daſhed the ſponge over the pictures of ſpring, and deſtroyed all the *delicate diſtinctions* of things. Where are now the fine tinges, which ſo lately charmed me from the glowing parterre? The bluſh is ſtruck out from the cheeks of the roſe, and the ſnowy hue is dropt from the lily. I caſt my eyes toward a magnificent ſeat; but the aſpiring columns, and fair expanded front, are mingled in rude confuſion. Without the ſun, all the elegance of the blooming world is a *mere blank*; all the ſymmetry of architecture is a *ſhapeleſs heap*.

Is not this an expreſſive emblem of the lovelineſs which the *Sun* of *Righteouſneſs* tranſfuſes into all that is amiable? Was it not for JESUS and his merits, I ſhould ſigh with anguiſh of ſpirit; even while I rove through ranks of the moſt beautiful flowers, or breathe amidſt a wilderneſs of ſweets. Was it not for JESUS and his merits; I ſhould roam like ſome *diſconſolate ſpectre*, even through the ſmiles of creation, and the careſſes of fortune. My converſation in this world, though dreſſed in the moſt engaging forms of external

* ——When night
Darkens the ſtreets, then wander forth the ſons
Of *Belial*, flown with inſolence and wine. MIL. P.

† ——*Sed luna videt, ſed ſidera teſtes*
Intendunt oculos.

‡ This is finely, and very forcibly expreſſed by the pſalmiſt: *If I ſay, Paradventure the darkneſs ſhall cover me; then ſhall my night be turned to day*: or, as it may rendered ſomewhat more emphatically, *Even the night ſhall be broad day-light all around me*. Pſal. cxxxix. 10.

‖ Pſal. xcvii. 2.

† The original words are much ſtronger than the tranſlation, רזית and תזרה ſignify, *Thou ſifteſt my path*, and art *intimately acquainted with* all my ways: the former, I apprehend, denoting the *exact* cognizance which the Almighty taketh, the latter implying the *conſtant* inſpection which he exerciſeth, over all the circumſtances of our conduct. *Pſal.* cxxxix. 2.

* I beg leave to inform the *young gentleman*, whoſe name dignifies my dedication, that *this* was a remark of his honoured *father*, when we rode together, and converſed in a duſky evening. I mention this circumſtance, partly to ſecure the paragraph from contempt; partly to give him, and the world, an idea of that eminently ſerious taſte which diſtinguiſhed my deceaſed friend.—"The *leaſt obvious* the reflection, the more clearly it diſcovers a turn "of mind remarkably ſpiritual; which would ſuffer nothing to "eſcape, without yielding ſome religious improvement. The "*meaneſt* the incident, the more admirable was that fertility of imagination, which could deduce the ſublimeſt truths from the moſt "trivial occurrences.

† 2 *Cor.* iv. 17. The great *Stephens*, that oracle of *Greek* learning, tranſlates καθ' ὑπερβολὴν, *Quo nihil majus dici aut fingi poteſt*. But how does the ſenſe riſe! how is the idea enlarged, under two ſuch forcible expreſſions! καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν—The whole verſe is a maſter-piece of the beautiful *antitheſis*, the lively *deſcription*, and the nervous *diction*. It is one of thoſe exquiſite paſſages in the inſpired writings, which, like ſome rich *aromatic plants*, cannot be tranſferred from their own generous and native ſoil, without being impaired in their vivacity, and loſing much of their delicacy. Perhaps, the following verſion may be ſomewhat leſs injurious to the ſacred original, than the common tranſlation: —*Our very light affliction, which is but juſt for the preſent moment, worketh out a far more exceeding, an incomparably great, and eternal weight of glory.*

pleaſure, would be like the paſſage of a *condemned malefactor*, through enamelled meadows, and bowers of bliſs, to be broke upon the wheel, or to expire on the rack. But a daily reflection on the LAMB's atoning blood; a comfortable truſt, that my ſoul is reconciled through this divine expiation; this is the ray, the golden ray, which irradiates the face of the univerſe. This is the *oil* of *beauty*, which makes all things wear a chearful aſpect; and the *oil* of *gladneſs*, which diſpoſes the ſpectator to behold them with delight *. This, this is the ſecret charm, which teaches nature, in all her proſpects and all her productions, ſo exquiſitely to pleaſe.

"MAN goeth forth to his work, and to his labour, "till the evening." But then his ſtrength fails; his ſpirits flag; and he ſtands in need, not only of ſome reſpite from toil, but of ſome kindly and ſovereign refreſhments.—What an admirable proviſion for this purpoſe is *ſleep!* Sleep introduces a moſt welcome vacation, both for the ſoul and body. The exerciſes of the brain, and the labours of the hand, are at once diſcontinued. So that the *weary* limbs repair their exhauſted vigour; while the *penſive* thoughts drop their load of ſorrows, and the *buſy* ones reſt from the fatigue of application.—Moſt reviving cordial! equally beneficial to our animal and intellectual powers. It ſupplies the fleſhly machine, and keeps all its nice movements in a proper poſture for eaſy play. It animates the thinking faculties with freſh alacrity, and rekindles their ardor for the ſtudies of the dawn. Without theſe enlivening recruits, how ſoon would the moſt robuſt conſtitution be waſted into a *walking ſkeleton*; and the moſt learned ſage degenerate into a *hoary idiot!*—Some time ago, I beheld, with ſurpriſe, poor *Florio*. His air was wild; his countenance meagre; his thoughts roving, and ſpeech diſconcerted. Inquiring the cauſe of this ſtrange alteration, I was informed, that, for ſeveral nights, he had not cloſed his eyes in ſleep. For want of which *noble reſtorative*, that ſprightly youth (who was once the life of the diſcourſe, and the darling of the company) is become a ſpectacle of miſery and horror.

How many of my fellow-creatures are, at this very inſtant, confined to the bed of languiſhing; and complaining, with that illuſtrious ſufferer of old, *Weariſome nights are appointed to me* †! Inſtead of indulging ſoft repoſe, they are counting the tedious hours; telling every ſtriking clock; or meaſuring the very moments, by their throbbing pulſe. How many, haraſſed with *pain*, moſt paſſionately long to make ſome little truce with their agonies, in peaceful ſlumbers! How many, ſick with *diſquietude*, and reſtleſs even on their downy pillows, would purchaſe this tranſient oblivion of their woes, almoſt at any rate!—That which wealth cannot procure, which multitudes ſigh for in vain, thy GOD has beſtowed on thee, times out of number. The *welcome viſitant*, punctual at the needed hour, has entered thy chamber, and poured his poppies round thy couch; has gently cloſed thy eye-lids, and ſhed his ſlumberous dews over all thy ſenſes.

Since ſleep is ſo abſolutely neceſſary, ſo ineſtimably valuable, obſerve, what a *fine apparatus* almighty goodneſs has made, to accommodate us with the balmy bleſſing. With how kind a precaution he removes whatever might obſtruct its acceſs, or impede its influence! He draws around us the *curtain* of *darkneſs*; which inclines us to a drowſy indolence, and conceals every object that might too ſtrongly agitate the ſenſe. He conveys *peace* into our *apartments*; and impoſes ſilence on the whole creation. Every animal is bidden to tread ſoftly, or rather to ceaſe from its motion, when man is retiring to his repoſe.—May we not diſcern, in this gracious diſpoſition of things, the tender cares of a *nurſing-mother*; who huſhes every noiſe, and ſecludes every diſturbance, when ſhe has laid the child of her love to reſt? *So*, by ſuch ſoothing circumſtances, and gently-working opiates, *HE giveth, to his beloved, ſleep* *.

Another ſignal inſtance of a providence intent upon our welfare, is, that we are preſerved *ſafe* in the hours of *ſlumber*. How are we then loſt to all apprehenſion of danger, even though the murderer be at our bed-ſide, or his naked ſword at our breaſt! Deſtitute of all concern for ourſelves, we are unable to *think of*, much more to *provide* for, our own ſecurity. At theſe moments, therefore, we lie open to innumerable perils; perils from the reſtleſs rage of flames; perils from the inſidious artifices of thieves, or the outrageous violence of robbers; perils from the *irregular workings* † of our own thoughts, and eſpecially from the incurſions of our ſpiritual enemy.

What dreadful miſchief might that reſtleſs, that implacable *adverſary* of *mankind* work, was there not an inviſible hand to controul his rage, and protect poor mortals! What ſcenes of horror might he repreſent to our imaginations, and "ſcare us with dreams, or "terrify us with viſions ‡!" But the *Keeper* of *Iſrael*,

* Thus applied, that fine piece of *flattery*, addreſſed to the *Heathen* emperor, is ſtrictly and literally *true*.

——*Vultus ubi tuus*
Affulſit populo, gratior it dies,
Et ſoles melius nitent. HORAT.

Which I would caſt in a *Chriſtian* mould, and thus tranſlate:

When faith preſents the Saviour's death,
And whiſpers, "This is thine;"
Sweetly my riſing hours advance,
And peacefully decline.

While ſuch my views, the radiant ſun
Sheds a more ſprightly rays:
Each object ſmiles; all nature charms:
I ſing my cares away.

† Job vii. 3.

* Pſal. cxxvii. 2.

† I think, it is referable only to a ſuperintending and watchful *providence*, that we are not hurried into the moſt *pernicious* actions, when our imagination is heated, and our reaſon ſtupified by dreams.—We have ſometimes heard of unfortunate perſons, who, walking in their ſleep, have thrown themſelves headlong from a window, and been daſhed to death on the pebbles. And whence is it, that ſuch diſaſtrous accidents are only *related* as pieces of news, not experienced by ourſelves, or our families? Were *our* minds more ſober in their operations, or more circumſpect in their regards? No, verily: nothing could be more wild than their excurſions; and none could be more inattentive to their own welfare. Therefore, if *we have laid us down, and ſlept* in peace; it was, becauſe the LORD vouchſafed us the ſweet refreſhment: if *we roſe again* in ſafety, it was, *becauſe the LORD ſuſtained us* with his unremitted protection.

Will the candid reader excuſe me, if I add a ſhort ſtory, or rather a *matter of fact*, ſuitable to the preceding remark?—Two perſons, who had been hunting together in the day, ſlept together the following night. One of them was renewing the purſuit in his dream; and, having run the whole circle of the chace, came, at laſt, to the fall of the ſtag. Upon this, he cries out with a determined ardor, *I'll kill him, I'll kill him*; and immediately feels for the knife, which he carried in his pocket. His companion happening to be awake, and obſerving what paſſed, leaped from the bed. Being ſecure from danger, and the moon ſhining into the room, he ſtood to view the event. When, to his inexpreſſible ſurpriſe, the infatuated ſportſman gave ſeveral deadly ſtabs, in the very place, where, a moment before, the throat and the life of his friend lay.—This I mention, as a proof, that nothing hinders us, even from being aſſaſſins of *others*, or murderers of *ourſelves*, amidſt the mad ſallies of ſleep; only the *preventing care* of our heavenly Father.

‡ What a complete maſter that malignant ſpirit is in exhibiting *viſionary repreſentations*, appears from his conduct towards CHRIST, on the high mountain: and that he is too ready, if not reſtrained by an over-ruling power, to employ his dexterity in afflicting mankind, is evident from his treatment of *Job*. See *Luke* iv. 5. *Job* vii. 14.

who

who never ſlumbers nor ſleeps, interpoſes in our behalf; at once to *cheriſh* us under his wings, and to *defend* us as with a ſhield.——It is ſaid of *Solomon*, That threeſcore valiant men were about his bed; all expert in war; every one with his ſword upon his thigh, becauſe of fear in the night *." But one greater than *Solomon*, one mightier than myriads of armed hoſts; even the great JEHOVAH, in whom is everlaſting ſtrength, he vouchſafes to *encamp about our houſes*, to watch over our ſleeping minutes, and to ſtop all the avenues of ill.—O! the unwearied and condeſcending goodneſs of our Creator! who *lulls* us to our *reſt*, by bringing on the ſilent ſhades; and *plants* his own ever-watchful eye as our *centinel*, while we enjoy the needful repoſe.

REASON now reſigns her ſedate office; and *Fancy*, extravagant fancy, leads the mind through a maze of vanity. The head is crowded with falſe images, and tantalized with the moſt ridiculous miſapprehenſions of things.—Some are expatiating amidſt *Fairy-fields*, and gathering garlands of viſionary bliſs; while their bodies are ſtretched on a wiſp of ſtraw, and ſheltered by the cobwebs of a barn. Others, quite inſenſible of their rooms of ſtate, are mourning in a doleful *dungeon*, or ſtruggling with the raging billows.—— Perhaps, with haſty ſteps, they climb the craggy cliff; and, with real anxiety, fly from the imaginary danger. Or elſe, benumbed with ſudden fear, and finding themſelves unable to eſcape, they give up at once their hopes and their efforts; and, though reclined on a couch of ivory, are ſinking, all helpleſs and diſtreſſed, in the furious whirlpool. So unaccountable are the *vagaries* of the *brain*, while ſleep maintains its dominion over the limbs!

But is this the only ſeaſon, when abſurd and incoherent irregularities play their magic on our minds? Are there not thoſe who *dream*, even in their *waking* moments!—Some pride themſelves in a notion of ſuperior excellency, becauſe the royal favour has annexed a few ſplendid titles to their names; or becauſe the dying ſilk-worm has bequeathed her fineſt threads to cover their nakedneſs.—Others congratulate their own ſignal happineſs, becauſe loads of golden lumber are amaſſed together in their coffers; or promiſe themſelves a moſt ſuperlative felicity indeed, when ſome thouſands more are added to the uſeleſs heap.—Nor are there wanting others, who gape after *ſubſtantial* ſatisfaction from *airy* applauſe; and flatter themſelves with, I know not what, immortality in the momentary buz of renown.—Are any of theſe a whit more reaſonable in their opinions, than the poor ragged wretch in his reveries; who, while ſnoring under a hedge, exults in the poſſeſſion of his ſtately palace, and ſumptuous furniture?—If perſons, who are *very vaſſals* to their own *domineering* paſſions, and led captive by numberleſs temptations; if theſe perſons pique themſelves with a conceit of their liberty, and fancy themſelves the *generous* and *gallant* ſpirits of the age: where is the difference between theirs, and the madman's frenzy; who, though chained to the floor, is throned in thought, and wielding an imaginary ſceptre?—In a word, as many as borrow their dignity from a plume of feathers, or the gaudy trappings of fortune; as many as ſend their ſouls to ſeek for bliſs in the blandiſhments of ſenſe, or in any thing ſhort of the divine favour, and a well-grounded hope of the incorruptible inheritance †; what are they but dreamers with their eyes open; *delirious*, though in *health*?

Would you ſee their picture drawn to the very life, and the ſucceſs of their ſchemes calculated with the utmoſt exactneſs; caſt your eye upon that fine repreſentation exhibited by the prophet: *It ſhall be even as when a hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his ſoul is empty: or as when a thirſty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold his ſoul is faint, and his ſoul hath appetite* ‡.—— Such is the race, and ſuch the prize, of all thoſe candidates for honour and joy, who run wide from the mark of the high calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS. They live in vanity, and die in woe.——Awaken us, merciful LORD, from theſe *noon-tide trances!* Awaken us, while conviction may turn to our advantage, and not ſerve only to increaſe our torment. O! let our eyes be enlightened, to diſcern the things that are excellent;" "and no longer be impoſed upon by fantaſtic appearances, which, however *pompous* they may ſeem, will prove more *empty* than the viſions of the night, more *tranſient* than the dream that is forgotten."

HAVING mentioned ſleep and dreams, let me once again conſider thoſe remarkable incidents of our frame; ſo very remarkable, that I may venture to call them a kind of experimental *myſtery*, and little leſs than a ſtanding *miracle*.—Behold the moſt *vigorous conſtitution*, when ſtretched on the bed of eaſe, and totally reſigned to the ſlumbers of the night. Its activity is oppreſſed with fetters of indolence; its ſtrength is conſigned over to a temporary annihilation; the nerves are like a bow unſtrung, and the whole animal ſyſtem is like a motionleſs log.——Behold a perſon of the moſt *delicate ſenſations*, and *amiable diſpoſitions*. His eyes, though thrown wide open, admit not the viſual ray; at leaſt, diſtinguiſh not objects. His ears, with the organs unimpaired, and articulate accents beating upon the drum, perceive not the ſound; at leaſt, apprehend not the meaning. The ſenſes, and their exquiſitively-fine feelings, are overwhelmed with an unaccountable ſtupefaction. You call him a *ſocial* creature; but where are his ſocial affections? He knows not the father that begat him, and takes no notice of the friend that is as his own ſoul. The wife of his boſom may expire by his ſide, and he lie more unconcerned than a barbarian. The children of his body may be tortured with the ſevereſt pangs; and he, even in the ſame chamber, remain untouched with the leaſt commiſeration.—Behold the moſt *ingenious ſcholar*; whoſe judgment is piercing, and able to trace the moſt intricate difficulties of ſcience; his taſte refined, and quick to reliſh all the beauties of ſentiment and compoſition. Yet, at this juncture, the thinking faculties are unhinged, and the intellectual œconomy quite diſconcerted. Inſtead of cloſe connected reaſonings, nothing but a diſjointed huddle of abſurd ideas; inſtead of well-digeſted principles, nothing but a diſorderly jumble of crude conceptions. The moſt palpable deluſions impoſe upon his imagination. The whole night paſſes, and he frequently miſtakes it for a ſingle minute; is not ſenſible of the tranſition, hardly ſenſible of any duration.

Yet no ſooner does the morning dawn, and daylight enter the room; but this ſtrange inchantment vaniſhes. The man awakes, and finds himſelf poſſeſſed of all the valuable endowments, which, for ſeveral hours, were ſuſpended, or loſt. His ſinews are braced, and fit for action. His ſenſes are alert and keen. The romantic viſionary brightens into the maſter of reaſon. The frozen or benumbed affections melt with tenderneſs, and glow with benevolence. And, what is beyond meaſure ſurpriſing, the intoxicated mind works itſelf ſober, not by *ſlow degrees*; but, in the *twinkling* of an eye, recovers from its perturbation.—— Why does not the ſtupor, which deadens all the nice operations of the animal powers, hold faſt its poſſeſſion? When the thoughts are once diſadjuſted, why are they not always in confuſion? How is it, that they are rallied

* Cant. iii. 7. 8.

† Theſe give a ſacred, and home-felt delight,
A *ſober certainty* of *waking* bliſs. MILT. *Comus.*

‡ Iſ. xxix. 8.

lied in a moment; and, from the wildeſt irregularity, reduced to the moſt orderly array!—From an inactivity reſembling death, how is the body to *ſpeedily* reſtored to vigour and agility! From extravagancies bordering upon madneſs; how is the underſtanding *inſtantaneouſly* re-eſtabliſhed in ſedateneſs and harmony!——Surely "this is the LORD's doing, and it ſhould be marvellous in our eyes;" ſhould awaken our gratitude, and inſpirit our praiſe.

This is the time in which *ghoſts* are ſuppoſed to make their appearance. Now the *timorous imagination* teems with phantoms, and creates numberleſs terrors to itſelf. Now dreary forms, in ſullen ſtate, ſtalk along the gloom; or, ſwifter than lightning, glide acroſs the ſhades. Now voices more than mortal are heard from the echoing vaults, and groans iſſue from the hollow tombs! Now melancholy ſpectres viſit the ruins of ancient monaſteries, and frequent the ſolitary dwellings of the dead. They paſs and repaſs, in unſubſtantial images, along the forlorn galleries; or take their determined ſtand over ſome lamented grave.—How often has the ſchool-boy fetched a long circuit, and trudged many a needleſs ſtep, in order to avoid the haunted church-yard! Or, if neceſſity, or neceſſity, has obliged him to croſs the ſpot, where *human ſkulls* are lodged below, and the *baleful yews* ſhed ſupernumerary horrors above; a thouſand hideous ſtories ruſh into his memory. Fear adds wings to his feet; he ſcarce touches the ground; dare not once look behind him; and eſteems his good fortune, if no frightful ſound purred at his heels, if no ghaſtly ſhape poiſed upon his ſight.

It is ſtrange, to obſerve the exceſſive timidity which poſſeſſes many people's minds, on this *fanciful occaſion*; while they are void of all concern, on others of the moſt *tremendous import*. Thoſe who are ſtartled in any dark and lonely walk, at the *very apprehenſion* of a ſingle ſpectre, are nevertheleſs unimpreſſed at the ſure *proſpect* of entering into a whole world of diſembodied beings; nay, are without any emotions of awe, though they know themſelves to be haſtening into the preſence of the great, infinite, and eternal Spirit.——Should ſome pale meſſenger from the regions of the dead draw back our curtains at the hour of midnight; and, appointing ſome particular place, ſay, as the horrid apparition to *Brutus*, *I'll meet thee there* †; I believe the boldeſt heart would feel ſomething like a panic; would ſeriouſly think upon the adventure, and be in pain for the event. But, when a voice from heaven cries, in the awakening language of the prophet, *Prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael* ‡; how little is the warning regarded! how ſoon is it forgot! Prepoſterous ſtupidity! to be *utterly unconcerned*, where it is the trueſt wiſdom to take the alarm; and to be *all trepidation*, where there is nothing really terrible!—Do thou, my ſoul, remember thy Saviour's admonition: "*I will forewarn you, whom you ſhall fear.* Fear not theſe imaginary horrors of the night: but fear that awful "Being, whoſe revelation of himſelf, though with "expreſſions of peculiar mercy, made *Moſes*, his favourite ſervant, tremble exceedingly: whoſe manifeſtation, when he appears with purpoſes of inexorable vengeance, will make *mighty conquerors*, who "were familiar with dangers, and eſtranged to diſmay, "call upon the mountains to fall on them, and the "rocks to cover them: the menace of whoſe majeſtic "eye, when he comes attended with thouſand thouſands of his immortal hoſts, will make the very "heavens cleave aſunder, and the earth flee away.—"O dread his diſpleaſure; ſecure his favour: and "then thou mayſt commit all thy other anxieties to the "wind; thou mayſt laugh at every other fear."

This brings to my mind a memorable and amazing occurrence, recorded in the book of *Job* *; which is, I think, no inconſiderable proof of the *real exiſtence* of apparitions; on ſome *very extraordinary* emergencies; while it diſcountenances thoſe legions of idle tales, which ſuperſtition has raiſed, and credulity received. Since it teaches us, that if, at any time, thoſe viſitants from the unknown world render themſelves perceivable by mortals, it is not upon any errand of frivolous conſequence, but to *convey intelligences* of the utmoſt moment, or to *work impreſſions* of the higheſt advantage.

'Twas in the *dead of night*. All nature lay ſhrouded in darkneſs. Every creature was buried in ſleep. The moſt profound ſilence reigned through the univerſe. In theſe ſolemn moments, *Eliphaz* alone, all wakeful and ſolitary, was muſing upon ſublime and heavenly ſubjects.—When lo! an awful being, from the inviſible realms, burſt into his apartment! *A ſpirit paſſed before his face.* Aſtoniſhment ſeized the beholder. His bones ſhivered within him; his fleſh trembled all over him; and the hair of his head ſtood erect with horror.—Sudden and unexpected was the appearance of the phantom; not ſuch its departure. *It ſtood ſtill*, to preſent itſelf more fully to his view. It made a ſolemn pauſe, to prepare his mind for ſome momentous meſſage.——After which, a voice was heard; a voice, for the importance of its meaning, worthy to be had in everlaſting remembrance; for the ſolemnity of its delivery, enough to alarm a heart of ſtone. It ſpoke; and this was the purport of its words:—"*Shall man, "frail man, be juſt before the mighty* GOD? *Shall "even the moſt accompliſhed of mortals be pure in the ſight "of his Maker* ‖? *Behold*, and conſider it attentively.

* Job iv. 12, 13, &c.

† *In a proof of the real exiſtence of apparitions*—if the ſenſe, in which I have always underſtood this paſſage, be true.—*Eliphaz*, I apprehend, was neither in a trance, nor in a dream, but perfectly awake.—Though he ſpeaks of ſleep, he ſpeaks of it, as falling not upon *himſelf* but upon *other* men. He does not mention *dreams*, though *viſions of the night*, would have ſuited the verſe (if the book be in metre) altogether as well as *trembling*.—It could not ſurely be a *wind*, as ſome tranſlate the word רוח. Becauſe the circumſtance of *ſtanding ſtill* is not ſo compatible with the nature of a wind; and a wind would have paſſed *above* him, all *around* him, as well as *before* him. Not to add, how low a remark it is, and how unworthy of a place in ſo auguſt a deſcription, that he *could not diſcern the form* of a wind.—It ſeems, therefore, to have been a real ſpirit: either *angelical*, as were thoſe which preſented themſelves to *Abraham* reſting at the door of his tent, and to *Lot* ſitting in the gate of *Sodom*; or elſe the ſpirit of ſome departed ſaint, as in the caſe of *Samuel*'s apparition, or the famous appearance of *Moſes* and *Elijah* on the mount of tranſfiguration.—A ſpirit, aſſuming ſome *vehicle*, in order to become viſible to the human eye: which, accordingly, *Eliphaz* ſaw, exhibiting itſelf as an object of ſight; but ſaw ſo obſcurely and indiſtinctly, that he was not able either to deſcribe its *aſpect*, or to diſcern *whom* it reſembled.

‡ I have given this ſolemn picture a *modern* dreſs, rather for the ſake of variety and illuſtration, than from any apprehenſion of improving the admirable original. Such an attempt, I am ſenſible, would be more abſurdly vain, than to lacquer gold, or paint the diamond. The deſcription, in *Eliphaz*'s own language, is awful and affecting to the laſt degree; a *night-piece*, dreſſed in all the circumſtances of the deepeſt horror. I queſtion whether *Shakeſpeare* himſelf, though ſo peculiarly happy for his great command of terrifying images, has any thing ſuperior or comparable to this. The judges of fine compoſition *ſee* the maſterly ſtrokes; and I believe, the moſt ordinary reader *feels* them, chilling his blood, and awakening emotions of dread in his boſom.

‖ There ſeems to be a ſignificant, and beautiful *gradation* in the

Vel quoque per ſomnos vulgo exanduta Parentes
Ingens, a ſolitario non deficit agmine Manes.
Diſque ſub aſpectum venêre videntibus Umbræ.—VIRG.

† The ſtory of *Brutus*, and his *evil genius*, is well known. Nor muſt it be denied, that the preciſe words of the ſpectre to the hero were, *I'll meet thee at* Philippi. But as this would not anſwer my purpoſe, I was obliged to make an alteration in the circumſtance of *place*.

‡ Amos iv. 12.

"*He put no such trust in his most exalted servants*, as "should bespeak them incapable of defect. *And his* "*very angels he charged with folly*," in finding, even in the highest perfection of their holiness, infinitely beneath his transcendent glories; as failing, even in all the fidelity of their obedience, inexpressibly short of the homage due to his adorable Majesty. If angelic natures must not presume to justify either themselves, or their services, before uncreated purity; *how much more* were absurd is such a notion, how much more impious such an attempt, in *them that dwell in houses of clay*, whose original is from the dust, and whose state is all imperfection!"

I would observe from hence, the very singular necessity of that *poverty* of *spirit*, which entirely *renounces* its own attainments; and most thankfully *submits* to the righteousness of the incarnate GOD.—To inculcate this lesson; the Son of the Blessed came down from heaven; and pressed no other principle, with so repeated * an importunity on his hearers. To instil the same doctrine, the HOLY GHOST touched the lips of the apostles with sacred eloquence; and made it an eminent part of their commission, "to demolish every high imagination." That no expedient might be wanting, to give it a deep and lasting efficacy on the human mind; a phantom arises from the valley of the shadow of death, or a teacher descends from the habitation of spirits.—Whatever then we neglect, let us not neglect to cultivate *this grace*, which has been so variously taught, so powerfully enforced.

HARK! a *direful voice*.—With sudden starts, and hideous screams, it disturbs the silence of the peaceful night. 'Tis the *screech-owl*, sometimes in frantic, sometimes in disconsolate accents, uttering her woes †. She flies the vocal grove, and shuns the society of all the feathered choir. The blooming gardens, and flowery meads, have no charms for her. Obscene shades, ragged ruins, and walls overgrown with ivy, are her favourite haunts. Above, the mouldering precipice nods, and threatens a fall; below, the toad crawls, or the poisonous adder hisses. The sprightly morning, which awakens other animals into joy, administers no pleasure to this gloomy recluse. Even the smiling face of day is her aversion; and all its lovely scenes create nothing but uneasiness.

So, just so, would it fare with the *ungodly*, were it possible to suppose their admission into the chaste and bright abodes of endless felicity. They would find nothing but disappointment and shame, even at the fountain-head of happiness and honour.—For how could the tongue, habituated to *profaneness*, taste any delight in the harmonious iterations of heaven? How could the eye, enamoured with *shade*, relish the scenes of everliving praise? Where would be the satisfaction of the soul, treasuring the *Superlative grandeur*? Since, in the temple of the skies, no incense of flattery would be addressed to the former; nor any officious homage paid to the latter.—The spotless and inconceivable purity of the blessed GOD, would *flash* confusion on the lascivious eye. The envious mind must be on a *rack* of self-tormenting *passions*, to observe millions of happy beings, shining in all the perfections of glory, and solacing themselves in the fulness of joy.—In short, the unsanctified soul, amidst holy and triumphant spirits, even in the refined regions of bliss and immortality, would be like this melancholy bird, *disfigured* from her darksome retirement, and *imprisoned* under the beams of day.

The voice of this creature screaming at our windows, or of the raven croaking over our houses, is they say, a *token* of approaching *death*. There are persons who would regard such an incident with no small degree of solicitude. Trivial as it is, it would damp their spirits, perhaps break their rest.—One cannot but wonder, that people should suffer themselves to be affrighted at such *fantastical*, and yet be quite unaffected with *real* presages of their dissolution. Real presages of this awful event address us from every quarter. What are these *incumbent glooms*, which overwhelm the world, but a kind of *pall* provided for nature; and an image of that long night, which will quickly cover the inhabitants of the whole earth? What an affinity has the *sleep* †, which will very soon weigh down my drowsy eye-lids, with that state of entire cessation, in which all my senses must be laid aside! The silent chamber, and the bed of slumber, are very significant representations of the land, where all things are hushed, all things are forgotten.—What means that deep *death-bell* sent, which, the other evening, quickened the air? Laden with heavier accents, it struck our ears, and seemed to knock at the door of our hearts. Surely, it brought a lesson to surviving mortals, and thus the tidings ran: "Mortals, the destroyer of your race is on "his way. The last enemy has passed the gulph; and "is gaining ground upon you every moment. His "paths are strewed with heaps of slain. Even now, his "javelin has laid one of your neighbours in the dust; "and will soon, very soon, aim the *inevitable blow* at "each of your lives."

We need not go down to the charnel-house, nor carry our search into the repositories of the dead, in order to find memorials of our impending doom. A multitude of these remembrancers are planted in all our paths, and point the heedless passengers to their long home. I can hardly enter a considerable town, but I meet the funeral procession, or the mourners going about the streets. The *hatchment* suspended on the wall, or the *crape* streaming in the air, are silent intimations, that both *rich* and *poor* have been emptying their houses, and replenishing their sepulchres. I can scarce join in any conversation, but mention is

* It is well worthy of our observation, says an excellent commentator, "That no one sentence uttered by our LORD, is so frequently repeated as this: *Whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.*" Which often occurs in the evangelists; but is never duly accomplished in us, unless we disclaim all pretension to merit and righteousness of our own, and seek them only in the atonement and obedience of JESUS CHRIST.

† *Eclogue culminibus ferali carmine bubo*
Sæpe queri, longasque in fletum ducere voces.

Thus sung that charming genius, that prince of the ancient poets, that most consummate master of elegance and accuracy; all whose *sentiments* are nature, whose every *description* is a picture, whose whole *language* is music.—VIRGIL.

* I would beg of the reader to observe, with what *propriety* our LORD touches this important point, in his memorable reply to *Nicodemus*. *Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he* CANNOT *enter into the kingdom of heaven.* I wave the *authority* of the supreme Judge, and speak with the *confidence* of a teacher in *Israel*. I might, without being liable to the least control, pass a sovereign decree, that unrenewed mortals, who are *flesh*, so corrupt, appetite, SHALL NOT enter the habitations of the pure; I might choose to represent it as a case of *impossibility*, and charge the impossibility, not upon divine severity, but upon human guilt. Sense perfects, from the very nature of things, preclude the sinful; their incapacities, their own minds; and contrariety cannot be reconciled, before which the whole [illegible] are as nothing. *Locke in loc.*

† *Et consanguineus lethi sopor.* VIRG.

made of some that are given over by the physician, and hovering on the confines of eternity! of others, that have just dropt their clay amidst weeping friends, and are gone to appear before the Judge of all the earth? There's not a *news-paper* comes to my hand, but, amidst all its entertaining narrations, reads several serious *lectures* of *mortality*. What else are the repeated accounts—of age worn out by slow-consuming sicknesses—of youth dashed to pieces by some sudden stroke of casuality—of patriots exchanging their seats in the senate for a lodging in the tomb—of misers resigning their breath, and (O relentless destiny!) leaving their very riches for others? Even the vehicles of our amusement are registers of the deceased; and the voice of *fame* seldom sounds, but in concert with a *knell*.

These monitors croud every place; not so much as the scenes of our diversion excepted. What are the decorations of our public buildings, and the most elegant furniture of our parlours, but the imagery of death, and trophies of the tomb? That marble bust, and those gilded pictures, how solemnly they *recognize* the fate of others, and speakingly remind us of our own! I see, I hear, and O! I feel this great truth. It is interwoven with my constitution. The frequent decays of the structure foretel its final ruin. What are all the pains, that have been darted through my limbs; what every disease, that has assaulted my health; but the *advanced guards* of the foe? What are the languors and weariness that attend the labours of each revolving day, but the more *secret practices* of the adversary, slowly undermining the earthly tabernacle?

Amidst so many notices, shall we go on thoughtless and unconcerned? Can none of these prognostics, which are sure as oracles, awaken our attention, and engage our circumspection? *Noah*, 'tis written, *being warned of GOD, prepared an ark*. Imitate, my soul, imitate this excellent example. Admonished by such a cloud of witnesses, be continually putting thyself in a readiness for the last change. Let not that day, of which thou hast so many infallible signs, come upon thee unawares.—Get the *world unlearned*, and thy affections disentangled from this enchanting world, that thou mayest be able to quit it with reluctance. Get the dreadful *hand-writing cancelled*, and all thy sins blotted out, that thou mayest depart in peace, and have nothing to fear at the decisive tribunal. Get, O! get thyself interested in the Redeemer's *merits*, and transformed into his sacred *image*; then shalt thou be meet for the inheritance of saints in light, and mayest even desire to be dissolved, and to be with CHRIST.

SOMETIMES in my evening-walk I have heard

~~—The wakeful bird~~

~~Sing darkling, and in shadiest covert hid,~~

~~Tune her nocturnal note~~ *.

How different the *airs* of this charming songster, from those harsh and boding *outcries!* The little creature ran through all the variations of music; and shewed herself mistress of every grace, which constitutes or embellishes harmony.—Sometimes she swells a manly throat, and her song kindles into ardor. The tone is so *bold*, and strikes with such energy, you would imagine the sprightly serenader in the very next thicket. Anon the strain *languishes*, and the mournful warbler melts into tenderness. Her melancholy notes just steal upon the shades, and faintly touch your ear; or, in soft and sadly-pleasing accents, they seem to die along the distant vale.—Silence is pleased, and night listens to the trilling tale.

What an invitation is this, to slip away from the thronged city! This coy and modest minstrel entertains only the *lovers* of *retirement*. Those who are carousing over the bowls, are ranting at the riotous club, lose this feast of harmony.—In like manner, the pleasures of religion, and the joy of reconciliation with GOD; the satisfactions arising from an established interest in CHRIST, and from the prospect of a blissful immortality; these are all lost to the mind, that is ever *in the croud*, and dares not, or delights not, to retire into itself.—Are we charmed with the nightingale's song? Do we wish to have it near, and hear it oftener? Let us seek a renewed heart, and a resigned will; a conscience that whispers peace, and passions that are tuned by grace. Then shall we never want a melody in our own breasts, far more *inspiring* than sweet *Philomela*'s sweetest strains.

As different as the voices of these birds, are the *circumstances* of those few persons who continue awake.—Some are squandering, pearls shall I say, or kingdoms? No; but what is unspeakably more precious, time; squandering this inestimable talent, with the most senseless prodigality. Not content with allowing a few *spare minutes* for the purpose of necessary recreation, they lavish many hours, devote *whole nights*, to that idle diversion of shuffling, ranging, and detaching a set of painted pasteboards.—Others, instead of this busy trifling, act the part of their own tormentors. They even piquet themselves *, and call it amusement; they are torn by wild horses, yet term it a sport. What else is the *gamester*'s practice? His mind is stretched on the tenter-hooks of anxious suspence, and agitated by the fiercest extremes of hope and fear. While the dice are rattling, his heart is throbbing; his fortune is tottering: and, possibly, at the very next throw, the one sinks in the gulf of ruin, and the other is hurried into the rage of distraction.

Some, snatched from the bloom of health, and the lap of plenty, are confined to the *chamber* of *sickness*; where they are constrained, either to plunge into the everlasting world, in an unprepared condition; or else (sad alternative!) to think over all the follies of a heedless life, and all the bitterness of approaching death. The disease rages; it baffles the force of medicine; and urges the reluctant wretch to the brink of the precipice. While furies rouse the conscience, and point at the bottomless pit below.—Perhaps, his *drooping mother*, deprived long ago of the husband of her bosom, and bereft of all her other offspring, is, even now, receiving the blow which consummates her calamities †. In vain she tries to assuage the sorrows of a beloved son; in vain she attempts, with her tender offices, to prolong a life dearer than her own. He faints in her arms; he bows his head; he sinks in death. Fatal, doubly fatal, that last expiring pang! While it dislodges the unwilling soul, it rends an *only child* from the yearning embraces of a parent, and tears away the support of her age, from a disconsolate widow.

While *those* long for a reprieve, *others* invite the stroke. Quite weary of the world, with a restless impatience,

* MILT. *Par. Lost*, b. III. l. 38.

* Alluding to a very painful punishment inflicted on delinquents among the soldiery.

† This brings to my mind one of the deepest *mourning pieces* extant in the productions of the pen. The sacred historian paints it in all the simplicity of style, yet with all the strength of colouring.—When *JESUS came nigh to the gate of the city, behold! there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow*.—What a gradation is here! How pathetically beautiful! Every fresh circumstance widens the wound; aggravates the calamity; till the description is worked up into the most finished picture of exquisite and inconsolable distress.—He was a *young man*; cut off in the flower of life, amidst a thousand gay expectations, and smiling hopes. A son; an *only* son; the afflicted mother's all: so that none remained to preserve the name, or perpetuate the family. What rendered the case still more deplorable, *she was a widow*: left entirely desolate; abandoned to her woes; without any to share her sorrows, or to comfort her under the irreparable loss.—Is not this a fine sketch of the *impassioned* and *picturesque*? Who can consider the narrative with any attention, and not feel his heart penetrated with a tender commiseration? *Luke* vii. 12.

patience, they ſigh for diſſolution: ſome pining away under the tedious decays of an incurable *conſumption*; or gaſping for breath, and almoſt ſuffocated by an inundation of *dropſical* waters. On ſome a relentleſs *cancer* has faſtened its envenomed teeth; and is gnawing them, though in the midſt of bodily vigour, in the midſt of pitying friends, gradually to death. Others are on a rack of agonies, by convulſive fits of the ſtone. O! how the pain writhes their limbs; how the ſweat bedews their fleſh; and their eye-balls wildly roll! Methinks the night condoles with theſe her diſtreſſed children: and ſheds dewy tears over their ſorrowful abodes. But of all mortals, *they* are the moſt exquiſitively miſerable, who groan beneath the preſſure of a *melancholy* mind, or ſmart under the laſhes of a *reſentful* conſcience. Though robed in ermine, or covered with jewels, the ſtate of a ſlave chained to the gallies, or of an exile condemned to the mines, is a perfect paradiſe compared with theirs.

O! that the *votaries* of *mirth*, whoſe life is a continued round of merriment and whim, would beſtow one ſerious reflection on this *variety* of human *woes*! It might teach them to be leſs enamoured with the few languid ſweets that are thinly ſcattered through this vale of tears, and environed with ſuch a multitude of ragged thorns. It might teach them no longer to dance away their years, with a giddy *rambling impulſe*; but to aſpire with a determined aim, after thoſe happy regions, where delights, abundant and unembittered, flow.

Can there be circumſtances, which a man of wiſdom would more earneſtly deprecate, than theſe ſeveral inſtances of grievous tribulation? There are; and, what is very aſtoniſhing, they are frequently the deſire and the choice of thoſe, who fancy themſelves the ſole heirs of happineſs: thoſe I mean, who are launching out into the depths of *extravagance*, and running exceſſive lengths of *riot*: who are proſtituting their reputation, and ſacrificing their peace, to the gratification of their luſts; ſapping the foundation of their health, in debaucheries; or ſhipwrecking the intereſts of their families, in their bowls; and, what is worſe, are forfeiting the joys of an eternal heaven, for the *ſordid* ſatisfactions of the beaſt; for the *tranſitory* ſenſations of an hour.—Ye ſlaves of appetite, how far am I from envying your groſs ſenſualities, and voluptuous revels! Little, ah! little are you ſenſible, that, while Indulgence ſhowers her roſes, and Luxury diffuſes her odours, they ſcatter *poiſons* alſo, and ſhed unheeded *bane**: evils incomparably more malignant, than the wormwood and gall of the ſharpeſt affliction.—Since death is in the drunkard's cup, and worſe than poniards in the harlot's embrace, may it ever be the privilege of the man whom I love, to go without his ſhare of theſe *peſtilent ſweets* †!

ABUNDANCE of living ſparks glitter in the lanes, and twinkle under the hedges. I ſuppoſe they are the *glow-worms*; which have lighted their little lamps, and obtained leave, through the abſence of the ſun, to play a feeble beam. A faint glimmer juſt ſerves to render them perceivable, without tending at all to diſſipate the ſhades, or making any amends for the departed day.—Should ſome weather-beaten traveller, dropping with wet, and ſhivering with cold, hover round this *mimicry* of *fire*, in order to dry his garments, and warm his benumbed limbs: ſhould ſome bewildered traveller, groping for his way, in a ſtarleſs night, and trackleſs deſert, take one of theſe *languid tapers* for a light to his feet, and a lantern to his path: how certainly would both the one and the other be fruſtrated of their expectation!—And are *they* more likely to ſucceed, who, neglecting that ſovereign balm, which diſtilled from the croſs, apply any *carnal* diverſion, to heal the anxiety of the mind? who, deaf to the infallible deciſions of revelation, reſign themſelves over to the erroneous *conjectures of reaſon*, in order to find the way that leadeth unto life? or, laſtly, who have recourſe to the *froth* of this vain world, for a ſatisfactory portion, and a ſubſtantial happineſs? Their conduct is in no degree wiſer; their diſappointment equally ſure; and their miſcarriage infinitely more diſaſtrous. To ſpeak in the delicate language of a ſacred writer, "They ſow the "wind, and will reap the whirlwind."

To ſpeak more plainly; the pleaſures of the world, which we are *all* ſo prone to dote upon; and the powers of fallen reaſon, which *ſome* are ſo apt to idolize; are not only vain, but treacherous: not only a *painted flame*, like theſe ſparkling animals; but much like thoſe unctuous exhalations, which ariſe from the marſhy ground, and often dance before the eyes of the benighted wayfaring man. Kindled into a ſort of fire, they perſonate a guide, and ſeem to offer their ſervice; but, blazing with *deluſive light*, miſlead their followers into hidden pits, headlong precipices, and unfathomable gulfs; where, far from his beloved friends, far from all hopes of ſuccour, the unhappy wanderer is ſwallowed up and loſt.

NOT long ago, we obſerved a very ſurpriſing appearance in the weſtern ſky. A *prodigious ſtar* took its flaming route through thoſe coaſts; and trailed, as it paſſed, a tremendous length of fire, almoſt over half the heavens. Some, I imagine, viewed the portentous ſtranger, with much the ſame anxious amazement, as *Belſhazzar* beheld the hand writing upon the wall. Some looked upon it as a *bloody* ‡ *flag*, hung out by divine reſentment, over a guilty world. Some read, in its glaring viſage, the fate of nations, and the fall of kingdoms ‖.——To others, it ſhook, or ſeemed to ſhake, *peſtilence* and *war* from its horrid hair. For my part, I am not ſo ſuperſtitious as to regard what every aſtrologer has to prognoſticate, upon the acceſſion of a *comet*, or the projection of its huge, *vaporous train*. Nothing can be more precarious and unjuſtifiable, than to draw ſuch concluſions from ſuch events: ſince they neither are preternatural effects,

* Hoſ. viii. 7.

† I hope it will be obſerved, that I am far from decrying that noble faculty of reaſon, when exerted in her proper ſphere; when acting in a *deferential ſubordination* to the revealed will of heaven. While ſhe exerciſes her powers within theſe appointed limits, ſhe is unſpeakably ſerviceable, and cannot be too induſtriouſly cultivated.—But, when ſhe ſets up herſelf in *proud contradiſtinction* to the ſacred oracles; when, all-arrogant and ſelf-ſufficient, ſhe ſays to the word of ſcripture, *I have no need of thee*: ſhe is then, I muſt be bold to maintain, not only a glow-worm, but an *ignis fatuus*; not only a bubble, but a ſnare.

May not this remark, with the ſtricteſt propriety, and without the leaſt limitation, be applied to the *generality* of our modern romances, novels, and theatrical entertainments? Theſe are commonly calculated to inflame a wanton fancy; or, if conducted with ſo much modeſty, as not to debauch the affections, they pervert the judgment, and bewilder the taſte. By their incredible adventures; their extravagant parade of gallantry; and their characters, widely different from truth and nature; they inſpire fooliſh conceits; anger idle expectations; intrude a diſguſt of genuine hiſtory; and miſlead their admirers, to acquieſce in the groſs civilities, or to reliſh the *ſober* ſatisfactions, of common life.

* *Yet, in the flow'rs that wreathe the ſparkling bowl,*
Fell adders hiſs, and pois'nous ſerpents roll. PRIOR's *Sol.*

† *Quàm ſuave eſt ſuavitatibus iſtis carere!* was St *Auguſtine's* pious exclamation. The ſubſtance of which Mr *Pope* has expreſſed, with more ſimplicity, and with no leſs dignity.

Count all th' advantage proſp'rous vice attains;
'Tis but what virtue flies from, and diſdains.

‡ —*Liquidus humor ſanguine guttas*
Sanguineas ingubre ſudet.— VIRG.

‖ —*Comantem cometen*
Sideris, et terris mutantem regna cometem. LUCAN.

nor

nor do they throw the frame of things into any disorder. I would rather adore that omnipotent Being, who rolled those stupendous orbs from his creating hand; and leads them, by his providential eye, through immeasurable tracts of æther: who bids them, now approach the sun, and glow with unsufferable ardors *; now retreat to the utmost bounds of our planetary system, and make their entry among other worlds.

They are harmless visitants. I acquit them from the charge of causing, or being accessary to, desolating plagues. Would to GOD, there were no other more formidable indications of *approaching judgment*, or *impending ruin!* But, alas! when vice becomes predominant, and irreligion almost epidemical: when the sabbaths of a jealous GOD are notoriously profaned; and that "name, which is great, wonderful, and holy," is prostituted to the meanest, or abused to the most execrable purposes: when the worship of our great Creator and Preserver is banished from many of the most *conspicuous families*; and it is deemed a piece of rude impertinence, so much as to mention the gracious Redeemer, in our *genteel interviews*: when it passes for an elegant freedom of behaviour, to ridicule the mysteries of Christianity; and a species of refined conversation, to taint the air with lascivious hints: when those who sit in the *scorner's chair*, rule with a high hand: and many of those who wear the *professor's garb*, are destitute of the power, and content themselves with the mere form of godliness: when such is the state of a community, there is reason, too apparent reason, to be horribly afraid. Such *phænomena*, abounding in the moral world, are not fanciful, but real omens. Will not an injured GOD "be avenged on such a nation as this?" Will he not be provoked to "sweep it with the besom of destruction †?"

O! that the inhabitants of *Great Britain* would lay these alarming considerations to heart! The LORD of hosts has commanded the sword of *civil discord* to return into its sheath. But have we returned every one from his *evil ways*? Are we become a renewed people; devoted to a dying Saviour; and zealous of good works? What mean those peals of sobs, which burst from the *repenting crowds*? What mean those melancholy moans, where the lusty droves were wont to low ‡? What mean those arrows of untimely death, discharged on our innocent and useful animals?

No wantonness or sloth has vitiated the blood of these laborious, temperate creatures. They have contracted no disease from unseasonable indulgencies, and inordinate revellings. The pure stream is their drink; the simple herb their repast. Neither care disturbs their sleep, nor passion inflames their breast. Whence then are they visited with such terrible disorders, as no prudence can prevent, nor any medicines heal?——Surely, these calamities are the weapons of divine displeasure, and manifest chastisements of an evil generation ‡. Surely GOD, the "GOD to whom vengeance belongeth," has still a controversy with our sinful land. And who can tell, where the visitation will end? what storm may follow these prelusive drops?—O! that we may "hear "the rod, and who hath appointed it!" Taught by these *general effects* of our disobedience, may we remove the *accursed thing* † from our tents; our practices; our hearts. May we turn from all ungodliness, before wrath come upon us to the uttermost; before iniquity prove our ruin!

SOMETIMES, at this hour, another most remarkable sight amuses the curious, and alarms the vulgar. A blaze of lambent meteors is kindled, or some extraordinary *lights* are refracted, *in the* quarters of the *north*.—The streams of radiance, like legions rushing to the engagement, meet and mingle, insomuch that the air seems to be all conflicting fire. Within a while they start from one another; and, like legions in precipitate flight, sweep, each a separate way, through the firmament. Now they are quiescent; anon they are thrown into a quivering motion; presently the whole horizon is illuminated with the glancing flames. Sometimes, with an aspect *awfully ludicrous*, they represent extravagant and antic vagaries: at other times you would suspect that some invisible hand was playing off the dumb *artillery* of the *skies*; and, by a strange expedient, giving us the flash, without the roar.

The villagers gaze at the spectacle, first with wonder, then with horror. A general *panic* seizes the country. Every heart throbs, and every face is pale. The crouds that flock together, instead of diminishing, increase the dread. They catch contagion from each other's looks and words; while fear is in every eye, and every tongue speaks the language of terror. Some in *hideous shapes*, armies mixing in fierce encounter, or fields swimming with blood. Some foresee *direful events*, states overthrown, or mighty monarchs totter-ing on their thrones. Others, scared with still more frightful apprehensions, think of nothing but the day of *doom*. "Sure," says one, "the unalterable hour "is struck, and the end of all things come."——"See," replies another, "how the blasted stars look wan! "Are not these the signs of the Son of man, coming in "the clouds of heaven?"——"JESUS prepare us" (cries a third, and lifts his eyes in devotion) "for the Arch-"angel's trump, and the great tribunal!"

If this *waving brightness*, which plays innocently over our heads, be so amazing to multitudes; what inexpressible consternation must overwhelm unthinking mortals, when the *general conflagration* commences! The day, the dreadful day, is approaching, "*in the which the* "*heavens shall pass away with a great noise* ‡, *and the*

* "The comet in the year 1680, according to Sir *Isaac Newton*'s "computation, was, in its nearest approach, above 166 times "nearer the sun than the earth is. Consequently, its heat was "then 28,000 times greater than that of summer. So that a ball "of iron as big as the earth, heated by it, would hardly become "cool in 50,000 years." DERH. *Astr. Theol.* p. 237.

† *Is.* xiv. 23. The eternal Sovereign, speaking of *Babylon*, denounces this threatening, *I will sweep it with the besom of destruction*—What a noble, but dreadful image, is here! How strongly and awfully pourtrayed! How pregnant also in its signification! intimating the *vile nature*, and expressing the *total extirpation*, of this wicked people; at the same time, suggesting the *perfect ease* with which the righteous GOD would execute his intended vengeance.

‡ If these papers should be so happy as to outlive their author, perhaps, it may be needful to inform posterity, that the above-mentioned hints allude to a most terrible, contagious, and mortal *distemper*, raging among the *horned-cattle* in various parts of the kingdom.

*Hinc *lætis vituli vulgo moriuntur in herbis,*
Et dulces animas plena ad præsepia reddunt.
Balatu hinc pecorum, et crebris mugitibus amnes,
Arentesque sonant ripæ, collesque supini. VIRG.

† Josh. vi. 18.

‡ 2 *Pet.* iii. 10. I have often thought this verse an eminent instance of that kind of beautiful writing, in which the very *sound* bears a sort of *significancy*; at least, carries an *exact* correspondence with the sense. The original expression—ροιζηδον—is one of the hoarsest and deepest words in language. Nothing could be more exquisitely adapted to affect the *ear*, as well as impress the *imagination*, with the wreck of nature, and the crash of a falling world.—I scarce ever read this clause, but it brings to my mind that admired description in MILTON:

——On a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil, and *jarring sound*,
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges *grate*
Harsh thunder.—— Book II. l. 879.

It is a pleasing employ, and a very laudable office of true criticism, to point out these inferior recommendations of the *sacred*

"*elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also,*
"*and all the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.*"
That mighty hand, which once opened the windows from on high, and broke up the fountains of the great deep, will then unlock all the *magazines* of *fire*, and pour a *second deluge* upon the earth. The vengeful flames, kindled by the breath of the Almighty, spread themselves from the centre to the circumference. Nothing can withstand their impetuosity; nothing can escape their rage. Universal desolation attends their progress. Magnificent palaces, and solemn temples, are laid in ashes. Spacious cities, and impregnable towers, are mingled in one smoking mass. Not only the productions of *human art*, but the works of *almighty power*, are fuel for the devouring element. The everlasting mountains melt, like the snows which cover their summit. Even vast oceans serve only to augment the inconceivable rapidity and fury of the blaze.—O! how shall I, or others, stand undismayed amidst the glare of a *burning world*, unless the LORD JEHOVAH be our defence? How shall we be upheld in security, when the globe itself is sinking in a *fiery ruin*, unless the Rock of Ages be our support?

BEHOLD! a new spectacle of of wonder! The *moon* is making her entry on the eastern sky. See her rising in clouded majesty! opening, as it were, and asserting her original commission to *rule over the night*. All grand and stately, but somewhat sullied is her aspect. However, she *brightens* as she *advances*; and grows clearer, as she climbs higher; till, at length, her silver loses all its dross; she unveils her peerless light; and becomes "the beauty of heaven, the glory of the stars *;" delighting every eye, and chearing the whole world, with the brightness of her appearance, and the softness of her splendors.—O! thou queen of the shades! may it be my ambition to follow this thy instructive example! While others are fond to transcribe the fashions of little courts, and to mimic personages of inferior size; be it mine to imitate thy *improving purity!* May my conduct become more unblemished, and my temper more refined, as I proceed farther and farther in my probationary course! May every sordid desire wear away; and every irregular appetite be gradually lost, as I make nearer approaches to the celestial mansions!—Will not this be a comfortable evidence, that I too shall shine in my adored Redeemer's kingdom? shine with a *richer* lustre, than that which radiates from thy resplendent orb; shine with an *unfading* lustre, when every ray that beams from thy beauteous sphere, is totally extinguished?

THE day afforded us a variety of entertaining sights. These were all withdrawn, at the accession of darkness. The stars, kindly officious, immediately lent us their aid. This served to *alleviate* the frown of night, rather than to *recover* the objects from their obscurity. A faint ray, scarcely reflected, and not from the entire surface of things, gave the straining eye a very imperfect glimpse; such as rather mocked, than satisfied vision.—Now the moon is risen, and has collected all her beams, the veil is taken off from the countenance of nature. I see the recumbent flocks; I see the green hedge-rows, though without the feathered choristers hopping from spray to spray. In short, I see once again the world's great picture; not indeed in its late lively colours, but more *delicately shaded* and arrayed in *softer charms* †.

sacred classics. Though, I believe, the inspired writers themselves, amidst all the elevation and magnificence of their divine ideas, disdained a scrupulous attention to such *little niceties* of style.

* Eccles xliii. 9.

———*Lucidum cœli decus.* HOR.

† ——Now reigns
Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things.— MILT.

What a *majestic scene* is here! incomparably grand, and exquisitely fine!—The moon, like an immense crystal lamp, pendent in the magnificent ceiling of the heavens. The stars, like so many thousands of golden tapers, fixed in their azure sockets. All pouring their lustre on spacious cities, and lofty mountains; glittering on the ocean; gleaming on the forest; and opening a prospect, wide as the eye can glance, more various than fancy can paint *.——We are forward to admire the performances of human art. A landscape, elegantly designed, and executed with a masterly hand; a piece of statuary, which seems, amidst all the recommendations of exact proportion, and graceful attitude, to soften into flesh, and almost breathe with life; these little *imitations* of nature, we behold with a pleasing surprise. And shall we be less affected, less delighted, with the inexpressibly-noble, and completely-finished *original!*—The ample dimensions of *Ranelagh*'s dome; the gay illuminations of *Vaux-hall* grove; I should scorn to mention on such an occasion, were they not the objects of general admiration. Shall we be charmed with those puny essays of finite ingenuity; and touched with no transport, at this stupendous display of omnipotent skill? at the august grandeur, and shining stateliness, of the firmament! which forms an alcove for ten thousand worlds, and is ornamented with myriads of everlasting luminaries.—Surely, this must betray, not only a total *want* of *religion*, but the most abject littleness of mind, and the utmost *poverty* of *genius*.

The moon is not barely "an *ornament* in the high "places of the LORD †," but of signal *service* to the inhabitants of the earth.—How uncomfortable is deep, pitchy, total darkness! especially in the long absence of the winter's sun. Welcome therefore, thrice welcome, this auspicious gift of Providence, to enliven the nocturnal gloom, and line with silver the raven-coloured mantle of night.—How desirable to have our summer-evenings illuminated! that we may be able to tread the dewy meads, and breathe the delicious fragrance of our gardens; especially, when the sultry heats render it irksome and fatiguing, to walk abroad by day.—How chearing to the *shepherd*, the rise of this universal lantern; as he tends his fleecy charge, or late configns them to their hurdled cots! How comfortable and how advantageous to the *mariner*, as he ploughs the midnight-main, to adjust the tackling, to explore his way, and, under the influence of this beaming sconce, to avoid the fatal rock!—For these, and other beneficial purposes, the hand of the ALMIGHTY has hung the *stately branch* on high: and filled it with a splendor, not confined to a single edifice, or commensurate to a particular square, but diffusive as the whole extent of the hemisphere.

The most faithful of our inferior servants are sometimes tardy in their office, sometimes negligent of their duty. But this celestial attendant is most *exactly punctual*, at all the stated periods of her ministra-

* *As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,*
O'er heav'n's clear azure spreads her sacred light;
When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene:
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole;
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
And tip with silver ev'ry mountain's head:
Then shine the vales: the rocks in prospect rise;
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies:
The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,
Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light. POPE'S HOM. ILIAD VIII.

I transcribe these lines, because Mr *Pope* says, they exhibit, in the original, the finest *night-piece* in poetry. And, if they are so beautiful in *Homer*'s language, who can suspect their suffering any disadvantage from the pen of his admirable *translator*?

† Eccles xliii. 9.

tion. If we chuſe to prolong our journey, after the ſun is gone down; the moon, during her whole *increaſe*, is always ready to act in the capacity of a guide. If we are inclined to ſet out very early in the morning; the moon in her *decreaſe* prevents the dawn, on purpoſe to offer her aſſiſtance. And, becauſe it is ſo pleaſant a thing for the eyes to behold the light, the moon, at her *full*, by a courſe of unintermitted waiting, gives us, as it were, a double day.—How apparently has the divine wiſdom intereſted itſelf, in providing even for the *pleaſurable accommodation* of man! How deſirous, that he ſhould want no piece of commodious furniture, no kind of delightful convenience! and, in proſecution of theſe benevolent intentions, has annexed ſo valuable an appendage to the terreſtrial globe.——Juſtly, therefore, does the pſalmiſt celebrate that admirable conſtitution, which ordained *the moon and the ſtars to govern the night*, as an inſtance of rich goodneſs *and of mercy which endureth for ever**.

THE moon, it is confeſſed, is *no luminous* body. All the brightneſs, which beautifies her countenance, is originally in the ſun, and no more than tranſmiſſively in her. That glorious orb is the parent of day, and the palace of light. From thence the morning-ſtar gilds her horn†; from thence the planetary circles are crowned with luſtre; and from thence the moon derives all her ſilver radiance.—It is pleaſing to reflect, that ſuch is the caſe with the *all-ſufficient Redeemer*, and his *dependent people*. We are repleniſhed from his fulneſs. What do we poſſeſs, which we have not received; and what can we deſire, which we may not expect; from that never-failing ſource of all good? He is the author of our faith, and the former of our graces. In his unſpotted life, we ſee the path; in his meritorious death, the price; and in his triumphant reſurrection, the proof, of bliſs and immortality. If we offend, and fall ſeven times a-day; he is the LORD our *peace*‡. If we are depraved, and our beſt deeds very unworthy; he is the LORD our *righteouſneſs* §. If we are blind, and even brutiſh, in heavenly knowledge; he is the LORD our *wiſdom* ‖: his word diſpels the ſhades; his Spirit ſcatters the intellectual gloom; his eye looks our darkneſs into day. In ſhort, we are nothing, and "CHRIST is all." Worſe than defective in ourſelves, "we are *complete* in him." So that if we ſhine, it is with delegated rays, and with borrowed light. We act by a ſtrength, and glory in merits, not our own!—O! may we be thoroughly ſenſible of our dependence on the Saviour! May we conſtantly imbibe his propitious beams; and never, by indulging *unbelief* or backſliding into *folly*, withdraw our ſouls from his benign influences! leſt we loſe our comfort, and our holineſs; as the fair ruler of the night loſes her ſplendor, when her urn is turned from its fountain ¶, and receives no more communications of ſolar boſſulgence.

THE moon is inceſſantly *varying*, either in her aſpect, or her ſtages.—Sometimes ſhe looks full upon us, and her viſage is all luſtre. Sometimes ſhe appears in profile, and ſhews us only half her enlightened face. Anon a radiant creſcent but juſt adorns her brow. Soon it dwindles into a ſlender ſtreak; till, at length, all her beauty vaniſhes, and ſhe becomes a beamleſs orb.—Sometimes ſhe riſes with the *deſcending day*, and begins her proceſſion amidſt admiring multitudes. Ere long ſhe defers her progreſs till the *midnight-watches*, and ſteals unobſerved upon the ſleeping world.—Sometimes ſhe juſt enters the edges of the weſtern *horizon*, and drops us a ceremonious viſit. Within a while, ſhe ſets out on her nightly tour, from the oppoſite regions of the eaſt; traverſes the whole *hemiſphere*; and never offers to withdraw, till the more refulgent partner of her ſway renders her preſence unneceſſary.—In a word, ſhe is, while converſant among us, ſtill waxing or waning, and, "never continueth in one ſtay."

Such is the moon; and ſuch are all *ſublunary things*, expoſed to perpetual viciſſitudes. How often, and how ſoon, have the faint echoes of *renown* ſlept in ſilence, or been converted into the clamours of obloquy! The ſame lips, almoſt with the ſame breath, cry Hoſanna, and Crucify.—Have not *riches* confeſſed their notorious treachery, a thouſand and a thouſand times? either melting away, like ſnow in our hands, by inſenſible degrees; or eſcaping, like a winged priſoner from its cage, with a precipitate flight.—Have we not known the bridegroom's *cloſet*, an antechamber to the *tomb*; and heard the voice, which ſo lately pronounced the ſparkling pair huſband and wife, proclaim an everlaſting divorce; and ſeal the decree with the ſolemn aſſeveration, "Aſhes to aſhes, duſt to duſt?"—Our *friends*, though the medicine of life; our *health*, though the balm of nature; are a moſt precarious poſſeſſion. How ſoon may the firſt become a corpſe in our arms; and how eaſily is the laſt deſtroyed in its vigour!—You have ſeen, no doubt, a ſet of pretty *pampered birds*, perching on your trees, or ſporting in your meadows. You was pleaſed with the lovely viſitants, that brought beauty on their wings, and melody in their throats. But could you inſure the *continuance* of this agreeable entertainment? No, truly. At the leaſt diſturbing noiſe, at the leaſt terrifying appearance, they ſtart from their ſeats; they mount the ſkies; and are gone in an inſtant, are gone for ever. Would you chuſe to have a happineſs, which bears date with their arrival, and expires at their departure? If you could not be content with a portion, enjoyable only through ſuch a *fortuitous term*, not of years, but of moments, O! take up with nothing earthly; ſet your affections on things above; there alone is "no variableneſs or ſhadow of turning."

Job is not a more illuſtrious pattern of patience, than an eminent exemplification of this remark.—View him in his *private eſtate*. He heaps up ſilver as the duſt; he waſhes his ſteps in butter, and the rock pours him out rivers of oil.—View him in his *public character*. Princes revere his dignity; the aged liſten to his wiſdom; every eye beholds him with delight; every tongue loads him with bleſſings.—View him in his *domeſtic circumſtances*. On one hand, he is defended by a troop of ſons: on the other, adorned with a train of daughters; and on all ſides ſurrounded by "a very great houſehold."——Never was human felicity ſo conſummate; never was *diſaſtrous revolution* ſo ſudden. The lightning, which conſumed his cattle, was not more terrible, and ſcarce more inſtantaneous. The joyful parent is bereft of his offspring, and his "children are buried in death." The man of affluence is ſtript of his abundance; and he who was clothed in ſcarlet, embraces the dunghill. The venerable patriarch is the deriſion of ſcoundrels; and the late darling of an indulgent providence, is become "a brother to dragons, a companion of owls."——Nor need we go back to former ages, for proofs of this afflicting truth. In our times, in all times, the wheel continues the ſame inceſſant whirl. And frequently thoſe who are triumphing to-day in the higheſt *elevations* of joy, to-morrow are bemoaning the inſtability of mortal affairs, in

* Pſal. cxxxvi. 9.

† I might, to juſtify this expreſſion, obſerve, that the planet *Venus*, commonly called the morning-ſtar, is found, by our teleſcopes frequently to appear *horned*; or to have a *creſcent* of light, ſomewhat like the moon, a little before or after her conjunction. But this would be a remark too deep and refined for my ſcheme; which proceeds only upon *ſuperficial* knowledge, and the moſt *obvious* appearances of nature.

‡ Judg. vi. 24. § Jer. xxiii. 6. ‖ 1 Cor. i. 30.

¶ Alluding to thoſe truly poetical lines in *Milton*,

Hither, as to their fountain, other ſtars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light.

Par. Loſt, b. VII. l. 364.

in the very *depths* of misery *.—Amidst so much fluctuation and uncertainty, how wretched is the condition, which has no anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast! May thy loving kindness, O God, be our present treasure; and thy future glory, our reversionary inheritance! Then shall our happiness, not be like the full-orbed moon, which is "a light that *decreaseth* in its "perfection;" but like the sun, when he goeth forth in his strength, and knoweth no other change, but that of *shining more* and more unto the perfect day.

METHINKS, in this ever-varying sphere, I see a representation, not only of our temporal advantages, but also of our *spiritual accomplishments*. Such, I am sure, is what the kind partiality of a friend would call *my righteousness*: and such, I am apt to suspect †, is the righteousness of every man living. Now we exercise it, in some few instances, in some little degrees. Anon sin revives, and leads our souls into a transient, though unwilling captivity. Now we are *meek*; but soon a ruffling accident intervenes, and turns our composure into a fretful disquietude. Now we are *humble*; soon we reflect upon some inconsiderable or imaginary superiority over others, and a sudden elatement swells our minds. Now, perhaps, we possess a clean heart, and are warm with holy love. But O! how easily is the purity of our affections sullied! how soon the fervour of our gratitude cooled! And is there not something amiss even in our best moments? something to be *ashamed* of, in all we *are*; something to be *repented* of, in all we *do*?

With what gladness, therefore, and adoring thankfulness, should we "submit to the righteousness of "our incarnate GOD;" and *receive*, as a divine gift, what cannot be *acquired* by human works ‡!—A writer of the first distinction, and nicest discernment, styles the obedience of our glorious Surety, an *everlasting righteousness*; such as was subject to no interruption, nor obscured by the least blemish; but proceeded always in the same uniform tenor, of the most spotless perfection.—This righteousness, in another sense, answers the prophets exalted description; as its beneficial and sovereign efficacy knows no end; but lasts through all our life; lasts in the trying hour of death; lasts at the decisive day of judgment; lasts through every generation; and will last to all eternity.

SOMETIMES I have seen that resplendant globe *shrink* of her *radiance*; or, according to the emphatical language of scripture, "turned into blood." The earth, interposing with its opake body, intercepted the solar rays, and cast its own gloomy shadow on the moon. The malignant influence gained upon her sickening orb; extinguished more and more, the feeble remainders of light; till at length, like one in a *deep swoon*, no comeliness was left in her countenance; she was totally overspread with darkness.—At this juncture, what a multitude of eyes were gazing upon the rueful spectacle! even of those eyes, which disregarded the empress of the night, or beheld her with indifference, when, robed in glory, and riding in her triumphal chariot, she shed a softer day through the nations. But now, under these circumstances of disgrace, they watch her motions with the most *prying attention*. In every place, her misfortune is the object of general observation; and the prevailing topic of discourse, in every company.

Is it not thus with regard to *persons* of *eminence*, in their respective spheres? Kings, at the head of their subjects; nobles, surrounded with their dependents; and (after names of so much grandeur, may I be allowed to add?) ministers labouring among their people †; are each in a conspicuous station. Their conduct, in its *minutest* step, especially in any *miscarriage*, will be narrowly surveyed, and critically scanned. Can there be a louder call, to ponder the paths of their feet, and to be particularly jealous over all their ways?—Those who move in inferior life, may grossly offend; and little alarm be given, perhaps no notice taken. But it is not to be expected, that the least slip in their carriage, the least flaw in their character, will pass undiscovered. *Malice*, with her eagle-eyes, will be sure to discern them; while *Censure*, with her shrill trumpet, will be as far from concealing them; as *Calumny*, with her treacherous whispers, from extenuating them. A planet may sink below the horizon; or a star, for several months, withdraw its shining; and scarce one in ten thousand perceive the loss. But, if the moon suffers a transient eclipse, almost half the world are spectators of her dishonour.

Very different was the case, when at this late hour, I have taken a solitary walk on the *sea-shore*, or *cliff*. At the foot of the steep mountain, the sea all clear and smooth, spread itself into an immense plain, and held a watery mirror to the skies. Infinite heights above, the firmament stretched its azure expanse, bespangled with unnumbered stars, and adorned with the moon, "walking in brightness ‡." She seemed to contemplate herself, with a peculiar pleasure; while the *transparent surface* both received, and returned her *silver image*. Here, instead of being covered with sackcloth, she shone with double lustre; or rather, with a lustre multiplied, in proportion to the number of beholders, and their various situations.

Such, methinks, is the effect of an exemplary behaviour, in persons of exalted rank. Their course, as it is nobly distinguished, so it will be happily *influential*. Others will catch the diffusive rays, and be ambitious to resemble a pattern so attracting. To commanding.

* I believe, I may venture to apply, what the *Tomanite* says of the affairs of the wicked, to all sublunary things, as a true description of their very *great instability*. Job xxii. 16. ... ... is rendered by *Schultens*, *Flumen fusum fundamentum eorum*. *Their foundation* (or what they reckon their most solid and stable possession) *is a flood poured out*.—Which is one of the boldest images, and most poetical beauties, I ever met with in any language, sacred or profane. In order to have a tolerable conception of the image, and a taste of its beauty, you must suppose a *torrent* of waters rushing in broken cataracts, and with impetuous rapidity, from a steep and craggy mountain. Then imagine to yourself an *edifice*, built upon the surge of this rolling precipice; which has no other basis than one of those headlong *whirling waves*. Was there ever such a representation of transitory prosperity, tending, with inconceivable swiftness, unto ruin? Yet such is every form of human felicity, that is not grounded on JESUS, and a participation of his merits, who is the *Rock of Ages*; on JESUS, and his image formed in our hearts, which is the *hope of glory*.

† I would not be understood, as measuring, in this respect, *others* by *myself*; but as taking my estimate from the unerring standard of scripture. And indeed, proceeding on this evidence, supported by this authority, I might have ventured further than a bare *suspicion*. For "there is not a *just* man upon earth that doth "good, and *sinneth not*," says the Spirit of inspiration by *Solomon* (*Eccles.* vii. 20.)—Nay, such is the purity, and so extensive are the demands of the divine law, that an apostle makes a still more humbling acknowledgment; "In *many* things we offend *all*." (*Jam.* iii. 2.)—And the unerring Teacher, who most thoroughly knew our frame, directs the most advanced, most established, and most watchful Christians, to pray daily for the forgiveness of their *daily trespasses*.—To which testimonies, I beg leave to add an elegant passage from the *Canticles*; because it not only expresses the sentiment of this paragraph, but illustrates it by the very same similitude. "She (the church) *is fair as the moon; clear as the sun.* Fair as the moon, the lesser and changeable light, in her *sanctification*; clear as the sun, the greater and invariable luminary, in her *justification*: the inherent holiness of believers being imperfect, and subject to many inequalities; while their imputed righteousness is every way complete, and constantly like itself. *Cant.* vi. 10.

‡ Rom. v. 17.—x. 3.

* Dan. ix. 24.

† *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill, cannot be hid.* Matth. v. 14.

‡ Job xxxi. 26.

manding. Their amiable qualities will not terminate in themselves; but we shall see them *reflected* from their families, their acquaintance, their retainers. Just as we may now behold another moon, trembling * in the stream, glittering in the canal, and displaying its lovely impress on every collection of waters.

THE moon, philosophy says, is a sort of *sovereign* over the *great deep*. Her orb, like a royal sceptre, sways the ocean, and actuates the fluid realms. It swells the tides, and perpetuates the reciprocal returns of ebb and flow. By which means the liquid element purges off its filth; and is preserved from being putrefied itself, and from poisoning the world.—Is the moon thus *operative* on the vast abyss? And shall not the faith of eternal and infinite delights to come, be equally efficacious on this soul of mine?—Far above her argent fields, are treasures of *happiness*, unseen by mortal eye, by mortal ear unheard, and unconceived by any human imagination. In that desirable world, the most distinguished and exalted *honours* also are conferred; in comparison with which, the thrones and diadems of earthly monarchs are empty pageants, and childish toys.—Yonder arch of sapphire, with all its spangles of gold, is but the floor of those divine abodes. What then are the apartments; what is the palace? how bright with glories; how rich with bliss?

O ye mansions of blessedness; ye beauties of my Father's kingdom; which far outshine these lamps of the visible heaven; transmit your sweet and winning invitations to my heart. *Attract* and *refine* all my affections. Withdraw them from *stagnating* on the sordid shores of flesh; never suffer them to settle upon the impure lees of sense; but impress them with *emotions* of restless desire after sublime and celestial joys:—Joys, that will proceed, still proceed in a copious and everlasting flow, when seas shall cease to roll:—Joys, that will charm every faculty with unimaginable pleasure; when the moon with her waxing splendors, shall chear our sight no more.

ENOUGH for the present evening. My thoughts have been sufficiently exercised, and my steps begin to be attended with weariness. Let me obey the admonition of nature; and give respite to my meditations, slumber to my eyes.—But stay.—Shall I retire to the bed of sleep, with as little ceremony, and with as much inattention, as the brutes to their sordid lair? Are no *acknowledgments* due to that divine Being, who is the support of my life, and the length of my days? Have I no farther need of his *protecting* care; no more occasion for the blessings of his goodness?——*Lepidus*, perhaps, may laugh at the bended knee; and have a thousand darts of raillery ready to discharge on the practice of devotion. The wits, I know, are unmercifully severe on what *they* call the drudgery of prayer, and the fantastical rant of praise. These they leave to the illiterate labourer, and the mean mechanic; or treat them, with a contemptuous sneer, as the parson's ignoble trade.

Is it then an instance of *superstitious* blindness, to distinguish; or of *whimsical* zeal, to celebrate, the most super-eminent excellency and merit? Is it an *ungraceful* business, or does it argue a *grovelling* disposition, to magnify goodness transcendently rich and diffusive?—What can be so truly becoming a *dependent state*, as to pay our adoring homage to the Author of all perfection, and profess our devoted allegiance to the supreme almighty Governor of the universe?——Can any thing more significantly bespeak an *ingenuous temper*, or administer a more real satisfaction to its finest feelings, than the exercises of penitential devotion; by which we give vent to an honest anguish, or melt into filial sorrow, for our insensibility to the best of friends, for our disobedience to the best of parents?—In a word, can there be a more *sublime pleasure*, than to dwell, in fixed contemplation, on the beauties of the eternal Mind; the amiable original of all that is fair, grand, and harmonious; the beneficent giver of all that is convenient, comfortable, and useful?——Can there be a more *advantageous employ*, than to present our requests to the Father of mercies; opening our minds to the irradiations of his wisdom, and all the faculties of our souls to the communications of his grace?—It is strange, unaccountably strange, that the notion of *dignity* in sentiment, and the pursuit of *refined* enjoyment, should ever be disunited from devotion: that persons, who make pretensions to an improved taste, and an exalted genius, should neglect this most ennobling intercourse with the wisest and best of beings, the inexhaustible source of honour and joy.

Shall I be deterred from approaching this source of the purest delight? deterred from pursuing this highest improvement of my nature? deterred from all by a *formidable* banter, or confuted by one *irrefragable* smile?—No: let the moon, in her resplendent sphere; and yonder pole, with all its starry train; witness, if I be silent even or morn; if I refrain to kindle in my heart, and breathe from my lips, the reasonable incense of praise; praise to that great and glorious GOD, who formed the earth, and built the skies; who poured from his hand the watery world, and shed the all-surrounding air abroad.—"Thou also madest the night, Maker omnipotent! and thou, the day! which I, though less than "the least of all thy mercies, have passed in safety, "tranquillity, and comfort.—When I was lost in the "extravagance of dreams, or lay immersed in the insensibility of sleep, thy hand recovered me from the "temporary lethargy. Thy hand set a new, a delicately-fine edge on all my blunted *senses*; and strung "my sinews with recruited vigour. When my thoughts "were benumbed and stupefied, thy quickening influence roused them into activity; when they were discordant and wild, thy regulating influence reduced "them into order: refitting me at once, to relish the "innocent entertainments of an *animal*, and to enjoy "the sublime gratifications, of a *rational* capacity.—— "When darkness covered the creation, at thy command, "the *sun* arose; painted the flowers, and distinguished "every object; gave light to my feet, and gave nature, "with all her beautiful scenes, to my eye.—To thee, "O thou GOD of my strength, I owe the *continuance* "of my being, and the *vivacity* of my constitution. By "thy sacred order, without any consciousness of mine, "the wheels of life move, and the crimson fountain "plays. *Over-ruled* by thy exquisite skill, it transforms "itself, by the nicest operations of an inexplicable kind "of chemistry, into a variety of the finest secretions: "which glide into the muscles, and swell them for "action; or pour themselves into the fluids, and repair their incessant decays: which cause chearfulness to sparkle in the eye, and health to bloom in the "cheek.

"*Disastrous accidents*, injurious to the peace of my "mind, or fatal to the welfare of my body, beset my "paths. But thy faithfulness and truth, like an impenetrable shield, guarded me all around. Under "this divine protection, I walked secure, amidst legions "of *apparent* perils; and passed unhurt, through a "far greater multiplicity of *unseen* evils. Not one of "my bones was broken; not a single shaft grazed upon my ease; even when the eye that watched over "me, saw, in its wide survey, *thousands falling beside "me*, in irrecoverable ruin; *and ten thousands* deeply "wounded, *on my right hand*.—If sickness has, at any "time, saddened my chamber, or pain harrowed my "flesh; it was a *wholesome* discipline, and a *gracious* "severity. The chastisement proved a sovereign medicine, to cure me of an immoderate fondness for "this imperfect, troublesome state; and to quicken my "desires

* *Splendet tremulo sub lumine pontus.* VIRG.

desires after the unembittered enjoyments of my eternal home?—Has not thy munificence, unwearied and unbounded, spread my *table*! and furnished it with the finest wheat; replenished it with marrow and fatness?! While temperance sweetened the bowl; appetite seasoned the dish; contentment and gratitude crowned the repast.—Has not thy kindness, O GOD of the families of *Israel*, preserved my affectionate *relations*; who study by their tender offices, to soften every care, and heighten every joy? Has not thy kindness given me valuable *friends*; whose presence is a cordial, to chear me in a dejected hour; and whose conversation mingles improvement with delight?

"When sin lay disguised amidst flowery scenes of pleasure; enlightened by thy wisdom, I *discerned* the latent mischief; made resolute by thy grace, I *shunned* the luscious bane. If through the impulse of sensuality, or the violence of passion, I have been hurried into the snare, and stung by the serpent; thy faithful admonitions have *recalled* the foolish wanderer; while the blood of thy Son has *healed* his deadly wounds.—Some, no doubt, have been cut off in the midst of their iniquities; and transmitted from the thrillings of polluted joy, to the agonies of eternal despair. Whereas, I have been distinguished by long suffering mercy; and, instead of lifting up my eyes in torments, to behold a heaven irrecoverably lost; I may lift them up under the pleasing views of being admitted, 'ere long, into those abodes of endless felicity.—In the mean time, thou hast vouchsafed me the *revelation* of thy will; the influences of the *Spirit*; and abundance of the most effectual *aids*, for advancing in knowledge, and growing in godliness; for becoming more conformable to thy image, and more meet for thy presence; for tasting the pleasures of religion, and securing the riches of eternity.

"How various is thy beneficence, O thou Lover of "souls! It has unsealed a thousand sources of good; "opened a thousand avenues of delight; and heaped "blessings upon me, with a ceaseless liberality. If I "should attempt to declare them, they would be more "than the *starry* host, which glitter in this unclouded "sky; more than the *dewy* gems, which will adorn the "face of the morning.

"AND shall I *forget* the GOD of my salvation, the "Author of all my mercies? Rather let my pulse forget "to beat!—Shall I render him *no* expressions of thankful"ness? Then might all nature reproach my ingratitude. "—Shall I rest satisfied with the *bare* acknowledgment "of my lips? No: let my life be vocal, and speak his "praise, in that only genuine, that most emphatical lan"guage,—the language of devout obedience. Let the "*bill* be drawn upon my very heart; let all my affec"tions *acknowledge* the draught; and let the whole tenor "of my actions, in time, and through eternity, be con"tinually *paying* the debt,—the ever-pleasing ever-grow"ing debt of duty, veneration, and love.

"And can I, O thou Guide of my goings, and Guar"dian of all my interests, can I *distrust* such signal, such "experienced goodness? *Thou hast been my Helper*, and "through all the busy scenes of day: *therefore under the* "*shadow of thy wings* will I repose myself, during the "darkness, the danger, and death-like inactivity of the "night. Whatever defilement I have contracted, wash "it thoroughly away in redeeming blood; and let nei"ther the sinful stain, nor the sinful inclination, accom"pany me to my couch!—Then shall *I lay me down in* "*peace, and take my rest*; chearfully referring it to thy all"wise determination, whether I shall open my eyes in "*this* world, or awake in the unknown regions of "*another*."

CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE STARRY HEAVENS.

There dwells a noble pathos *in the ſkies,*
Which warms our paſſions, proſelytes our hearts.
How eloquently ſhines *the glowing pole!*
With what authority it gives its charge,
Remonſtrating great truths *in ſtyle ſublime!*

Night-Thoughts, No. IX.

THIS evening, I exchange the nice retreats of art for the noble theatre of nature. Inſtead of meaſuring my ſteps under the *covert* of an arbour, let me range along the *ſummit* of this gently-riſing hill. There is no need of the leafy ſhade, ſince the ſun has quitted the horizon, and withdrawn his ſcorching beams. But ſee, how advantages and inconveniencies are uſually linked, and chequer our affairs below! If the *annoying heat* ceaſes, the *landſcape*, and its pleaſing ſcenes, are alſo removed.—The majeſtic caſtle, and the lowly cottage, are vaniſhed together.—I have loſt the aſpiring mountain, and its ruſſet brow; I look round, but to no purpoſe, for the humble vale, and its flowery lap. The plains whitened with flocks, and the heath yellow with furze, diſappear. The advancing night has wrapt in darkneſs the long extended foreſt, and drawn her mantle over the windings of the ſilver ſtream. I no longer behold that luxuriant fertility in the fields; that wild magnificence of proſpect, and endleſs variety of images; which have ſo often touched me with delight, and ſtruck me with awe, from this commanding eminence.

The loſs, however, is ſcarcely to be regretted; ſince it is amply compenſated by the opening beauties of the ſky. Here I enjoy a free view of the whole hemiſphere; without any obſtacle from below, to confine the exploring eye; or any cloud from above, to overcaſt the ſpacious concave. 'Tis true, the lively vermilion, which ſo lately ſtreaked the chambers of the weſt, is all faded. But the *planets*, one after another, light up their lamps; the *ſtars* advance in their glittering train; a thouſand and a thouſand luminaries ſhine forth in ſucceſſive ſplendors; and the whole firmament is kindling into the moſt beautiful glow. The blueneſs of the æther, heightened by the ſeaſon of the year, and ſtill more enlivened by the *abſence* of the *moon*, gives thoſe gems of heaven the ſtrongeſt luſtre.

One pleaſure more the invading gloom has not been able to ſnatch from my ſenſe. The night rather improves, than deſtroys, the fragrance which exhales from the *blooming beans*. With theſe the ſides of this ſloping declivity are lined; and with theſe the balmy zephyrs perfume their wings. Does *Arabia*, from all her ſpicy groves, breathe a more liberal, or a more charming gale of ſweets? And, what is a peculiar recommendation of the rural entertainments preſented in our happy land, they are alloyed by no apprehenſions of danger. No poiſonous ſerpent lurks under the bloſſom; nor any ravenous beaſt lies ready to ſtart from the thicket.—But I wander from a far more exalted ſubject. My thoughts, like my affections, are too eaſily diverted from the heavens, and detained by inferior objects. Away, my attention, from theſe little blandiſhments of the earth; ſince all the *glories* of the *ſky* invite thy regard.

WE have taken a turn among the *Tombs*, and viewed the ſolemn memorials of the dead; in order to learn the vanity of mortal things, and to break their ſoft inchantment.—We have ſurveyed the *ornaments* of the *Garden*; not that the heart might be planted in the parterre, or take root among the flowery race; but that theſe delicacies of a day might teach us to aſpire after a better paradiſe, where beauty never fades, and delight is ever in the bloom.—A third time we lighted the candle of meditation; and ſought for wiſdom, not in the crouded city, or wrangling ſchools, but in the ſilent and lonely *walks* of ancient *Night* *.—Let us once more indulge the contemplative vein, and raiſe our ſpeculations to thoſe *ſublimer works* of the great Creator, which the regions of the ſky contain, and this duſky hour unveils †.

If we have diſcerned the touches of his pencil glowing in the colours of ſpring; if we have ſeen a ſample of his beneficence exhibited in the ſtores of nature, and a ray of his brightneſs beaming in the blaze of day; what an infinitely richer field for the diſplay of his perfections are the heavens! The *heavens*, in the moſt emphatical manner, declare the glory of GOD.

* Referring to the ſeveral ſubjects of the three preceding eſſays.

† Night opes the *nobleſt ſcenes*, and ſheds an awe,
Which gives thoſe venerable ſcenes full weight,
And deep reception in th' entender'd heart.
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The heavens are nobly eloquent of the Deity, and the moſt magnificent heralds of their Maker's praiſe. They ſpeak to the whole univerſe; for there is neither ſpeech ſo *barbarous*, but their language is underſtood; nor nation ſo *diſtant*, but their voices are heard among them *.—Let me then, in this ſolemn ſeaſon, formed for thought, and a calm intercourſe with heaven; let me liſten to their ſilent lectures. Perhaps, I may receive ſuch impreſſive manifeſtations of "the eternal power and Godhead," as may *ſhed* religion on my ſoul, while I walk the ſolitary ſhades; and may be a tutelary *friend* to my *virtue*, when the call of buſineſs, and the return of light, expoſe me again to the inroads of temptation.

THE *Iſraelites*, inſtigated by frenzy rather than devotion, worſhipped the hoſt of heaven. And the pretenders to *judicial aſtrology* talk of I know not what myſterious efficacy, in the different aſpect of the ſtars, or the various conjunction and oppoſition of the planets.—Let thoſe who are unacquainted with the ſure word of revelation, give ear to theſe ſons of deluſion, and dealers in deceit. For my part, it is a queſtion of indifference to me, whether the conſtellations ſhone with ſmiles, or loured in frowns, on the hour of my nativity. Let CHRIST be my guard; and, ſecure in ſuch a protection, I would laugh at their impotent menaces. Let CHRIST be my *guide;* and I ſhall ſcorn to aſk, as well as deſpair of receiving, any predictory information from ſuch ſenſeleſs maſſes.—What! ſhall "the living ſeek to the dead †?" Can theſe bodies advertiſe me of future events, which are unconſcious of their own exiſtence? Shall I have recourſe to dull, unintelligent matter, when I may apply to that all-wiſe Being, who, with one comprehenſive glance, diſtinctly views whatever is lodged in the boſom of immenſity, or forming in the womb of futurity? —Never, never will I ſearch for any intimations of my *fate*, but often trace my Creator's *footſteps* ‡, in yonder ſtarry plains. In the former caſe, they would be teachers of lies; in the latter they are oracles of truth. In this therefore, this ſenſe only, I profeſs myſelf the pupil of the ſtars.

THE vulgar are apprehenſive of nothing more than a multitude of *bright ſpangles* dropt over the æthereal blue. They have no higher notion of theſe fine appearances, than that they are ſo many *golden ſtuds*, with which the empyrean arch is decorated.—But ſtudious minds, that carry a more accurate and ſtrict inquiry among the celeſtial bodies, bring back advices of a moſt aſtoniſhing import. Let me juſt recollect the moſt material of thoſe *ſtupendous diſcoveries*, in order to furniſh out proper ſubjects for contemplation. And let the unlearned remember, that the ſcene I am going to diſplay, is the workmanſhip of that incomprehenſible GOD, who is "perfect in knowledge "and mighty in power; whoſe name, whoſe nature, and all whoſe operations, are "great and marvellous;" who ſummons into being, with equal eaſe, a ſingle grain, or ten thouſand worlds.—To this if we continually advert, the aſſertions, though they will certainly excite our *admiration*, need not tranſcend our belief.

THE earth, is in fact, a round body; however it may ſeem, in ſome parts, to be ſunk into vales, and raiſed into hills *; in other parts, to be ſpread into a ſpacious plain, extending to the confines of the heavens, or terminated by the waters of the ocean.—We may fancy, that it has deep foundations, and reſts upon ſome prodigiouſly ſolid baſis. But it is *pendent* in the wide tranſpicuous æther, without any viſible cauſe to uphold it from above, or ſupport it from beneath.—It may ſeem to be ſedentary in its attitude, and motionleſs in its ſituation. But it is continually *ſailing* †, through the depths of the ſky; and, in the ſpace of twelve months, finiſhes the mighty voyage. Which periodical rotation produces the ſeaſons, and completes the year.—As it proceeds in the annual circuit, it *ſpins* upon its own *centre;* and turns its ſides alternately to the fountain of light. By which means, the *day* dawns in one hemiſphere; while the night ſucceeds in the other. Without this expedient, one part of its regions would, during half the great revolution, be ſcorched with exceſſive heat, or languiſh under an unintermitted glare: while the other, expoſed to the contrary extremes, would be frozen to ice, and buried under a long oppreſſion of diſmal and deſtructive darkneſs.

I cannot forbear taking notice, that, in this compound motion of the earth, the one never *interferes* with the other, but both are perfectly *compatible*. Is it not thus with the precepts of religion, and the needful affairs of the preſent life; not excepting even the innocent gratifications of our appetites?—Some, I believe, are apt to imagine, that they muſt renounce ſociety, if they devote themſelves to CHRIST; and abandon all the ſatisfactions of *this* world, if they once become zealous candidates for the felicity of *another*.—But this is a very miſtaken notion, or elſe a very injurious repreſentation, of the doctrine which is according to godlineſs. It was never intended to drive men into deſerts; but to lead them through the peaceful and pleaſant paths of wiſdom, into the bliſsful regions of life eternal. It was never intended to ſtrike off the wheels of buſineſs, or cut in ſunder the ſinews of induſtry; but rather, to make men induſtrious from a principle of *conſcience*, not from the inſtigations of *avarice;* that ſo they may promote their immortal happineſs, even while they provide for their temporal maintenance. It has no deſign to extirpate our paſſions, but only to reſtrain their irregularities; neither would it extinguiſh the delights of ſenſe, but prevent them from evaporating into vanity, and ſubſiding into gall.—A perſon may be chearful among his friends, and yet joyful in GOD. He may taſte the ſweets of his earthly eſtate; and, at the ſame time, cheriſh his hopes of a nobler inheritance in heaven. The *trader* may proſe-

* Pſal. xix. 2. † Iſ. viii. 19.

‡ "It is moſt becoming" (ſays a great author) "ſuch imperfect creatures as we are, to contemplate the works of GOD, "with *this* deſign, that we may diſcern the manifeſtations of wiſdom in them; and thereby excite in ourſelves thoſe devout affections, and that ſuperlative reſpect, which is the very eſſence "of praiſe, as it is a reaſonable and moral ſervice." ABERNETHY *on the attributes*.—And, indeed, if we are ſincerely diſpoſed to employ ourſelves in this excellent, this delightful duty of praiſing the infinite Creator; the *means*, and the *motives*, are both at hand. His works, in a wonderful and inſtructive variety, preſent themſelves, with pregnant manifeſtations of the moſt tranſcendent excellencies of their Maker. They pour their evidence from all quarters, and into all the avenues of the mind. They invite us, eſpecially in the magnificent ſyſtem of the univerſe, to contemplate *counſel* conſummately wiſe, and *execution* inimitably perfect;—*power*, to which nothing is impoſſible; and *goodneſs*, which extendeth to all, which endureth for ever.—To give, not a full diſplay, but only ſome *ſlight ſtrictures*, of theſe glorious truths, is the principal ſcope of the following remarks.

* A learned writer, I think, Dr *Derham*, has ſomewhere an obſervation to this purpoſe:—That the loftieſt *ſummits* of hills, and the moſt enormous *ridges* of mountains, are no real objection to the *globular* or round form of the earth. Becauſe, however they may render it, to our limited ſight, vaſtly uneven and protuberant; yet they bear no more proportion to the *entire* ſurface of the terraqueous ball, than a *particle* of duſt, caſually dropt on the mathematician's globe, bears to its whole circumference. Conſequently, the rotund figure is no more deſtroyed in the former caſe, than in the latter.—On the ſame principle, I have not thought it neceſſary, to take any notice of the comparatively ſmall difference between the *polar* and *equatorial* diameter of the earth.

† With what amazing *ſpeed*, this veſſel (if I may carry on the alluſion) filled with a multitude of nations, and freighted with all their poſſeſſions, makes her way through the æthereal ſpace; ſee page 347. in note †. *col.* 2.

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cute the demands of commerce, without neglecting to negotiate the affairs of his ſalvation. The *warrior* may wear his ſword, may draw, in a juſt cauſe, that murderous weapon; yet be a good ſoldier of JESUS CHRIST, and obtain the crown that fadeth not away. The *parent* may lay up a competent portion for his children, and not forfeit his title to the treaſures, either of grace or of glory.——So far is Chriſtianity from obſtructing any valuable intereſt, or with holding any real pleaſure; that it improves the one, and advances the other. Juſt as the diurnal and annual motions are ſo far from *claſhing* that they entirely *accord*; and inſtead of being deſtructive of each other, by mutually blending their effects, they give proportion and harmony to time, fertility, and innumerable benefits to nature.

To us, who dwell on its ſurface, the earth is by far the *moſt extenſive* orb, that our eyes can, any where, behold. It is alſo clothed with verdure; diſtinguiſhed by trees; and adorned with a variety of beautiful decorations. Whereas, to a ſpectator placed on one of the planets, it wears an uniform aſpect; looks all luminous, and *no larger* than a ſpot. To beings who dwell at ſtill greater diſtances, it entirely diſappears.—That which we call, alternately, the morning and the evening ſtar; as in one part of her orbit, ſhe rides foremoſt in the proceſſion of night; in the other, uſhers in, and anticipates the dawn; is a *planetary world*. Which, with the four others, that ſo wonderfully vary their myſtic dance, are in themſelves dark bodies, and ſhine only by reflection; have fields, and ſeas, and ſkies of their own; are furniſhed with all accommodations for *animal* ſubſiſtence, and are ſuppoſed to be the abodes of *intellectual* life. All which, together with this our earthly habitation, are dependent on that grand diſpenſer of divine munificence, the ſun; receive their light from the diſtribution of his rays, and derive their comforts from his benign agency.

The *ſun*, which ſeems to perform its daily ſtages through the ſky, is, in this reſpect *, *fixed* and immoveable. 'Tis the great axle of heaven, about which the globe we inhabit, and other more ſpacious orbs, wheel their ſtated courſes.—The ſun, though ſeemingly *ſmaller* than the *dial* it illuminates, is abundantly *larger* † than this whole *earth*; on which ſo many lofty mountains riſe, and ſuch vaſt oceans roll. A line, extending from ſide to ſide, through the centre of that reſplendent orb, would meaſure more than eight hundred thouſand miles: a girdle, formed to go round its circumference, would require a length of millions: were its ſolid contents to be eſtimated, the account would overwhelm our underſtanding, and be almoſt beyond the power of language to expreſs‡.——Are we ſtartled at theſe reports of philoſophy? Are we ready to cry out, in a tranſport of ſurpriſe, How *mighty* is the Being, who kindled ſuch a prodigious fire; and keeps alive, from age to age, ſuch an enormous maſs of flame!——Let us attend our philoſophic guides, and we ſhall be brought acquainted with ſpeculations more enlarged and more amazing.

This ſun, with all its attendant planets, is but a very little part of the grand machine of the univerſe. Every *ſtar*, though, in appearance, no bigger than the diamond that glitters upon a lady's ſtring, is really a *vaſt globe*, like the ſun in ſize, and in glory, no leſs ſpacious, no leſs luminous, than the radiant ſource of our day. So that every ſtar is, not barely a world, but the *centre* of a magnificent ſyſtem; has a retinue of worlds, irradiated by its beams, and revolving round its attractive influence. All which are loſt to our ſight, in unmeaſureable wilds of æther.—That the ſtars appear like ſo many diminutive, and ſcarce diſtinguiſhable *points*, is owing to their immenſe and inconceivable diſtance. Immenſe and inconceivable indeed it is; ſince a ball ſhot from the loaded cannon, and flying, with unabated rapidity, muſt travel, at this impetuous rate, almoſt ſeven hundred thouſand years §, before it could reach the *neareſt* of thoſe twinkling luminaries.

Can any thing be more wonderful than theſe obſervations? Yes: there are truths far more ſtupendous; there are ſcenes far more extenſive. As there is no end of the almighty Maker's greatneſs; ſo no imagination can ſet limits to his creating hand.—Could you ſoar beyond the moon, and paſs through all the planetary choir; could you wing your way to the higheſt apparent ſtar, and take your ſtand on one of thoſe loftieſt pinnacles of heaven; you would, there, ſee *other ſkies* expanded, *another ſun*, diſtributing his inexhauſtible beams by day; *other ſtars*, that gild the horrors of the alternate night; and *other* †, perhaps nobler *ſyſtems*, eſtabliſhed; eſtabliſhed, in unknown profuſion, through the boundleſs dimenſions of ſpace.---Nor does the dominion of the univerſal Sovereign terminate *there*. Even at the end of this vaſt tour, you would find yourſelf advanced no farther than the ſuburbs of creation; arrived only at the frontiers of the great JEHOVAH's kingdom ‖.

And do they tell me, that the ſun, the moon, and all the planets, are but a little part of HIS works? *How great*, then, *are his ſigns! and how mighty are his wonders!*—And if ſo, what is the CREATOR himſelf! How far exalted above all praiſe! who is ſo *high*, that he looks down on the higheſt of theſe dazzling ſpheres, and ſees even the ſummit of creation in a vale; ſo *great*, that this prodigious extent of ſpace is but a point in his preſence; and all this confluence of worlds, as the lighteſt atom, that fluctuates in air, and ſports in the meridian ray §.

* See *Religious Philoſopher*, p. 819.

† See *Aſtro-Theology*, book II. chap. II.—Where the author, having aſſigned various reaſons to ſupport this theory of our *modern aſtronomers*, adds,—"Beſides the forementioned ſtrong pro-"babilities, we have this farther recommendation of ſuch an ac-"count of the univerſe, that it is far *more* magnificent, and "worthy of the infinite *Creator*, than any other of the narrower "ſchemes."

‡ *Job*, after a moſt beautiful diſſertation on the mighty works of GOD, as they are diſtributed through univerſal nature, from the heights of heaven, to the very depths of hell, cloſes the magnificent account with this acknowledgment; *Lo! theſe are parts of his ways*. Or, as the original word more literally ſignifies, and may, I think, be more elegantly rendered, *Theſe are only the ſkirts*, the very outermoſt borders of his works. No more than a ſmall preface to the immenſe volume of the creation.—From the *Hebrew* uſe of *extremities*, I cannot forbear thinking on the extreme and very attenuated *fibres* of the root, when compared with the whole ſubſtance of the *trunk*; or on the exquiſitely ſmall ſize of the *capillary* veſſels, when compared with the whole ſtructure of the body. *Job* xxvi. 14.

‖ Dan. iv. 3.

§ This puts me in mind of a very fine remark on a ſcripture beauty, and a ſolid correction of the common tranſlation, made by that learned, ſagacious, and devout expoſitor *Vitringa*.—Iſa. II. xl. 15. we find it written of the ſupreme Being, that *he taketh up the iſles as a very little thing*. Which, our critic obſerves, is neither anſwerable to the import of the original, nor conſonant to the ſtructure of the diſcourſe. The prophet had no intention to inform mankind, what the Almighty could *do* with regard to the iſlands, if he pleaſed to exert uncontrollable power. His deſign was to ſhew, how inſignificant, or rather what mere nothings *they*

* I ſay, *in this reſpect*; that I may not ſeem to forget, or exclude, the revolution of the ſun round its own axis.

† A hundred thouſand times, according to the *loweſt* reckoning. Sir ISAAC NEWTON computes the ſun to be 900,000 times bigger than the earth. *Religious Philoſopher*, p. 749.

‡ Dr DERHAM, after having calculated the dimenſions of the planets, adds, "Amazing as theſe maſſes are, they are all "far outdone by that ſtupendous globe of light, the ſun; which, "as it is the fountain of light and heat to all the planets about it, "ſo doth it far ſurpaſs them all in its bulk: its apparent diameter "being computed at 822,148 *Engliſh* miles, its ambit at 2,582,873 miles, and its ſolid contents at 290,971,000,000,000,000." *Aſtro-Theol.* book I. chap. II.

Thou moſt ſublime and incomprehenſibly glorious GOD, how am I overwhelmed with awe! how ſunk into the loweſt proſtration of mind! when I conſider thy "*excellent greatneſs*," and my own utter inſignificancy!—And have I, exceſſively mean as I am, have I entertained any *conceited apprehenſions* of myſelf? Have I felt the leaſt elatement of thought, in the preſence of ſo majeſtic and adorable a Being? How ſhould this wound me with ſorrow, and cover me with confuſion!—O my GOD, was I poſſeſſed of all the *high perfections*, which accompliſh and adorn the angels of light; amidſt all theſe noble endowments, I would fall down in the *deepeſt abaſement* at thy feet. Loſt in the infinitely ſuperior blaze of thy uncreated glories, I would confeſs myſelf to be nothing; to be leſs than nothing, and vanity.—How much more ought I to maintain the moſt unfeigned humiliation, before thy divine Majeſty; who am not only duſt and aſhes, but a compound of ignorance, imperfection, and depravity!

WHILE, beholding this vaſt expanſe, I learn my own extreme meanneſs, I would alſo diſcover the abject littleneſs of all *terreſtrial things*.—What is the earth, with all her oſtentatious ſcenes, compared with this aſtoniſhingly grand furniture of the ſkies? What, but a dim *ſpeck*, hardly perceivable in the map of the univerſe? It is obſerved, by a very judicious writer *, That if the ſun himſelf, which enlightens this part of the creation, was extinguiſhed; and all the hoſt of planetary worlds, which move about him, were annihilated; they would not be miſſed, by an eye that can take in the whole compaſs of nature, any more than a grain of ſand upon the ſea-ſhore. The bulk of which they conſiſt, and the ſpace which they occupy, is ſo exceedingly little in compariſon of the whole, that their loſs would ſcarce leave a blank in the immenſity of GOD's works.—If then, not our globe only, but this whole ſyſtem, be ſo very diminutive; what is a kingdom, or a county? What are a few *lordſhips*, or the ſo much admired *patrimonies* of thoſe who are ſtyled wealthy †? When I meaſure them with my own little pittance, they ſwell into proud and bloated dimenſions. But, when I take the univerſe for my ſtandard, how ſcanty is their ſize, how contemptible their figure! They ſhrink into *pompous nothings* ‡.

When the keen-eyed eagle ſoars above all the feathered race, and leaves their very ſight below; when ſhe wings her way, with direct aſcent, up the ſteep of heaven; and, ſteadily gazing on the meridian ſun, accounts its beaming ſplendors all her own: does ſhe then regard, with any ſolicitude, the *mote* that is flying in the air, or the *duſt* which ſhe ſhook from her feet? And ſhall this eternal mind, which is capable of contemplating its Creator's glory; which is intended to enjoy the viſions of his countenance; ſhall this *eternal mind*, endued with ſuch great capacities, and made for ſuch exalted ends, be ſo *ignobly ambitious*, as to ſigh for the tinſels of ſtate; or ſo *poorly covetous*, as to graſp after ample territories on a needle's point?—No; under the influence of ſuch conſiderations, I feel my ſentiments expand, and my wiſhes acquire a turn of ſublimity. My throbbing deſires after worldly grandeur die away; and I find myſelf, if not poſſeſſed of power, yet ſuperior to its charms.—Too long, muſt I own, have my affections been pinioned by vanity, and immured in this earthly clod. But theſe thoughts break the *ſhackles*. Theſe objects open the door of *liberty*. My ſoul, fired by ſuch noble proſpects, weighs anchor from this little nook; and coaſts no longer about its contracted ſhores; doats no longer on its painted ſhells. The *immenſity* of things is her range; and an *infinity* of bliſs is her aim.

BEHOLD this immenſe expanſe, and admire the condeſcenſion of thy GOD.—In this manner, an inſpired and princely aſtronomer improved his ſurvey of the nocturnal heavens. *When I conſider thy heavens, even the works of thy fingers, the moon and the ſtars which thou haſt ordained*; I am ſmitten with wonder at thy glory, and cry out in a tranſport of gratitude, *LORD, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him* †? "How amazing, how charming, is that "divine benignity, which is pleaſed to bow down its "ſacred regards to ſo fooliſh and worthleſs a creature! "yea, diſdains not from the height of infinite exaltation, "to extend its kind providential care to our moſt mi"nute concerns!—This is amazing. But that the ever"laſting Sovereign ſhould give his Son, to be made "fleſh, and become our Saviour! ſhall I call it a *miracle* "of condeſcending goodneſs? Rather, what are all "miracles, what are all myſteries, to this ineffable gift!"

Had the *brighteſt archangel* been commiſſioned to come down, with the olive-branch of peace in his hand, ſignifying his eternal Maker's readineſs to be reconciled; on our bended knees, with tears of joy, and a torrent of thankfulneſs, we ought to have received the tranſporting news. But when, inſtead of ſuch an angelic envoy, he ſends his *only-begotten Son*, his Son beyond all thought illuſtrious, to make us the gracious overture:—ſends him from the "habitation of his ho"lineſs and glory," to put on the *infirmities* of mortality, and dwell in a tabernacle of clay:—ſends him, not barely to make us a tranſient viſit, but to abide *many years* in our inferior and miſerable world:—ſends him, not to exerciſe dominion over monarchs, but to wear out his life in the ignoble form of a *ſervant*; and, at laſt, to make his exit under the infamous character of a *malefactor!* Was ever love like this? Did ever grace ſtoop ſo low ‡?—Should the ſun be ſhorn of all his radiant honours, and degraded into a *clod* of the valleys; ſhould all the dignitaries of heaven be depoſed from their thrones, and degenerate into *inſects* of

* The ſoul of man was made to walk the ſkies,
Delightful outlet of her priſon here!
There, diſencumber'd from her chains, the ties
Of toys terreſtrial, ſhe can rove at large;
There freely can aſpire, dilate, extend,
In full proportion let looſe all her pow'rs.
Night-Thoughts, No. IX.

† Pſal. viii. 3. 4.

‡ This reminds me of a very noble piece of *ſacred oratory*, where, in a fine ſerics of the moſt beautiful gradations, the apoſtle diſplays the admirably-condeſcending kindneſs of our Saviour.—*He thought it no robbery*, it was his indiſputable right, *to be equal with* the infinite, ſelf-exiſtent, immortal GOD. *Yet* in mercy to ſinners, *he emptied himſelf* of the incommunicable honours, *and* laid aſide the robes of incomprehenſible glory.—When he entered upon his mediatorial ſtate, inſtead of acting in the grand capacity of univerſal Sovereign, he *took upon him the form of a ſervant*, and not the form of thoſe miniſtering ſpirits, whoſe duty is dignity itſelf; who are throned, though adoring.—He took not on him the nature of angels, but ſtooped incomparably low; aſſumed a body of animated duſt, *and was made in the likeneſs of men*; thoſe inferior *and* depraved creatures.——Aſtoniſhing condeſcenſion! but not ſufficient for the overflowing riches of the Redeemer's love.——*For, being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf* farther ſtill; occupied the loweſt place, where all was low *and* ignoble.——He not only ſubmitted to the yoke of the law, but alſo bore the

they are, in his eſteem, and before his majeſty.—The iſlands, ſays he, though ſo *ſpacious*, as to afford room for the erection of kingdoms, and the abode of nations; though ſo *ſtrong*, as to withſtand, for many thouſands of years, the raging and reiterated aſſaults of the whole watery world; are yet, before the adored JEHOVAH, *ſmall* as the minuteſt grain, which the eye can ſcarce diſcern; *light* as the feathered mote, which the leaſt breath hurries away like a tempeſt.—אִיִּים כְּדַק יִטּוֹל *Inſulæ ſunt ut leve quid, quod avolat. The* deep-rooted *iſlands are as the volatile atom, which*, by the gentleſt undulations of the air, *is waſted to and fro in perpetual agitation.*

* Spect. vol. VIII. No. 565.

† *Juvat inter ſidera vagantem divitum pavimenta ridere, et totam cum auro ſuo terram.* SEN.

‡ *Terrellæ grandia inania.* WATTS's Hor. Lyr.

a day; great, great would be the abasement. But *nothing* to thine, most blessed JESUS; *nothing* to thine, thou Prince of peace; when, for us men, and for our salvation, thou didst not abhor the coarse accommodations of the *manger*; thou didst not decline even the gloomy horrors of the *grave*.

'Tis well, the sacred oracles have given this doctrine the most explicit confirmation, and evidence quite incontestable. Otherwise, a favour so undeserved, so unexpected, and rich beyond all imagination, might stagger our belief.—Could HE, who launches all these planetary globes through the illimitable void; and leads them on, from age to age, in their extensive career; could HE resign his hands, to be *confined* by the girding cord, and his back to be *ploughed* by the bloody scourge? —Could HE, who crowns all the stars with inextinguishable *brightness*, be himself defiled with *spitting*, and disfigured with the thorny scar? It is the greatest of wonders, and yet the surest of truths.

O! ye mighty orbs, that roll along the spaces of the sky; I wondered, a little while ago, at your vast dimensions, and ample circuits. But now my amazement ceases; or rather, is entirely swallowed up by a much more stupendous subject. Methinks, your enormous bulk is shrivelled to an *atom*; your prodigious revolutions are contracted to a *span*; while I muse upon the far more elevated heights, and unfathomable depths; the infinitely more extended lengths, and unlimited breadths of this *love of* GOD *in* CHRIST JESUS *.

CONTEMPLATING this stately expanse, I see a mirror, which represents, in the most awful colours, the *hideousness* of human *guilt*.—Ten thousand volumes, wrote on purpose to display the aggravations of my various acts of disobedience, could not so effectually convince me of their inconceivable enormity, as the consideration of that *all-glorious person* †, who to make an atonement for them, spilt the last drop of his blood.—*I have sinned*, may every child of *Adam* say; *and what shall I do unto thee, O thou Observer of men*‡? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? Vain commutation! and such as would be rejected by the blessed GOD, with the utmost abhorrence.—Will all the *potentates*, that sway the sceptre in a thousand kingdoms, devote their royal and honoured lives to rescue an obnoxious creature from the stroke of vengeance? Alas! it must cost more, incomparably more, to expiate the malignity of sin, and save a guilty wretch from hell.—Will all the *principalities* of *heaven* be content to assume my nature, and resign themselves to death for my pardon ‖? Even this would be too mean a satisfaction for inexorable justice; too scanty a reparation of GOD's injured honour. So flagrant is human guilt, that nothing but a victim of *infinite dignity* could constitute an adequate propitiation. *He* who said, "Let there be light, and there was light;" Let there be a firmament, and immediately the blue curtains floated in the sky; *He* must take flesh; HE must feel the fierce torments of crucifixion; and pour out his soul in agonies, if ever such transgressors are pardoned.

How vast is that debt, which all the wealth of both the *Indies* cannot discharge! How vitiated that habit of body, which all the drugs produced by nature herself, cannot rectify! But how much more *ruined* was thy condition, O my soul! how much more *heinous* were thy crimes! Since nothing less than the sufferings and death of Messiah, the Son of GOD, and radiant image of his glory, could effect thy recovery, or cancel thy iniquity. —Though perhaps thou art not sunk so very deep in pollution, as some of the most abandoned profligates; yet remember the inestimable ransom paid to redeem thee from everlasting destruction. Remember this; and "never open thy mouth any more *;" either to *murmur* at the divine chastisements, or to *glory* in thy own attainments. Remember this; and even loath, "*loath* "thyself † for the multitude of thy provocations," and thy great baseness.

ONCE more: let me view this beautiful, this magnificent expanse; and conceive some juster apprehensions of the unknown richness of my *Saviour's atonement*. —I am informed by a writer who cannot mistake, that the high priest of my profession, who was also the sacrifice for my sins, is *higher than the heavens* ‡; more exalted in dignity, more bright with glory, than all the heavenly mansions, and all their illustrious inhabitants. If my heart was humbled at the consideration of its excessive guilt, how do all my drooping powers revive at this delightful thought? The poor criminal, that seemed to be *tottering* on the very brink of the infernal pit, is *raised*, by such a belief, even to the portals of paradise. My self-abasement, I trust, will always continue; but my fears, under the influence of such a conviction, are quite gone ‖. I do not, I cannot, doubt the efficacy

infirmities, and ministered to the necessities of mortals. He even washed the feet of others, and had not where to lay his own head. —Yea, he carried his meritorious humiliation to the very deepest degrees of possible abasement. *He became obedient unto death*;—and not to a common or natural death, but a death more infamous than the gibbet; more torturous than the rack;—*even the* accursed *death of the cross*. Phil. ii. 6. 7. 8.

* Eph. iii. 18. 19.

† *Quo quisque altius ascendit in cognitione* CHRISTI, *eo profundius peccati atrocitatem cognoscet.*

‡ *Job* vii. 20. Not *preserver*, as it stands in our version, but *observer of men*. Which phrase, as it denotes the exact and incessant *inspection* of the divine eye; as it intimates the absolute impossibility, that any transgression should *escape* the divine notice; is evidently most proper, both to allign the *reason*, and heighten the *emphasis* of the context.

‖ MILTON sets this thought in a very poetical and striking light.—All the sanctities of heaven stand round the throne of the Supreme Majesty. GOD foresees and foretells the fall of man; the *ruin* which will unavoidably ensue on his transgression; and the utter *impossibility* of his being able to extricate himself from the abyss of misery.

Him with his whole posterity, must die;
Die he, or justice must; unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.

After which affecting representation, intended to raise the most tender emotions of pity, the following inquiry is addressed to all the surrounding angels:

Say, heav'nly powers, where shall we find such love?
Which of you will be mortal, to redeem
Man's mortal crime? and die, the dead to save?
He ask'd; but all the heav'nly choir stood mute,
And silence was in heav'n.—

There is, to me at least, an inimitable spirit and beauty in the last circumstance.—That such an innumerable multitude of generous and compassionate beings, should be struck *dumb* with surprise and terror, at the very mention of *the deadly forfeiture and ransom set!* No *language* is so eloquent as this *silence*. Words could not possibly have expressed, in so emphatical a manner, the *dreadful nature* of the task; the *absolute inability* of any or all creatures to execute it; the super-eminent and *matchless love* of the eternal Son, in undertaking the tremendous work; not only without reluctance, but unsought and unimplored; with readiness, alacrity, and delight. *Paradise Lost*, book III. line 209. Edit. BENTL.

* Ezek. xvi. 63. † Ezek. xxxvi. 31. ‡ Heb. vii. 26.

‖ I am sorry to find, that some of my readers were a little disgusted at this expression, "*My fears are quite gone*;" as thinking, it discovered a tincture of arrogance in the writer, and tended to discourage the weak Christian. But, I hope, a more mature consideration will acquit me from both these charges.—For what has the author said? Only that at some *peculiarly happy* moments, when the Holy Ghost bears witness of CHRIST in his heart, and he is favoured with a glimpse of the Redeemer's matchless excellency;—that, in these *brighter intervals* of life, his trembling fears, with regard to the decisive sentence of the great tribunal, are turned into pleasing expectations. And what is there in such a declaration offensive to the *strictest* modesty, or dispiriting to the *weakest* believer? Instead of creating discouragement, it points out

of this propitiation. *While I see a* glimpse of its matchless excellency, and *verily believe* myself interested in its merits, I know not what it is to feel any misgiving suspicions; but am stedfast in faith, and joyful through hope.

Be my iniquities like debts of millions of talents, here is more than full payment for all that prodigious sum. Let the enemy of mankind, and accuser of the brethren, load me with invectives; this one plea, *A divine Redeemer died*, most thoroughly quashes every indictment. For, though there be much turpitude, and manifold transgressions, "there is no condemnation to those that "are in CHRIST JESUS."—Nay, were I chargeable with all the vilest deeds, which have been committed in every age of the world, by every nation of men; even in this most deplorable case, I need not sink into despair. Even such guilt, though grievous beyond all expression, is not to be compared with that *abundance* of *grace* and righteousness, which dwell in the incarnate Divinity.—How great, how transcendently glorious, are the *perfections* of the adored JEHOVAH! So great, so superlatively precious, is the *expiation* of the dying JESUS. 'Tis impossible for the human mind to *exalt* this atonement * too highly; 'tis impossible for the HUMBLE PENITENT to *confide* in it too steadily. The scriptures, the scriptures of eternal truth, have said it (exult, my soul, in the belief of it!), that the blood on which we rely, is GOD's *own blood* †; and therefore all-sufficient to expiate, omnipotent to save.

David, that egregious sinner, but more exemplary saint, seems to have been well acquainted with this comfortable truth. What else can be the import of that very remarkable, but most devout declaration? *Thou shalt purge me* ‡ *with hyssop, and I shall be clean: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*—"I have been guilty, I must confess, of the most com-"plicated and shocking crimes! crimes, inflamed by "every aggravating circumstance, with regard to my-"self, my neighbour, and my GOD. *Myself*, who "have been blessed above men, and the distinguished "favourite of providence; *my neighbour*, who, in the "most dear and tender interests, has been irreparably "injured; *my GOD*, who might justly expect the most "grateful returns of duty, instead of such enormous "violations of his law. Yet, all horrid and execrable "as *my offence* is, it is nothing to the superabundant "merit of that *great Redeemer*, who was promised from "the foundations of the world; in whom all my fa-"thers trusted; who is the hope of all the ends of the "earth. Though my conscience be more loathsome, "with adulterous impurity, than the *dunghill*; though "treachery and murder have rendered it even black "as the gloom of *hell*; yet washed in the fountain "opened for sin and for uncleanness *, I shall be,—I "say not, pure only, this were a disparagement to the "efficacy of my Saviour's death; but I shall be fair "as the *lily*, and white as the snow. Nay, let me not "derogate from the glorious object of my confidence; "cleansed by this sovereign, sanctifying stream, I shall "be *fairer* than the full-blown lily, *whiter* than the "new-fallen snows."

POWER, saith the scripture, *belongeth unto GOD* †.—And in what majestic lines is this attribute of JEHOVAH written, throughout the whole volume of the creation? especially through those magnificent pages, unfolded in yonder starry regions: which are therefore styled by the sweet and seraphic singer of *Israel*, "the "firmament of his power ‡;" because the grand *exploits* of *omnipotence* are there displayed with the utmost pomp, and recorded in the most legible characters.

Who, that looks upward to the midnight-sky, and, with an eye of reason, beholds its rolling wonders; who can forbear enquiring, Of *what* were those mighty orbs *formed?*—Amazing to relate! they were produced without materials. They sprung from emptiness itself.—The stately fabric of universal nature emerged out of *nothing*.—What *instruments* were used by the supreme Architect, to fashion the parts with such exquisite niceness, and give so beautiful a polish to the whole? How was all connected into one finely-proportioned, and nobly-finished structure?—A *bare Fiat* accomplished all. LET THEM BE, said GOD. He added no more; and immediately the marvellous edifice arose; adorned with every beauty; displaying innumerable perfections; and declaring, amidst unraptured seraphs, its great Creator's praise. "By the *word* of the LORD were "the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the "*breath* of his mouth ‖."—What forceful machinery *fixed* some of those ponderous globes on an immoveable basis? What irresistible impulse *bowled* others through the circuit of the heavens? What coercive energy *confined* their impetuous courses within limits astonishingly large, yet most minutely true?—Nothing but his *sovereign will*. For all things were at first constituted, and all to this day abide, "according to his ordinance."

Without any toilsome assiduity or laborious process, to raise—to touch—to *speak* such a multitude of immense bodies into being;—to *launch* them through the spaces of the sky, as an arrow from the hand of a giant;—to impress on such *unwieldy* masses a motion far outstripping the swiftness of the winged creation §;—and to *continue* them in the same rapid whirl, for thousands and thousands of years;—what an amazing instance of infinite might is this!—Can any thing be impossible to the LORD, the LORD GOD; the Creator and Controller of all the ends of the earth, all the regions of the universe? Rather, is not all that we count *difficult*, perfect ease to that glorious Being,

* This doctrine, though rich with *consolation* to the ruined sinner, yet is it not likely to open a door for *licentiousness*, and embolden transgressors to prosecute their VICES?—No: it is the most powerful motive to that genuine repentance, which *flows* from an unfeigned love of GOD; and *operates* in a hearty detestation of all sin. One, who knew the unmeasurable goodness of the LORD, and was no stranger to the sinful perverseness of our nature, says, *There is mercy with thee*: THEREFORE *shalt thou be feared*. Psal. cxxx. 4.—Words full to my purpose; which at once add the *highest* authority to this sentiment, and direct our minds to its proper influence, and due improvement.

† Acts xx. 28.

‡ *Psal.* li. 7. *Thou shalt purge.* I prefer this translation before the new one. Because this speaks the language of a more stedfast belief, and gives the highest honour to the divine goodness. Were the words intended to bear no more than the common *petitionary* sense, and not to be expressive of a noble *plerophory* of faith; they would rather have been תזאני and בבסני *imperatives*, not *futures*.

* Zech. xiii. 1. † Psal. lxii. 11. ‡ Psal. cl. 1.

‖ If this thought is admitted a second time, and suffered to ennoble the next paragraph; it is partly, because of its unequalled *sublimity*; partly, because it awakens the most *grand* idea of creating power; and partly, because the practice of the *psalmist*, an authority too great to be controverted, is my precedent.—The beautiful stanza quoted from *Psal.* xxxiii. 6. is a proof, how thoroughly the royal poet entered into the majesty of the *Mosaic* narration. The repetition of the sentiment, ver. 9. intimates, how peculiarly he was charmed with that *noble manner* of describing the divine operations. While the turn of his own composition shews, how perfectly he possessed the same *elevated way* of thinking. And this, long before *Longinus* wrote the celebrated treatise, which has taught the Heathen, as well as the Christian world, to admire the *dignity* of the *Jewish* legislator's style. Vid. Long. de *Sublim.* sect. IX.

§ To give *one* instance of this remark.—The earth, in the diurnal revolution, which it performs on its own axis, *whirls about*

who only ſpake, and the world was made *? who only gave command, and the ſtupendous axle was lodged faſt, the lofty wheels moved complete!—What a ſure defence, O my ſoul, is this everlaſting ſtrength of thy GOD! Be this thy continual *refuge*, in the article of danger; this thy never-failing *reſource*, in every time of need.

What cannot this uncontrollable power of the great JEHOVAH effect for his people? Be their miſeries ever ſo galling, cannot this GOD relieve them? Be their wants ever ſo numerous, cannot this GOD ſupply them? Be their corruptions within ever ſo inveterate, or their temptations without ever ſo importunate; cannot this mighty, mighty GOD ſubdue the former, and fortify them againſt the latter?—Should *trials*, with an inceſſant vehemence, ſift thee as wheat; ſhould *Tribulation*, with a weight of woes, almoſt grind thee to powder; ſhould *Pleaſure*, with bewitching ſmiles, ſolicit thee to delicious ruin; yet "hold thee faſt by GOD," and lay thy help upon him that is omnipotent †. Thou canſt not be involved in ſuch calamitous circumſtances, or expoſed to ſuch imminent peril; but thy GOD, whom thou ſerveſt, is able to deliver thee from the one, and to ſupport thee under the other. To *ſupport!* to *deliver!* let me not diſhonour the unlimited greatneſs of the power. He is able to exalt thee, from the deepeſt diſtreſs, to the moſt triumphant joy; and to make even a complication of evils work together for thy everlaſting good. *He is able*, not only to accompliſh what I have been ſpeaking, but *to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can aſk or think* *.

O! the *wretched condition* of the wicked, who have this LORD of all power for their enemy! O! the *deſperate madneſs* of the ungodly, who provoke the Almighty to jealouſy!—Beſotted creatures! are you able to contend with your Maker, and enter the liſts againſt incenſed Omnipotence? Can you *bear* the fierceneſs of his wrath, or ſuſtain the vengeance of his lifted arm? At his preſence, though awfully ſerene, the hills melt like wax, and the "mountains ſkip like frighted lambs." At the leaſt intimation of his diſpleaſure, the foundations of nature rock, and the "pillars of heaven tremble." How then can a withered leaf endure, when "his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire?" Or can any thing *ſtreſs* a guilty worm, when the great and terrible GOD ſhall *whet his glittering ſword, and his hand take hold on* inexorable *judgment*? when *that hand*, which ſhoots the planets, maſſes of exceſſive bulk †, with ſuch ſurpriſing rapidity, through the ſky: *that hand*, which darts the comets to ſuch unmeaſurable diſtances beyond the orbit of our remoteſt planet, beyond the purſuit of the ſtrongeſt eye; when THAT HAND is ſtretched out to puniſh, can the munition of rocks, the intervention of ſeas, or even interpoſing worlds, divert the blow?——Conſider this, *Ambition*; and bow thy haughty creſt. Conſider this, *Diſobedience*; and bend thy iron ſinew. O! conſider this, all ye that forget, or affront, the tremendous JEHOVAH. He can, by a ſingle act of his will, lay the univerſe in utter ruin: and can he want power to bring *you*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to the duſt of death, or to the flames of hell? He has—I ſay not, ten thouſand lightnings to ſcorch you to aſhes; ten thouſand thunders to cruſh you into atoms; but, what is unſpeakably more dreadful,—he has an *army* of terrors, even in the *look* of his angry countenance. His very frown is worſe than deſtruction.

I cannot diſmiſs this ſubject, without admiring the *patience* of the bleſſed GOD; who, though ſo ſtrong and powerful, yet "is provoked every day."—Surely, as is his majeſty, ſo is his mercy; his pity altogether commenſurate to his power. If I vilify but the name of an earthly monarch, I loſe my liberty, and am confined to the dungeon. If I appear in arms, and draw the ſword, againſt my national ſovereign, my life is forfeited, and my very blood will ſcarce atone for the crime. But thee I have diſhonoured, O thou King immortal and inviſible! Againſt thee my breaſt has fomented *ſecret diſaffection*; my behaviour

about at the rate of above a thouſand miles an hour. And as the great orbit which it deſcribes annually round the ſun, is reckoned at 554 millions of miles, it muſt *travel* near a million and a half each day.—What a *force* muſt be requiſite, to protrude ſo vaſt a globe, and wheel it on, loaded as it is with huge mountains, and ponderous rocks, at ſuch a prodigious degree of velocity! It ſurpaſſes human conception!—How natural, how pertinent, how almoſt unneceſſary, after ſuch an obſervation, is the acknowledgement made by holy *Job*, *I know that* THOU *canſt do every thing, and that no thought*, no imaginable ſcheme, *can be with-holden from thee*, can lie beyond thy power to execute.—— Chap. xlii. 2.

* Pſal. xxxiii. 9.

† It is a moſt charming deſcription, as well as a comfortable promiſe, which we find in *Iſa.* xl. 29, 30, 31.—*HE giveth power to the feeble; and to them that have no might* at all, *he* not only imparteth, but *increaſeth ſtrength*; making it to abound, where it did not ſo much as exiſt.—Without this aid of JEHOVAH, *even the youths*, amidſt the very prime of their vigour and activity, *ſhall become languid* in their work, *and weary* in their courſe. *And the young men*, to whoſe reſolution and abilities nothing ſeemed impracticable, *ſhall* not only not ſucceed, but *utterly fail*, and miſcarry in their various enterpriſes.——*Whereas, they that wait upon the LORD*, and confide in his grace, ſhall preſs on, with a generous ardor, from one degree of religious improvement to another. Inſtead of exhauſting, they *ſhall renew their ſtrength*; difficulties ſhall animate, and toil invigorate them. *They ſhall mount up as with* ſoaring *wings*, above all oppoſition; they ſhall be carried through every diſcouragement, *as eagles* cleave the yielding air. *They ſhall run*, with ſpeed and alacrity, the way of GOD's commandments, *and not be weary: they ſhall hold on* (בלכתם *progredientur, carpent iter*) with conſtancy and perſeverance, in thoſe peaceful paths, *and not faint*; but arrive at the end of their progreſs, and receive the prize of their high calling.

To this moſt chearing doctrine, permit me to add its no leſs beautiful and delightful *contraſt*. *Eliphaz*, ſpeaking of the enemies of the righteous, ſays—יתרם מבלי אכל—which is rendered by a great critic in ſacred learning, *Nihil exiſtum ſoctio nobis adverſarii.*—We ſhould reckon our language acquitted itſelf tolerably well, if, when depreciating the abilities of an adverſary, it ſhould repreſent them weak as the *ſcorched thread*, feeble as the *diſſolving ſmoke*. But theſe are cold forms of ſpeech, compared with the eloquence of the Eaſt. According to the genius of our Bible, *all the power that oppoſes the godly, is* a mere nothing; or, to ſpeak with a more emphatical air of contempt, *a deſtroyed, an extirpated nothing*.—Admire this expreſſion, ye that are charmed with daring images, and (what *Tully* calls *verbum ardens*) a ſpirited and glowing diction.—Remember this declaration, ye that fight the good fight of faith. The united force of all your enemies, be it ever ſo formidable to the eye of fleſh, is before your almighty Guardian, *nihil nihiliſſimum*, not only nothing, but *leſs than nothing*, and vanity. *Job* xxii. 20.

* I ſhould, in this place, avoid ſwelling the notes any farther, was it not to take notice of the inimitable paſſage quoted above, and to be found *Eph.* iii. 20.—Which, if I do not greatly miſtake, is the moſt complete repreſentation of divine power, that it is poſſible for words to frame.—To do all that our tongue can *aſk*, is a miracle of might. But we often think more than we can expreſs, and are actuated with "*groanings unutterable*." Yet to anſwer theſe vaſt deſires, is not beyond the accompliſhment of our heavenly Father.—Nay, to make his gifts and his bleſſings commenſurate to the *largeſt ſtretch* of human expectations, is a ſmall thing with the GOD of glory. He is able to do *above all* that the moſt enlarged apprehenſion can imagine; yea, to do *abundantly* more, *exceeding abundantly* more, than the mind itſelf, in the utmoſt exertion of all its faculties, is capable of *wiſhing*, or knows how to *conceive*.

† One of the planets (*Saturn*) is ſuppoſed to be more than 90 times as big as the globe on which we live. According to the ſame calculation, the largeſt of the planets (*Jupiter*) is above 200 times vaſter, than this vaſt collection of ſpacious foreſts, towering mountains, extenſive continents, and boundleſs oceans.—Such enormous magnitude! winged with ſuch prodigious ſpeed!—It raiſes aſtoniſhment beyond expreſſion.—*With GOD is terrible majeſty!* Job xxxvii. 22.—*Who ſhall not fear* THEE, O LORD, *and glorify thy name?* Rev. xv. 4.

has

has risen up in *open rebellion*; and yet I am spared, yet I am preserved. Instead of being banished from thy presence, I sit at thy table, and am fed from thy hand. Instead of pursuing me with *thunder-bolts* of vengeance, thy *favours* surround me on every side. That arm, that injured arm, which might justly fall, with irretrievable ruin, on a traitor's head, is most graciously stretched out, to caress him with the tenderest endearments, to cherish him with every instance of parental kindness!—O! thou mightiest, thou best of beings, how am I pained at my very soul, for such shameful and odious disingenuity! Let me always abominate myself, as the basest of creatures; but *adore* that unwearied long-suffering of thine which refuses to be irritated; *love* that unremitted goodness, which no acts of ingratitude could stop, or so much as check, in its gracious current. O! let this stubborn heart, which duty could not bind, which threatenings could not awe, be the captive, the *willing captive*, of such triumphant beneficence.

I HAVE often been struck with wonder at that almighty skill, which *weighed* the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance; which *proportioned* the waters in the hollow of its hand, and *adjusted* the dust of the earth * by a measure. But how much more marvellous is that magnificent œconomy, which *poised* the stars with inexpressible nicety, and *meted* out the heavens with a span! where all is prodigiously vast; immensely various; and yet more than mathematically exact. Surely the *wisdom* of GOD manifests itself in the skies, and shines in those lucid orbs; shines on the contemplative mind, with a lustre incomparably brighter than that which their united splendors transmit to the eye.

Behold yonder countless multitude of globes; consider their amazing magnitude; regard them as the sovereigns of so many systems, each accompanied with his planetary equipage. Upon this supposition, what a multiplicity of mighty spheres must be perpetually running their rounds, in the upper regions! Yet none mistake their way, or *wander* from the goal, though they pass through trackless and unbounded fields. None *fly off* from their orbits, into extravagant excursions; none *press in* upon their centre, with too near an approach. None *interfere* with each other in their perennial passage, or *intercept* the kindly communications of another's influence †. But all their rotations proceed in eternal harmony; keeping such time, and observing such laws, as are most exquisitely adapted to the perfection of the whole.

WHILE I contemplate this "excellent wisdom, "which made the heavens," and attunes all their motions; how am I abashed at that mixture of arrogance and folly, which has, at any time, inclined me to murmur at thy *dispensations*, O LORD! What is this, but a sort of implicit treason against thy supremacy, and a tacit denial of thy infinite understanding?—Hast thou so regularly placed such a wonderful diversity of systems, through the spaces of the universe?—didst thou, without any probationary essays, without any improving retouches, speak them into the most consummate perfection?—dost thou continually superintend all their circumstances, with a sagacity that never mistakes the minutest tittle of propriety? And shall I be so unaccountably stupid, as to question the *justness* of thy *discernment*, in "chusing my inheritance, and fixing the bounds of "my habitation!"—Not a single erratum, in modelling the structure, determining the distance *, and conducting the career of *unnumbered* worlds! And shall my peevish humour presume to censure thy interposition, with regard to the affairs of *one* inconsiderable creature; whose stature, in such a comparative view, is less than a span, and his present duration little more than a moment?

O! THOU GOD, "in whose hand my breath is, and "whose are all my ways," let such sentiments as now possess my thoughts, be always lively on my heart! These shall compose my mind into a *cheerful* acquiescence, and a *thankful* submission; even when afflictions gall the sense, or disappointments break my schemes. Then shall I, like the grateful patriarch †, in all the changes of my condition, and even in the depths of distress, erect an *altar* of adoring resignation, and inscribe it with the apostle's *motto*, TO GOD ONLY WISE. Then, shouldst thou give me leave to be the carver of my own fortunes, I would humbly desire to relinquish the grant, and recommit the disposal of myself to thy unerring beneficence. Fully persuaded that *thy counsels*, though contrary to my froward inclinations, or even afflictive to my flesh, are incomparably more eligible than the blind impulse of my own will, however soothing to animal nature.

ON a careless inspection, you perceive no accuracy or uniformity in the position of the heav'nly bodies. They appear like an *illustrious chaos*; a promiscuous heap of shining globes; neither ranked in order, nor moving by line.—But what *seems* confusion, *is* all regularity. What carries a show of negligence, is really the result of the most masterly contrivance. You think, perhaps, they rove in their aerial flight; but they rove by the nicest rule, and without the least error. Their circuits, though seemingly devious; their mazes, though intricate to our apprehensions ‡; are marked out, not indeed with golden compasses, but by the infinitely more exact determinations of the all-wise Spirit.

So, what wears the *appearance* of calamity, in the allotments appointed for the godly, has really the *nature* of a blessing. It issues from fatherly love, and will terminate in the richest good. If *Joseph* is snatched from the embraces of an indulgent parent, and abandoned to slavery in a foreign land; it is in order to save the holy family from perishing by famine; and to preserve

* *Isa.* xl. 12. *The dust of the earth*, in this sublime scripture, signifies the dry land, or *solid* part of our globe; which is placed in contradistinction to the whole collection of fluid matter, mentioned in the preceding clause.—Perhaps, this remarkable expression may be intended to intimate, not only the extreme niceness, which stated the dimensions of the world *in general*, or in the gross; but also that *particular exactness*, with which the very smallest materials that constitute its frame, (not excepting each individual atom), were calculated and disposed.—*q. d.* 'Tis a small thing to say, No such enormous redundancies, as unnecessary ridges of mountains, were suffered to subsist. There was not so much as the least grain of sand *superfluous*, or a single particle of dust *deficient*.—As the grand aim of the description is, to celebrate the *consummate wisdom*, exemplified in the creation; and to display that *perfect proportion*, with which every part tallies, coincides, and harmonizes with the whole; I have taken leave to alter the word of our *English* translation *comprehend*, and introduce in its stead a term, equally faithful to the *Hebrew*, and more significative of the prophet's precise idea.

† The interception of light, by means of an eclipse, happens very *rarely*. And then it is of so *short* a continuance, as not to be at all inconvenient. Nay, it is attended with such *circumstances*, as render it rather useful, than prejudicial.

* The sun in particular, (and let this serve as a specimen of that most curious exactness, with which the other celestial bodies are constituted and all their circumstances regulated) the sun is formed of such a determined magnitude, and placed at such a convenient distance,—"as not to annoy, but only refresh us, and nourish "the ground with its kindly warmth. If it was *larger*, it would "set the earth on fire; if *smaller*, it would leave it frozen. If it "was *nearer* us, we should be scorched to death; if *farther* from "us, we should not be able to live for want of heat."
STACKHOUSE's *History of the Bible*.

† See *Gen.* xii. 7. 8.

‡ ——Mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolv'd; yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem. MILT.

ſerve "the ſeed, in whom all the nations of the earth "ſhould be bleſſed." If he falls into the deepeſt diſgrace, it is on purpoſe that he may riſe to the higheſt honours. Even the confinement of the priſon, by the unſearchable workings of providence, opens his way to the right hand of the throne itſelf.—Let the moſt afflicted ſervant of JESUS wait the final upſhot of things. He will *then* diſcover the apparent expediency of all thoſe tribulations, which *now*, perhaps, he can hardly admit without reluctance, or ſuffer without ſome ſtruggles of diſſatisfaction. Then the guſhing tear, and the heaving ſigh, will be turned into tides of gratitude, and hymns of holy wonder.

In the mean time, let no audacious railer preſumptuouſly impeach the divine procedure; but, adoring where we cannot comprehend, let us expect the *evolution* of the myſterious plan. Then ſhall every eye perceive, that the ſeeming labyrinths of providence, were the moſt *direct* and *compendious* way, to effect his general purpoſes of grace, and to bring about each one's particular happineſs *.—Then, alſo, ſhall it be clearly ſhewn, in the preſence of applauding worlds, why Virtue pined in want, while Vice rioted in affluence; why amiable Innocence ſo often dragged the dungeon-*chain*, while horrid Guilt trailed the *robe* of ſtate.—That day of univerſal audit, that day of everlaſting retribution, will not only *vindicate*, but *magnify*, the whole management of Heaven. The auguſt ſeſſions ſhall cloſe with this unanimous, this glorious acknowledgment: "Though *clouds* "*and darkneſs*, impenetrable by any human ſcrutiny, "*were* ſometimes *round about* the ſupreme Conductor of "things; yet *righteouſneſs and judgment were the* conſtant "*habitation of his ſeat* †; the invariable ſtandard of all his "adminiſtrations."——Thus (if I may illuſtrate the grandeſt truths by inferior occurrences) while we view the arras on the ſide of *leaſt diſtinction*, it is void of any elegant fancy; without any nice ſtrokes of art; nothing but a confuſed jumble of incoherent threads. No ſooner is the piece beheld in its *proper aſpect*, but the ſuſpected rudeneſs vaniſhes, and the moſt curious arrangement takes place. We are charmed with deſigns of the fineſt taſte, and figures of the moſt graceful form. All is ſhaped with ſymmetry; all is clad in beauty.

THE *goodneſs* of GOD is moſt eminently diſplayed in the ſkies.—Could we take an underſtanding ſurvey of whatever is formed by the divine Architect, throughout the whole extent of *material* things; our minds will be tranſported with their excellencies, and our tongues echo back that great encomium. They are "good, very "good ‖." Moſt *beautiful* ‖ in themſelves; contrived by unerring wiſdom, and executed with inimitable ſkill. Moſt *uſeful* ‖ in their functions; exactly fitting the places they fill, and completely anſwering the purpoſes for which they were intended.—All the parts of the inanimate creation proclaim, both by their intrinſic and relative excellencies, the all-diffuſive beneficence of their Maker.

How much more wonderful are the diſplays of divine indulgence, in the worlds of life! Becauſe dead

——— The *moral world*,
Which, though to us it ſeems embroil'd, moves on
In higher order; fitted, and impell'd
By *wiſdom*'s fineſt hand, and iſſuing all
In gen'ral good. THOMS. *Wint.* l. 586. laſt edit.

† Pſal. xcvii. 2. ‡ Gen. i. 31.

‖ This καλοκαγαθια of the univerſe, and all its parts, has been very highly, and very juſtly extolled, by the ancient inquirers into nature; and was, indeed, an illuſtrious ſcene ſpread before the ſages of the Heathen world, wherein to contemplate the goodneſs and the glories of the Supreme Being.—It was nobly ſaid by a Pagan philoſopher, on this occaſion; Εις τουτο μεταβληθηναι τον Θεον ὁταν τον κοσμον δημιουργειν. *That GOD, when he undertook the work of creation, tranſformed himſelf into love.*—But he need not *tranſform* himſelf into this amiable principle; for "GOD *is* love;" as was much more nobly ſaid by one, whom that *philoſopher* would have termed a *barbarian*. 1 *John* iv. 8.

matter is incapable of delight, therefore the gracious Creator has raiſed innumerable ranks of *perceptive exiſtence*; ſuch as are qualified to taſte his bounty, and enjoy each a happineſs ſuited to its peculiar ſtate. With this view, he furniſhed the regions of inferior nature, with an order and a ſeries of ſenſitive beings. The *waters* teem with ſhoals of finny inhabitants. The *dry land* ſwarms with animals of every order. The dwellings of the *firmament* are occupied by multitudes of winged people. Not ſo much as a *green leaf*, philoſophers ſay, but lodges and accommodates its puny animalcule tenants *.—And wherefore this diverſity, this profuſion of living creatures, flying in the air, treading the ground, and gliding through the paths of the ſea? For this moſt glorious reaſon:—that the eternal Sovereign may exerciſe his ſuperabundant goodneſs; that his *table* may be furniſhed with millions and millions of *gueſts*; that he may fill, every hour, every moment, their mouths with food, or their hearts with gladneſs.

But what a ſmall theatre are three or four *elements* for the operations of JEHOVAH's bounty! His magnificent liberality ſcorns ſuch ſcanty limits. If you aſk, Wherefore has he created *all worlds*, and repleniſhed them with an unknown multiplicity of beings, riſing, one above another, in an endleſs gradation of ſtill richer endowments, and ſtill nobler capacities? The anſwer is,—For the manifeſtation of his own glory, and eſpecially for the *communication* of his inexhauſtible beneficence †.—The great Creator could propoſe no advantage to himſelf. His bliſs is incapable of any addition. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made," he was ſupremely happy in his own independent and all-ſufficient ſelf. His grand deſign therefore, in erecting ſo many ſtately fabrics, and peopling them with ſo many tribes of inhabitants, was, to *tranſfuſe* his exuberant kindneſs, and *impart* felicity in all its forms. Ten thouſand worlds, ſtocked with ten thouſand times ten thouſand ranks of ſenſitive and intelligent exiſtence, are ſo many ſpacious gardens, which, with rivers of communicated joy, this ever-flowing fountain waters continually.

Boundleſs ‡, and (which raiſes our idea of this divine principle, to the very higheſt degree of perfection) diſintereſted ‡ munificence! How inexpreſſibly

* A very celebrated poet, in a beautiful paragraph on this ſubject, informs his reapers, that all nature ſwarms with life. In ſubterranean *cells*, the earth heaves with vital motion. Even the hard *ſtone*, in the very inmoſt receſſes of its impenetrable citadel, holds multitudes of animated inhabitants. The *pulp* of mellow fruit, and all the productions of the orchard, feed the inviſible nations. Each *liquid*, whether of acid taſte, or milder reliſh, abounds with various forms of ſenſitive exiſtence. Nor is the pure *ſtream*, or tranſparent *air*, without their colonies of unſeen people.—In which conſtitution of things, we have a wonderful inſtance, not only of the divine goodneſs to thoſe minute beings, in giving them a *capacity* for animal gratifications; but of his tender care for mankind, in making them *imperceptible* to our ſenſes.

——— Theſe, conceal'd
By the kind art of forming Heav'n, eſcape
The groſſer eye of man: for if the worlds
In worlds incloſ'd ſhould on his ſenſes burſt;
From cates ambroſial, and the nectar'd bowl,
He'd turn abhorrent: and, in dead of night,
When ſilence ſleeps o'er all, be ſtunn'd with noiſe.
THOMSON's *Summer.*

† A ſacred writer, conſidering this delightful ſubject, and confining his obſervation within the *narrow limits* of his own country, cries out, with a mixture of amazement and gratitude, *How great is his goodneſs, and how great is his beauty!*—Who then can forbear being loſt in wonder, and tranſported with delight, when he extends his ſurvey to thoſe infinitely more *copious communications* of divine bounty; which, like ſalutary and refreſhing ſtreams, run through all worlds; and make, not only the *little valleys* of a ſingle kingdom, but the immenſity of creation *laugh, and ſing?*—Zech. ix. 17.

‡ ‡ In this ſenſe, *there is none good, but One, that is GOD.*—None

amiable is the bleſſed GOD, conſidered in this charming light! Is it poſſible to conceive any excellence ſo adorable and lovely, as infinite benevolence, guided by unerring wiſdom, and exerting almighty power, on purpoſe to make a whole univerſe happy!—O my ſoul, what an *irreſiſtible attractive* is here! What a moſt worthy object, for thy moſt fervent affection! Shall now every glittering toy become a rival to this tranſcendently-beneficent being, and rob him of thy heart?—No. Let his all-creating arm teach thee to truſt in the fulneſs of his ſufficiency:—let his all-ſuperintending eye incline thee to acquieſce in the diſpenſations of his Providence:—and let his bounty, ſo freely vouchſafed, ſo amply diffuſed, induce thee to *love* him, with all the ardor of a grateful and admiring ſoul; induce thee to *ſerve* him, not with a joyleſs awe, or ſlaviſh dread, but with unfeigned alacrity, and a delightful complacency.

If the goodneſs of GOD is ſo admirably ſeen in the works of nature, and the favours of Providence; with what a noble ſuperiority does it *even triumph* in the *myſtery of redemption* *!—Redemption is the brighteſt mirror, in which to contemplate this moſt lovely attribute of the Deity. Other gifts are only as *mites* from the divine treaſury; but redemption opens, I had almoſt ſaid exhauſts, all the *ſtores* of indulgence and grace. Herein "GOD *commendeth* his love †:" not only manifeſts, but ſets it off, as it were, with every bright and grand embelliſhment: manifeſts it in ſo ſtupendous a manner, that it is beyond parallel; beyond thought; "above all bleſſing and praiſe."——Was he not thy *Son*, everlaſting GOD, thy *only* Son; the Son of thy boſom from eternal ages; the higheſt object of thy complacential delight? Was not thy love to this adorable Son, incomparably greater than the tendereſt affection of *any*, or the united affections of *all*, mortal parents? Was not the bleſſed JESUS more illuſtrious in excellency than all angels; more exalted in dignity than all heavens? Yet didſt thou reſign HIM for poor mortals; for vile ſinners!——Couldſt thou ſee him deſcend from his royal *throne*; and take up his abode in the ſordid *ſtable*? ſee him forego the *homage* of the ſeraphim; and ſtand expoſed to the reproachful *indignities* of an inſolent rabble? ſee him arraigned at the bar, and ſentenced to death; numbered with malefactors, and nailed to the gibbet; bathed in his own innocent blood, and pouring out his ſoul in agonies of ſorrow?——Could the Father, the Father *himſelf*, with unknown philanthropy ‡, ſay? "It "ſhall, it ſhall, be ſo! My pity to rebellious man pleads, "and prevails. Awake, therefore, O *ſword* ‖, edged "with divine wrath; awake; and be ſheathed in that "*immaculate* breaſt; pierce that *dearly-beloved* heart. I "am content, that my Son endure the ſharpneſs of death, "rather than ſinful mortals periſh for ever."——Incomprehenſible love! May it henceforward be the favourite ſubject of my *meditation*; more delightful to my muſing mind, than applauſe to the ambitious ear! May it be the darling theme of my *diſcourſe*; ſweeter to my tongue, than the droppings of the honey-comb to my taſte! May it be my choiceſt *comfort*, through all the changes of life; and my reviving *cordial*, even in the laſt extremities of diſſolution itſelf!

A *prophet* contemplating, with a diſtant ſurvey, this unexampled inſtance of almighty love, is wrapt into a *tranſport* of *devotion*. At a loſs for proper acknowledgments, he calls upon the whole univerſe to aid his labouring breaſt, and ſupply his lack of praiſe. *Sing melodiouſly, ye* vaulted *heavens; exult; and even leap for gladneſs, thou* cumberous *earth; ye mountains*, break your long ſilence, and *burſt into peals of loudeſt acclamation* *; *for the* LORD, by this precious gift, and this great ſalvation, *hath comforted his people*.——A *ſacred hiſtorian* hath left it upon record, that, at the firſt exhibition of this raviſhing ſcene, there was with the angel who brought the bleſſed tidings, a multitude of the heavenly hoſt, praiſing GOD, and making the concave of the ſkies reſound with their Hallelujahs. At the dawn of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, when he was beginning to riſe with healing in his wings, the *morning-ſtars* ſang together, and all the *ſons* of GOD ſhouted for joy.—And ſhall *man*, whom this gracious diſpenſation principally reſpects; ſhall *man*, who is the centre of all theſe gladdening rays; ſhall he have no heart to adore, no anthem to celebrate, this

Love without end, and without meaſure grace?

MILT.

How *pure* is the ſtate of the ſky, and how *clear* its aſpect! Clearer than the limpid ſtream; purer than the tranſparent cryſtal; and more curiouſly fine than the poliſhed mirror. That *ſtately cieling*, fretted with gold, and ſtretched to an extent of many millions of leagues, is not diſfigured with a ſingle flaw. That *azure canopy*, embroidered with ſtars, and ſpacious enough to form a covering for unnumbered worlds, is without the leaſt ſpot or wrinkle.——Yet this, even this, will ſcarce yield us ſo much as a faint repreſentation of the *divine purity*. GOD is a GOD of matchleſs and tranſcendent excellency. His ways are uprightneſs itſelf. His counſels and words are the very ſanctity of wiſdom and of truth. The *laws* which he has given to univerſal nature, are exquiſitely contrived, and beyond all poſſibility of improvement. The *precepts* which he has appointed for the human race, are a complete ſummary of all that is honourable in itſelf, and perfective of the rational mind.——Not the leaſt *overſight*, in planning a ſeries of events for all futurity. Not the leaſt mal-adminiſtration, in managing the affairs of every age, ſince time began; and of every nation under the whole heavens.——Pardon theſe diſparaging expreſſions. A *negative* perfection is far, far beneath thy dignity, *O thou Moſt Higheſt* †. In all

* In this, and in other parts of the *Contemplations*, the reader will obſerve, that the attributes of the DEITY are repreſented as ſhining with more diſtinguiſhed luſtre in the wonders of *redemption*, than in the works of *creation*. If *ſuch* remarks ſhould ſeem to be unprecedented, or to ſtand in need of a vindication; permit me to ſubjoin the ſentiments of a great critic, equally verſed in *both* thoſe ſublime theories.—"In a perfect orator," he ſays, "*Tully* requires ſome ſkill in the nature of heavenly bodies; be-"cauſe his mind will become more extenſive and unconfined; "and, when he deſcends to treat of human affairs, he will both "think and write in a more exalted and magnificent manner. "For the ſame reaſon, that excellent maſter would have recom-"mended the ſtudy of thoſe great and glorious myſteries, which "revelation has diſcovered to us; *to which the nobleſt parts of this* "*ſyſtem of the world are as much inferior, as the creature is leſs excel-*"*lent than the Creator.*" *Spect.* vol. VIII. No. 633.

† Rom. v. 8.

‡ *Philanthropy*, that is, loving-kindneſs to man.

‖ Zech. xiii. 7.

* *If.* xlix. 13.—I have not adhered to our common tranſlation but endeavoured to preſerve, ſomewhat more faithfully, the noble *pathos*, and inimitable *energy*, of the ſacred original.—The love of GOD manifeſted in a divine and dying Saviour, is a bleſſing of ſuch inconceivable richneſs, as muſt render all acknowledgments *flat*, and all encomiums *languid*. Yet I think, the moſt poetical and moſt emphatical celebration of that unſpeakable inſtance of goodneſs, is contained in this rapturous exclamation of the prophet. Which intimates, with a wonderful majeſty of ſentiment, that even the whole compaſs of the *inanimate creation*, could it be ſenſible of the benefit, and capable of delight, would expreſs its *gratitude* in all theſe demonſtrations of the moſt lively and exuberant joy.

† *O thou Moſt Higheſt.*—This expreſſion occurs more than once in the pſalms uſed by the eſtabliſhed church. It is, I think, one of thoſe *beauties*, which, becauſe often exhibited, generally eſcape our notice. It is a *ſuperlative* formed on a ſuperlative; and, though not ſtrictly conformable to grammatical rules, is nobly

these instances; in all thy acts, and all thy attributes; thou art not only holy, but "*glorious* in *holiness*."

So inconceivably holy is the LORD GOD of hosts, that he sees *defilement* even in the *brightness* of the firmament. The living sapphire of the heavens, before his majesty, loses its lustre. *Yea, the stars* (though the most pure and resplendent part of the heavens) *are not pure in his sight. How much less man, who*, in his fallen and depraved state, *is* but as *a worm*, that crawls in the corrupted carcase; *and the son of man, who*, by reason of his manifold actual impurities, *is* too justly compared to *an insect*, that wallows amidst stench and putrefaction *?—Is there not then abundant cause, for the most irreproachable and eminent of mankind, to renounce all arrogant pretensions; to lay aside every assuming air; to take nothing but *shame* and confusion to themselves? A holy prophet, and a holy prince, felt such humbling impressions, from a glimpse of the uncreated purity. *I abhor myself in dust and ashes* †, was the declaration of the one; *I am a man of unclean lips* ‡, the confession of the other.—Should not this teach us all to adore the divine mercies, for that precious *purifying fountain* ‖, which was foretold from the foundation of the world, but was opened at that awful juncture, when knotty whips tore the flesh; when ragged thorns mangled the temples; when sharpened nails cut fresh sluices for the crimson current; when the gash of the spear completed the dreadful work, and *forthwith flowed there*, from the wounded heart, *blood and water?*

Especially, since GOD himself saw no blemish in his *dear Son*. *He looketh to the moon, and it shineth not*: yet his all-penetrating and jealous eye discerned nothing amiss, nothing defective, in our glorious Redeemer. Nothing amiss? He bore this most illustrious testimony concerning his holy child JESUS: "In him I am *pleased*; I am *well pleased*; I acquiesce, with entire complacency, and with the highest delight, in his person, his undertaking; and the whole execution of his office."—How should this thought enliven our hopes, while the other mortifies our pride? Should not our hearts spring within us, and even leap for joy, at the repeated assurance given us by revelation, that such a divinely-excellent person is our Mediator? What apparent reason has every believer to adopt the blessed virgin's exclamation! "*My soul doth magnify the* LORD "for his transcendent mercy; *and my spirit rejoices*, not "in wide-extended harvests, waving over my fertile "glebe *; not in armies vanquished, and leaving the "peculiar treasure of nations for my spoil *; but in an "infinitely richer, nobler blessing, even in GOD *my Sa*"*viour*."—That a person so sublime and perfect, has vouchsafed to become my *Surety*; to give himself for my *Ransom*, in the world below; and act as my *Advocate*, in the royal presence above; yea, to make *my* recovery the reward of his sufferings; *my* final felicity, the honour of his mediatorial kingdom!

WHEN an innumerable multitude † of bodies, many of them more than a *hundred thousand miles* in diameter ‡, are all set in motion;—when the orbits, in which they perform their periodical revolutions, are extended at the rate of several hundreds of *millions*;—when each has a *distinct* and separate sphere for finishing his vast circuit;—when no one knows what it is to be cramped; but each most *freely expatiates* in his unbounded career;—when every one is placed at such an *immense remove* from each other, that they appear to their respective inhabitants, only as so many spots of light;—how astonishing must be the expanse, which yields *room* for all those mighty globes, and their widely-diffused operations! To what prodigious lengths did the almighty Builder stretch his line, when he marked out the stupendous platform!—I wonder at such an immeasurable extent. My very thoughts are lost in this abyss of space. But be it known to mortals, be it never forgot by sinners, that, in all its most surprising amplitude, it is *small*, it is *scanty*, compared with the bounty and the mercy of its Maker.

His *bounty* is absolutely without limits ‖, and without end. The most lavish generosity cannot exhaust, or even diminish, his munificence. O! all ye tribes of men, or rather, all ye classes of intelligent creatures,

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nobly superior to them all.—The language seems to be sensible of its own deficiency, when the incomprehensible JEHOVAH is addressed, or celebrated. Oppressed, as it were, with the glories of the subject, it labours after a *more emphatical* manner of diction, than the ordinary forms of speech afford.—It is, if I rightly judge, one of those daring and happy peculiarities of a masterly genius, which Mr POPE so finely describes; and, while he describes, exemplifies:

> Great wits sometimes may *gloriously offend*,
> And *rise* to *faults* true critics dare not mend;
> From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
> And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art.
>
> *Essay on Criticism.*

St *Paul*'s—ὑπερβολὴν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς βάρος—is a beautiful passage of the like nature. Which our translators have very properly rendered, *less than the least of all saints*.—His πολλῷ μᾶλλον περισσοτέρως is another instance of the same kind. But here the *English* version fails. *Far better* is extremely *flaccid*, compared with the *nervous* original. And I greatly question, whether it is possible to translate the sentence, with equal conciseness, and with equal spirit. See *Eph.* iii. 8. *Phil.* i. 23.

* *Job* xxv. 5. 6. I submit it to the judgment of the learned, whether this is not the true meaning of the text.—It may not, perhaps, recommend itself to the *sequaniss'bly-nice* critic; or to those persons who dream of, I know not what, *dignity* in our fallen nature. But it seems, in preference to every other interpretation, *suitable* to the sacred context; and is far, far from being *injurious* to the character of that apostate race, which is "altogether become abominable," and "is as an unclean thing."—On this supposition, there is not only an apparent, but a very striking contrast, between the purity of GOD, and the pollution of man: the *purity* of the most high GOD, which outshines the moon, and eclipses the stars: The *pollution* of degenerate man, which, exclusive of a Saviour, would render him as loathsome to the all-seeing eye, as the vilest vermin are in ours.—Without assigning this sense to the passage, I cannot discern the force of the *antithesis*, nor indeed the *propriety* of the sentiment. Worms, in the general, give us an idea of *meanness* and *infirmity*; not of *defilement* and *impurity*; unless they are insects, hatched amidst putrefaction, and considered in such noisome circumstances.—The two words of the original, רמה and תולעה are evidently used in this signification by *Moses* and *Isaiah*: by the former, to denote the vermin which devoured the *putrefied* manna; by the latter, to express the reptiles which swarm in the body that sees *corruption*. *Exod.* xvi. 20. *Is.* xiv. 11.

† Job xlii. 6. ‡ Is. vi. 5.

‖ *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of* David, *and to the inhabitants of* Jerusalem, *for sin and uncleanness*. Zech. xiii. 1.

† This refers, not only to the planets which pass and repass about our sun, but also to the other planetary worlds, which are supposed to attend the several fixed stars.

‡ The diameter of *Jupiter* is calculated at 130,650 miles, while its orbit is reckoned to consist of 895,134,000. Which computation, according to the maxims of astronomy, and the laws of proportion, may, as is taken for granted in the Contemplations, be applied to *other planets* revolving round *other suns*.

‖ By *bounty*, I mean, not the actual exercise, or the sensible effects, of this excellency in the Deity. These *are* and always *must be*, through the immense perfection of the attribute, and the necessary scantiness of the recipient, bounded. But I would be understood, as speaking of the divine *power* and the divine *will*, to exert divine beneficence. These can have no real, no imaginable limits. These, after a profusion of blessings, distributed to unnumbered worlds, continued through unnumbered ages, must *still* have more to bestow; for *ever* have more to bestow; *infinitely* more to bestow, than it is possible for creation itself to receive.

* * The inspired penman, from these two occasions of distinguished joy, sets forth the incomparably *greater delight*, which arises from the gift of a Saviour, and the blessing of redemption. *Is.* ix. *ver.* 3. compared with *ver.* 6.

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are not ſtreightened in the *liberality* of your ever-bleſſed Creator, be not ſtreightened in your own *expectations*. Open your mouth wide, and he ſhall fill it with copious and continual draughts from the cup of joy. Your GOD, on whom is your whole dependance, is more than able, is more than willing, to "ſupply all your need, according to his riches in glory."—When the LORD JEHOVAH is the giver, and his grace * the gift; let your wiſhes be unbounded, and your cravings inſatiable. All that created beings can poſſibly *covet*, but a very ſmall pittance of that unknown happineſs, which the everlaſting Benefactor is ready to *beſtow*. Suppoſe every charitable diſpoſition which warms the hearts of the human race, added to thoſe more enlarged affections which glow in heavenly boſoms; what were they all, even in their higheſt exerciſe, compared with the benignity of the divine nature? Bleſs *me* then, thou eternal ſource of love; bleſs *all* that reverence thy holy name; according to thy own moſt profuſe goodneſs; whoſe great prerogative it is to diſdain all meaſure. O! bleſs me, in proportion to that grace; the richneſs of which unutterable by the tongues of men, and of angels) was once *ſpoken* in the groans, and *written* in the wounds, of the expiring Son!

Spacious indeed are theſe heavens! Where do they begin? Where do they end? What is their extent? Can angels anſwer my queſtion? Have angels travelled the vaſt circuit? can angels meaſure the bounds of ſpace? No; 'tis boundleſs, 'tis unknown,—'tis amazing all.—How charming then to reflect, that the *mercy* of GOD is "greater than the heavens;" is more extenſive than the dimenſions of the ſky. Tranſporting reflection! Let me indulge thee once more †. Let me think over the delightful diſplays of this lovely attribute; and, while I admire the *trophies* of forgiving goodneſs, add one to the number.—With what amiable and affecting colours is this repreſented in the *parable* of the *prodigal!* What could induce that fooliſh youth to forſake his father's houſe? Had he not been tenderly cheriſhed by the good parent, and loaded with benefits from his indulgent hand? Were not the reſtraints of parental government an eaſy yoke? or rather, a *preſervative* from *ruin?* Notwithſtanding every endearing obligation, he revolts from his duty; and launches unto ſuch ſcandalous irregularities as were diſhonourable to his family, and deſtructive to himſelf.—When neceſſity, not choice, but ſharp neceſſity drove him to a ſubmiſſive return; does the injured father ſtand aloof, or ſhut his doors? Quite the reverſe. He eſpies him, while he is yet a *great way off*; and, the moment he beholds the profligate youth, he *has compaſſion on him*. His bowels yearn; they "ſound like an harp," touched with notes divinely ſoft. He never once thinks of his ungracious departure, and infamous debaucheries. Pity, parental pity, paſſes an act of oblivion; and, in one inſtant, cancels a ſeries of long-continued provocations.——So ſtrong are the workings of fatherly affection, that he is almoſt impatient to embrace the naked and deſtitute wretch. The ſon's pace is ſlow, *He aroſe and came*; the father's is ſwift, He ſprung forth (aged as he was) and *ran*. And is there a ſingle frown in his brow, or one upbraiding word on his tongue?—Inſtead of loathing the ſordid creature, or reproaching him for his odious exceſſes; he *falls* on his *neck*, claſps him in his arms, and hugs him to his boſom. Inſtead of diſowning the riotous ſpendthrift, or rejecting him for his undutiful behaviour; he receives and welcomes him with *kiſſes* of delight. He rejoices at his return from extravagance and vice, as he formerly rejoiced on the day of his nativity.——When this companion of harlots opens his mouth, *before he ſpeaks, the father hears*. He interrupts him, in the midſt of his intended ſpeech. The overflowings of his compaſſionate heart can brook no delay. He ſeems to be *uneaſy* himſelf, till he has made the afflicted penitent *glad*, with the aſſurance of his acceptance, and the choiceſt of his favours.—While the poor abaſhed offender ſeeks nothing more than not to be abhorred, he is thoroughly reconciled, and honoured before the whole family. While he requeſts no other indulgence, than only to be treated as the *meaneſt ſervant*; he is clothed with the *beſt robe*; he is feaſted with the *fatted calf*; he is careſſed as the deareſt of children.—Was there ever ſo bright and winning a picture of the tendereſt mercy, moſt freely vouchſafed, even to the moſt unworthy of creatures? Yet *thus*, my ſoul; and *thus*, my fellow-ſinner; will the LORD GOD of everlaſting compaſſions receive us, if, ſenſible of our miſery, and thirſting for ſalvation, we turn to him through JESUS CHRIST.

Where ſin has abounded, ſays the proclamation from the court of heaven, *grace doth much more abound*.—*Manaſſeh* was a monſter of barbarity; for he cauſed his own children to paſs through the fire, and filled *Jeruſalem* with innocent blood. *Manaſſeh* was an adept in iniquity; for he not only multiplied, and to an extravagant degree, his own ſacrilegious impieties; but he poiſoned the principles, and perverted the manners of his ſubjects, *making them to do worſe than the* moſt deteſtable of the *Heathen* idolators *. Yet, through this ſuperabundant grace, he is humbled; he is reformed; and becomes a child of forgiving love, an heir of immortal glory.——Behold that bitter and bloody perſecutor *Saul*; when, breathing out threatnings †, and bent upon ſlaughter, he worried the lambs, and put to death the diſciples of JESUS. Who, upon the principles of human judgment, would not have pronounced *him* a veſſel of wrath, deſtined to unavoidable damnation? nay, would not have been ready to conclude, that, if there were heavier chains, and a deeper dungeon, in the world of woe; they muſt ſurely be reſerved for ſuch an implacable enemy of true godlineſs? Yet (admire and adore the inexhauſtible treaſures of grace!) this *Saul* is admitted unto the goodly fellowſhip of

* 2 *Cor.* ix. 8. *GOD is able to make* all *grace* abound *towards you, that ye, having* all ſufficiency *in* all things, *may* abound *to* every *good work*.—How beautiful and emphatical is this deſcription! inferior to nothing, but that extent of ability, and thoſe riches of liberality, which it ſo eloquently celebrates. Does it not *exhauſt* all the powers of language, while it attempts to give us a *ſpecimen* of the munificence of the LORD?

† *Once more* refers to page 32, of *Reflections on a Flower-Garden*.—What follows, to the next page, exhibits a *digreſſive* view of the divine mercy. I thought it proper to appriſe my reader of this excurſion; though, I hope it will be needleſs to offer an apology for enlarging upon a theme incomparably joyous. Who can complain of *tediouſneſs*, while I ſpeak conſolation to diſtreſſed, and recovery to ruined creatures? The divine mercy is the ſole fountain of all our preſent and future bleſſings. In conformity to this benign attribute, human hopes ariſe, and human felicity flows. Who, therefore, can be weary of *viewing* and *reviewing*, when the lengths and breadths of forgiving grace are the raviſhing proſpect?

* See 2 *Chron.* xxxiii.

† *Acts* ix. 1. Σαυλος ετι εμπνεων απειλης και φονου, *Saul yet breathing out threatening and ſlaughter*.—What a repreſentation is here of a mind, *mad* with *rage*, and abandoned to the fierceſt extremes of barbarity! I ſcarce know, whether I am more *ſhocked* at the perſecutor's ſavage diſpoſition, or *charmed* with the evangeliſt's lively deſcription.—The adverb ετι ſeems referable to chap. viii. ver. 3. and has, or in this connection, a peculiar force. The havock he had committed, the inoffenſive families he had *already* ruined, were not ſufficient to aſſuage his vengeful ſpirit. They were only a *taſte*, which, inſtead of glutting the blood-hound, made him more cloſely purſue the track, and more eagerly pant for deſtruction.—He is *ſtill* athirſt for violence and murder. So eager and inſatiable is his thirſt, that he even *breathes out* threatening and ſlaughter. His words are ſpears and arrows, and his tongue a ſharp ſword. 'Tis as natural for him to *menace* the Chriſtians, as to breathe the air.—Nay, they *bleed* every hour, every moment, in the purpoſes of his rancorous heart. It is only owing to want of power, that every ſyllable he utters, every breath he draws, does not deal about deaths, and cauſe ſome of the innocent diſciples to fall.

the prophets; is numbered with the noble army of martyrs; and makes a diſtinguiſhed figure among the glorious company of the apoſtles.—The *Corinthians* were flagitious even to a proverb. Some of them wallowed in ſuch abominable vices, and habituated themſelves to ſuch outrageous acts of injuſtice, as were a reproach to human nature. Yet even theſe ſons of violence, and ſlaves of ſenſuality, "were waſhed; were ſanctified; "were juſtified *:" *waſhed* in the precious blood of a dying Redeemer; *ſanctified* by the powerful operations of the bleſſed Spirit; *juſtified* through the infinitely-tender mercies of a gracious GOD. Thoſe who were once the burden of the earth, are now the joy of heaven, and the delight of angels.

There is another inſtance in ſcripture, which moſt loudly publiſhes that ſweeteſt of the divine names, *The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth; keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin* †. An inſtance this, which exceeds all the former; which exceeds whatever can be imagined; which if I was to forget, the very ſtones might cry out, and ſound it in my ears. I mean the caſe of thoſe ſinners who murdered the *Prince* of *Peace*, and LORD of glory.—Theſe men could ſcarce have the ſhadow of an excuſe for their crime; hardly a circumſtance to extenuate their guilt. They were well acquainted with his exemplary converſation; they had often heard his heavenly doctrines; they were almoſt daily ſpectators of his unequalled miracles. They therefore had all poſſible reaſon to *honour* him, as the moſt illuſtrious of beings; and to *receive* his goſpel, as the moſt ineſtimable of bleſſings. Yet, notwithſtanding all theſe engaging motives to love him, even above their own lives, they ſeize his perſon; aſperſe his character; drag him before a Heathen tribunal; and extort a ſentence of death againſt innocence and holineſs itſelf. Never was the *vileſt ſlave* ſo contumeliouſly abuſed; nor the moſt *execrable malefactor* ſo barbarouſly executed. The ſun was confounded at the ſhocking ſcene; and one cannot but wonder, how the avenging lightnings could with-hold their flaſhes. The earth trembled at the horrid deed; and why, why did it not cleave aſunder, and open a paſſage, for ſuch blood-thirſty miſcreants, into the nethermoſt hell? Shall *theſe* ever hope to obtain forgiveneſs from the righteous Judge? Shall not *theſe* be conſigned over to inexorable wrath, and the ſevereſt torments?—O the miraculous effects of divine grace! O the triumphant goodneſs of GOD our Saviour! Many, even of *theſe* impious wretches, at the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, were convinced of their miſerable ſtate; were wounded with penitential remorſe; fled to the ſanctuary of the croſs; had their pardon ratified by the baptiſmal ſeal; and, continuing in the apoſtles doctrine, were made partakers of the kingdom of heaven: where they now ſhine, as ſo many everlaſting *monuments* of moſt diſtinguiſhed *mercy*; and receive beatitude paſt utterance, from that very Redeemer, whom once "with "wicked hands they crucified and ſlew."

Well might the prophet cry out with a pleaſing amazement, "Who is a GOD like unto thee, that pardoneth "iniquity, and paſſeth by tranſgreſſion ‡!"——Let all fleſh know aſſuredly; let all fleſh rejoice greatly; that with the LORD there is *ſuch mercy*, and with his CHRIST *ſuch plentiful redemption*.—And O! for the voice of an archangel, to circulate the glad tidings through the univerſe; that the *American* ſavage, as well as the *European* ſage, may learn the *exceeding riches of grace* in CHRIST: through whoſe infinitely-great propitiation, all manner of ſin, barbarity, and blaſphemy, are freely forgiven unto men.

WHAT a grand and majeſtic *dome* is the ſky! Where are the *pillars* which ſupport the ſtately concave? What art, moſt exactly true, balanced the preſſure? What props, of inſuperable ſtrength, ſuſtain the weight? How is that immeaſurable arch *upheld*, unſhaken and unimpaired; while ſo many generations of buſy mortals have *ſunk* and diſappeared, as bubbles upon the ſtream?—If thoſe ſtars are of ſuch an amazing bulk, how are they alſo *faſtened* in their lofty ſituation? By what miracle in mechanics, are ſo many thouſands of ponderous orbs kept from falling upon our heads; kept from daſhing both the world to pieces, and its inhabitants to death? Are they hung in golden or adamantine chains? Reſt they their enormous load on rocks of marble, or columns of braſs?——No; they are *pendulous* in fluid æther; yet are more immoveably *fixed*, than if the everlaſting mountains lent their foreſts for an axle-tree, or their ridges for a baſis. The almighty Architect *ſtretches out the north*, and its whole ſtarry train, *over the empty place*. He *hangs the earth*, and all the ethereal globes *upon nothing* †. Yet are their foundations laid ſo ſure, that they can "never be moved at any time."

No unfit repreſentation, to the *ſincere* Chriſtian, of his *final* perſeverance ‖; ſuch as points out the cauſe which effects it, and conſtitutes the pledge which

* Job xxvi. 7.

† With regard to the *final perſeverance* of the true believer, I am ſenſible, this point is not a little controverted.—The ſentiments which follow, are *my* ſtedfaſt belief. It is by no means proper, in a work of this nature, to enter upon a diſcuſſion of the ſubject. Neither have I room, ſo much as to hint, what might be urged for its ſupport.—Let my reader obſerve, that I am far from delivering it, as eſſential to Chriſtianity, or neceſſary to ſalvation. Millions, of the very contrary conviction, are, I doubt not, high in the favour of GOD, and in a growing meetneſs for his heavenly kingdom. As I blame none for *rejecting* *, none, I hope, will be offended with me for *eſpouſing* this particular doctrine.—To be of different opinions, at leaſt in ſome inferior inſtances, ſeems an unavoidable conſequence of our preſent ſtate; where *ignorance*, in part, cleaves to the wiſeſt minds; and *prejudice* eaſily beſets the moſt impartial judgments. This may turn to our common advantage; and afford room for the diſplay and exerciſe of thoſe *healing* virtues, moderation, meekneſs, and forbearneſs.—Let me only be permitted to aſk, whether this tenet does not evidently tend to eſtabliſh the *comfort* of the Chriſtian, and to magnify the *fidelity* of GOD our Saviour? whether, far from countenancing ſloth, or encouraging remiſſneſs, to *know* that our labour ſhall not be in vain, is not the moſt prevailing inducement to *abound* in the work of the LORD? 1 *Cor.* xv. 58.

Is any one inclined to examine the reaſons which made the author a proſelyte to this perſuaſion? He may find them diſplayed in the memorial, delivered by ſeveral ſelect and eminent divines of the church of *England*, at the renowned Synod of *Dordt*.—(See *Acta Synod. Dordrech.* par. II. pag. 246. of the *Latin* edition, publiſhed in a ſingle quarto volume.)—Thoſe who have no opportunity of conſulting the memoirs of that venerable aſſembly, I would refer to the works of the indefatigable and very learned *Turrettine*, or to thoſe of the candid and elegant *Witſius*.—Turret. tom. II. q. xvi. Witſ. Oecon. lib. III. chap. xiii.

The lateſt and fulleſt view of the point, which I ever remember to have met with, in any of our *Engliſh* writers, is in the *Lime-ſtreet Lectures*. Which are a defence of ſeveral moſt important doctrines of the goſpel, and contained in two octavo volumes; the united labours of *nine* modern divines; moſt of whom are *well* known to the world by their *other* evangelical and uſeful writings. In thoſe lectures, the final perſeverance of the ſaints is very particularly ſtated, and, to *my* apprehenſion at leaſt, moſt ſatisfactorily proved. The arguments, uſually urged againſt it, are impartially conſidered; and I cannot but think (with all due deference to the judgment of others) unanſwerably confuted.

And here (not to ſwell this note any farther) I ſhall only juſt hint, that the judicious *Hooker* (an authority, perhaps, as weighty and unexceptionable as any that can well be produced) gives a ſolemn *atteſtation* to this tenet, in a ſhort diſcourſe on the perpetuity of faith, ſubjoined to his *Eccleſiaſtical Polity*, fol. edit.

* As the final perſeverance of the ſaints is as much the doctrine of the Bible, as juſtification by the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt; our author's charity here ſeems to be culpable; and certainly thoſe who impugn any doctrine of Chriſtianity, are worthy of reproof.

* 1 Cor. vi. 9. 10. 11. † Exod. xxxiv. 6. 7. ‡ Mic. vii. 18.

aſcertains

aſcertains it.—His nature is all enfeebled. He is not able, of himſelf, to think a good thought. He has no *viſible* ſafeguard, nor any ſufficiency of his *own*. And yet whole legions of formidable enemies are in a confederacy to compaſs his ruin. The *world* lays unnumbered ſnares for his feet: the *devil* is inceſſantly urging the ſiege, by a multitude of fiery darts, or wily temptations: the *fleſh*, like a perfidious inmate, under colour of friendſhip, and a ſpecious pretence of pleaſure, is always forward to betray his integrity.—But, amidſt all theſe threatening circumſtances, of perſonal weakneſs, and imminent danger, an inviſible aid is his defence. *I will uphold thee*, ſays the bleſſed GOD, *with the right hand of my righteouſneſs* *. Comfortable truth! The arm, which fixes the ſtars in their orders, and guides the planets in their courſe, is ſtretched out to preſerve the heirs of ſalvation.—*My ſheep*, adds the great Redeemer, *are mine; and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand* †. What words are theſe! And did they come from HIM, who hath all power in heaven, and on earth! And were they ſpoke to the weakeſt of the flock, to every unfeigned follower of the great Shepherd? Then, Omnipotence itſelf muſt be *vanquiſhed*, before they can be *deſtroyed*, either by the ſeductions of fraud, or the aſſaults of violence.

If you aſk therefore, what ſecurity we have of enduring to the end, and continuing faithful unto death?——The very *fame* that eſtabliſhes the heavens, and ſettles the ordinances of the univerſe. Can *theſe* be thrown into confuſion ‡? Then may the true believer draw back unto perdition. Can the ſun be diſlodged from his ſphere, and ruſh lawleſsly through the ſky? Then, and then only, can the faith of GOD's elect ‖ be *finally* overthrown.——Be of good courage then, my ſoul; rely on thoſe divine ſuccours, which are ſo ſolemnly ſtipulated, ſo faithfully promiſed. Though thy grace be languid as the glimmering ſpark; though the overflowings of corruption threaten it with total extinction; yet, ſince the great JEHOVAH has undertaken to cheriſh the dim principle, "many waters cannot quench it, nor all floods "drown it." Nay, though it were feeble as the *ſmoking flax* §, goodneſs and faithfulneſs ſtand engaged, to augment the heat; to raiſe the fire, and feed the flame; till it beam forth, a lamp of immortal glory, in the heavens.

As to the *faithfulneſs* of a covenanting GOD, this may be emblematically ſeen in the ſtability of the heavenly bodies, and the perpetuity of their motions ¶.——Thoſe that are *fixed* or *ſtationary*, continue unalterable in their grand elevations. No injurious ſhocks, no violence of conflicting elements, are able to diſplace thoſe everlaſting hinges, on which dependent worlds revolve. Through the whole flight of time, they recede not, ſo much as a hair's breadth, from the preciſe central point of their reſpective ſyſtems.——While the *erratic*, or *planetary*, perform their prodigious ſtages without any intermiſſion, or the leaſt embarraſſment. How ſoon, and how eaſily, is the moſt finiſhed piece of human machinery diſconcerted! But all the celeſtial movements are ſo nicely adjuſted, all their operations ſo critically proportioned, and their mutual dependencies ſo ſtrongly connected, that they prolong their beneficial courſes throughout all ages.——While *mighty cities* are overwhelmed with ruin, and their very names loſt in oblivion; while *vaſt empires* are ſwept from their foundations, and leave not ſo much as a ſhadowy trace of their ancient magnificence; while *all terreſtrial* things are ſubject to viciſſitude, and fluctuating in uncertainty: *theſe* are permanent in their duration; *theſe* are invariable in their functions. "Not one faileth."——Who doubts the conſtant ſucceſſion of day and night, or the regular returns of ſummer and winter? And why, O! why ſhall we doubt the *veracity* of GOD, or diſtruſt the *accompliſhment* of his holy word? Can the ordinances of heaven depart? Then only can GOD forget to be gracious, or neglect the performance of his promiſe.——Nay, our LORD gives us yet firmer ground of affiance. He affords us a ſurer bottom for our faith, than the *fundamental laws* of the univerſe. *Heaven and earth*, he ſays, *ſhall paſs away; but my words ſhall not*, in a ſingle inſtance, or in one tittle of their import, *paſs away*. No: his ſacred word, whatever may obſtruct it, whoever may oppoſe it, ſhall be fulfilled to the very uttermoſt.

O powerful word! How aſtoniſhing is its efficacy! When this word was iſſued forth, a thouſand worlds emerged out of nothing. Should the mighty orders be repeated, a thouſand more would ſpring into exiſtence. By this word, the vaſt ſyſtem of created things is *upheld*, in conſtant and immutable perfection. Should it give command, or ceaſe to exert its energy; the univerſal frame would be diſſolved, and all nature revert to her original chaos. And this very word is *pledged* for the ſafety, the comfort, the happineſs of the godly. This inviolable, this almighty word, *ſpeaks* in all the promiſes of the goſpel.——How ſtrangely infatuated are our ſouls, that we ſhould value it ſo little? What infidels are we in fact, that we ſhould depend upon it no more? Did it *create* whatever has a being; and ſhall it not *work* faith in our breaſts? Do unnumbered worlds owe their ſupport to this word; and ſhall it not be ſufficient to buoy up our ſouls in troubles, or eſtabliſh them in trials? Is it the *life* of the univerſe, and ſhall it be a *dead* letter to mankind?

If I wiſh to be heard, when I implore heavenly bleſſings; is not *this privilege* moſt clearly made over to my enjoyment, in that well-known text, "Aſk, and "it ſhall be given you *?"——If I long for the eternal Comforter to dwell in my heart, and ſanctify my nature; have I not an apparent title to this *high prerogative*, conferred in that ſweet aſſertive interrogation; "How "much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy "Spirit to thoſe that aſk him †?"—If I earneſtly covet the ineſtimable treaſures that are compriſed in the great IMMANUEL's mediation; can I have a firmer claim to the *noble portion*, than is granted in that moſt precious ſcripture; "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe "caſt out ‡?"——What aſſurance of being intereſted in the unſpeakable mercies would I deſire? What *form* of *conveyance*, what *deed* of *ſettlement*, were it left to my own option, ſhould I chuſe? Here is the word of a king; the King immortal and inviſible; all whoſe

* If. xli. 10. † John x. 28.

‡ Jer. xxxi. 35. 36. ‖ Tit. i. 2.

§ The *tenderneſs* and *faithfulneſs* of GOD to his people are finely pictured by the prophet *Iſaiah*, chap. xlii. ver. 3. Which paſſage, becauſe of its rich conſolation, and uncommon beauty, is deſervedly adopted by St *Matthew*, and ingrafted into the ſyſtem of evangelical truths.—*He will not* himſelf *break*, nor ſuffer to be broken by any other, *the bruiſed reed; nor quench the ſmoking flax*. Was it poſſible to have choſen two more delicate, and expreſſive repreſentations?—Could any image be more ſignificant of a very infirm and enfeebled *faith*, than the flexile *reed*, that bends before every wind? which beſides its natural weakneſs, is made abundantly weaker by being *bruiſed*, and ſo is ready to fall in pieces of itſelf.—Or could any thing, with a more pathetical exactneſs, deſcribe the extreme imbecillity of that other principle of the divine life, *love*? The ſtate of the *flax*, juſt beginning to burn, is liable to be put out by the leaſt blaſt: more liable ſtill is the wick of the lamp, when it is not ſo much as kindled into a glimmering flame, but only *breathing ſmoke*, and uncertain whether it ſhall take fire or no.—Yet true faith, and heavenly love, though ſubſiſting amidſt ſuch pitiable infirmities, will not be abandoned by their great Author; ſhall not be extinguiſhed by any temptations; but be maintained, invigorated, and made finally triumphant. *Matth.* xii. 20.

¶ Pſal. cxix. 89. 90.

* Matth. vii. 7.

† Luke xi. 13. ‡ John vi. 37.

declarations

declarations * are truth itself.——If a monarch beſtow immunities on a body of men, and confirm them by an authentic charter; no one controverts, no one queſtions their right to the royal favours. And why ſhould we ſuſpect the *validity* of thoſe glorious grants, which are made by the everlaſting Sovereign of nature; which he has alſo *ratified* by an oath, and *ſealed* with the blood of his Son?—Corporations may be diſfranchiſed, and charters revoked.—Even mountains may be removed, and ſtars drop from their ſpheres. But a tenure founded on the divine promiſe, is unalienably *ſecure*, is *laſting* as eternity itſelf.

WE have endeavoured to ſpell a *ſyllable* of the eternal name in the ancient manuſcript of the ſky. We have catched a *glimpſe* of the Almighty's glory, from the luſtre of innumerable ſtars. But would we behold all his excellencies pourtrayed in *full* perfection, and drawn to the very life; let us attentively conſider the REDEEMER.——I obſerve, there are ſome parts of the firmament, in which the ſtars ſeem, as it were, to *cluſter*. They are ſown thicker, they lie cloſer, than uſual; and ſtrike the eye with redoubled ſplendor. Like the jewels on a crown, they mingle their beams, and reflect an increaſe of brilliancy on each other. Is there not ſuch an aſſemblage, ſuch a *conſtellation* of the divine honours, moſt amiably effulgent in the bleſſed JESUS?

Does not infinite *wiſdom* † ſhine, with ſurpaſſing brightneſs, in CHRIST? To the making of a world, there was no obſtacle; but to the ſaving of man, there ſeemed to be unſurmountable bars. If the rebel is ſuffered to eſcape; where is the *inflexible juſtice*, which denounces "death as the wages of ſin?" If the offender is thoroughly pardoned; where is the *inviolable veracity*, which has ſolemnly declared, "The "ſoul that ſinneth, ſhall die?" Theſe awful attributes are ſet in terrible array; and, like an impenetrable battalion, oppoſe the ſalvation of apoſtate mankind. Who can ſuggeſt a method to *abſolve* the traiterous race, yet vindicate the honours of almighty Sovereignty? This is an intricacy, which the moſt exalted of finite intelligencies are unable to clear.——But behold the *unſearchable ſecret* revealed! revealed in the wonderful redemption accompliſhed by a dying Saviour! ſo plainly revealed, that "he who runs may read;" and even *babes* underſtand, what minds of the deepeſt penetration could not contrive.—The Son of GOD, taking our nature, obeys the law, and undergoes death, in our ſtead. By this means, the threatened *curſe* is executed in all its rigour, and free *grace* is exerciſed in all its riches. Juſtice maintains her rights, and, with a ſteady hand, adminiſters impartial vengeance; while mercy diſpenſes her pardons, and welcomes the repentant criminal into the tendereſt embraces. Hereby the ſeemingly thwarting attributes are reconciled. The ſinner is ſaved, not only in *full conſiſtence* with the honour of the ſupreme perfections, but to the moſt *illuſtrious manifeſtation* of them all.

Where does the divine *power* ‡ ſo ſignally exert itſelf, as in the croſs of CHRIST, and in the conqueſts of grace?—our LORD, in his loweſt ſtate of humiliation, gained a more glorious victory, than when, through the dividing ſea, and the waſte howling wilderneſs, he "rode upon his chariots and horſes of "ſalvation." When his hands were rivetted, with irons, to the bloody tree; he diſarmed death of its ſting, and plucked the prey from the jaws of hell. Then, even then, while he was crucified in *weakneſs*, he vanquiſhed the *ſtrong man*, and ſubdued our moſt formidable enemies. Even then, he ſpoiled principalities, triumphed over the powers of darkneſs, and led captivity captive.—Now he is exalted to his heavenly throne, with what a prevailing efficacy does his grace go forth, "conquering, and to conquer!"—By this, the *ſlaves* of ſin are reſcued from their bondage, and reſtored to the *liberty* of righteouſneſs. By this, depraved wretches, whoſe appetites were *ſenſual*, and their diſpoſitions *deviliſh*, are not only renewed, but renewed after the image of GOD, and made partakers of a *divine* nature. Millions, millions of loſt creatures are ſnatched, by the interpoſition of grace, like *brands* from the burning; and, tranſlated into everlaſting manſions, ſhine brighter than the *ſtars*, ſhine bright as the *ſun*, in the kingdom of their Father.

Would you then ſee an incomparably more bright diſplay of the divine excellence, than the unſpotted firmament, the ſpangles of heaven, or the golden fountain of day exhibit? Contemplate JESUS of *Nazareth*. He is the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon. In his immaculate nature, in his heavenly tempers, in his moſt holy life, the *moral perfections* of the Deity are repreſented to the higheſt advantage *.—Hark! how *Mercy*, with her charming voice, ſpeaks in all he utters. See! how *Benevolence* pours her choiceſt ſtores, in all he does. Did ever compaſſion look ſo amiably ſoft, as in thoſe pitying tears, which ſwelled his eyes, and trickled down his cheeks, to bedew the rancour of his inveterate enemies?—Was it poſſible for *Patience* to aſſume a form ſo lovely, as that ſweetly-winning conduct, which bore the contradiction of ſinners? which entreated the obſtinate to be reconciled, beſought the guilty not to die?——In other things, we may find ſome *ſcattered* rays of JEHOVAH's glory; but in CHRIST they are all collected and united. In CHRIST they beam forth, with the ſtrongeſt radiance, with the moſt delightful effulgence. *Out of Sion*, and in *Sion*'s great Redeemer, *hath GOD appeared in perfect beauty*.

Search then, my ſoul, above all other purſuits, ſearch the records of redeeming love. Let theſe be the principal objects of thy ſtudy. Here employ thyſelf with the moſt unwearied aſſiduity.—*In theſe are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge* †. *Such wiſdom*, as charms and aſtoniſhes the very angels; engages their cloſeſt attention, and fills them with the deepeſt adoration ‡. *Such knowledge*, as qualifies the poſſeſſor, if

* In this ſenſe, that ſaying of our LORD is eminently true, *He that hath ſeen ME, hath ſeen the FATHER*, John xiv. 9.

† *Coloſſ.* ii. 3.—Not a mean degree, but a *treaſure*; not one treaſure, but *many*; not many only, but *all* treaſures, of true wiſdom, and ſaving knowledge; are in CHRIST, and his glorious goſpel.—The tranſcendent *excellency* of thoſe treaſures ſeems to be finally intimated, in that other expreſſion αποκρυφοι, *hid*; (which may be interpreted by the *Hebrew* טמן מטמן, *Job* iii. 21.) *laid up*, with the utmoſt care, and the greateſt ſafety. Not left at all adventures, to be ſtumbled upon by every giddy wanderer; or to fall into the arms of the yawning ſluggard; but like jewels of the brigheſt luſtre, or riches of the higheſt value, *kept in ſtore* to adorn and reward the diligent ſearcher.

‡ This, I believe, is the *import* of the apoſtle's language, though it is not a *literal* tranſlation of εις α επιθυμουσιν αγγελοι παρακυψαι, 1 *Pet.* i. 12.——I never had ſuch a lively apprehenſion of the beautiful ſignificancy of the laſt word, as when I have attended a diſſection of ſome part of the animal body. In order to diſcern the *minutiæ* of the admirable frame, the latent wonders of art and mechaniſm, the eye is ſo ſharpened, and its application ſo *intenſely bended*, as gives a very juſt *experimental* comment on that expreſſive phraſe, παρακυψαι.——With ſuch earneſt attention is the everlaſting goſpel contemplated by the *angelic* orders! How much more, if it were poſſible, does it deſerve the devout and inceſſant conſideration of *human* minds? ſince, by *them*, it is not only to be ſpeculated, as a bright and raviſhing diſplay of the divine attributes but to be applied to their fallen

* ——— If *theſe* fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rottenneſs,
And earth's baſe built on ſtubble. MILT. *Comus*.

† See the next note.

‡ CHRIST *the wiſdom of GOD, and the power of GOD*. 1 Cor. i. 24.—*To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church* (by the amazing contrivance, and accompliſhment of its redemption) *the* deep, extenſive, and (πολυποικιλος) *greatly-diverſified wiſdom of GOD*. Eph. iii. 10.

not for offices of dignity on earth, yet for the moſt honourable advancements in the kingdom of heaven. Diſunited from which knowledge, all application is but elaborate impertinence; and all ſcience, no better than pompous ignorance.—Theſe records contain the faultleſs model of duty, and the nobleſt motives to obedience. Nothing ſo powerful to work a lively faith, and a joyful hope, as an attentive conſideration of our LORD's unutterable merits. Nothing ſo ſovereign to antidote the peſtilential influence of the world, and deliver our affections from a ſlavery to ignoble objects, as an habitual remembrance of his extreme agonies. The genuine, the ever-fruitful *ſource* of all *morality*, is the unfeigned love of CHRIST; and the croſs, the CROSS, is the appointed * *altar*, from which we may fetch a coal †, to kindle this ſacred fire.

Behold, therefore, *the man*; the matchleſs and ſtupendous man; whoſe practice was a pattern of the moſt exalted virtue, and his perſon the mirror of every divine perfection. Examine the memoirs of his heavenly temper, and exemplary converſation. Contemplate that *choir* of *graces*, which were aſſociated in his mind, and ſhed the higheſt luſtre on all his actions. Familiarize to thy thoughts his inſtructive diſcourſes, and enter into the very ſpirit of his refined doctrines: that the graces may be transfuſed into thy breaſt, and the doctrines tranſcribed in thy life.——Follow him to *Calvary*'s horrid eminence; to *Calvary*'s fatal cataſtrophe: where innocence, dignity, and merit, were *made perfect through ſufferings*; each ſhining, with all poſſible ſplendor, through the tragical ſcene; ſomewhat like his own radiant bow, then glowing with the greateſt beauty, when appearing on the darkeſt cloud.——Be thy moſt conſtant attention fixed on that lovely and ſorrowful ſpectacle. Behold the ſpotleſs victim nailed to the tree, and ſtabbed to the heart. Hear him pouring out prayers for his murderers, before he poured out his ſoul for tranſgreſſors. See the wounds that ſtream with forgiveneſs, and *bleed balm* for a diſtempered world. O! ſee the juſtice of the Almighty and his goodneſs; his mercy and his vengeance; every *tremendous* and *gracious* attribute manifeſted, manifeſted with inexpreſſible glory, in that moſt *ignominious*, yet *grandeſt*, of tranſactions.

SINCE GOD is ſo inconceivably great, as theſe his marvellous works declare;

Since the great Sovereign ſends ten thouſand worlds,
To tell us, he reſides above them all,
In glory's unapproachable receſs ‡;

how can we forbear haſtening, with *Moſes*, bowing ourſelves to the earth, and worſhipping? O! what an honourable, as well as advantageous employ, is prayer!—*Advantageous.* By prayer, we cultivate that improving correſpondence with JEHOVAH, we carry on that gladdening intercourſe with his SPIRIT, which muſt begin here, in order to be completed in eternity.——*Honourable.* By prayer, we have acceſs to that mighty potentate, whoſe ſceptre ſways univerſal nature, and whoſe rich regalia fill the ſkies with luſtre. Prayer places us in his preſence-chamber; while "the blood of ſprinkling" procures us a gracious audience.

Shall I then *bluſh* to be found proſtrate before the throne of grace? Shall I be *aſhamed* to have it known, that I offer up ſocial ſupplications in the family, or am conſcientious in obſerving my private retirements? Rather, let me glory in this unſpeakable privilege. Let me reckon it the *nobleſt* poſture, to fall low on my knees before his footſtool; and the *higheſt* honour, to enjoy communion with his moſt exalted Majeſty.—Incomparably more noble, than to ſit, in perſon, on the triumphal chariot; or to ſtand, in effigy, amidſt the temples of worthies.

Moſt ineſtimable, in ſuch a view, is that promiſe, which ſo often occurs in the prophetic writings, and is the crowning benefit of the new covenant, *I will be thy God* *.—Will this ſupremely excellent and almighty Being vouchſafe to be *my* portion? to ſettle upon a poor ſinner, not the heritage of a country, not the poſſeſſion of the whole earth, but his *own* ever bleſſed *ſelf*? May I then, through his free condeſcending grace, and the unknown merits of his Son, look upon all theſe infinitely-noble attributes as my treaſure? May I regard the *wiſdom*, which ſuperintends ſuch a multitude of worlds, as my guide; the *power*, which produced, and preſerves them in exiſtence, as my guard; the *goodneſs*, which, by an endleſs communication of favours, renders them all ſo many habitations of happineſs, as *my exceeding great reward*?—What a fund of felicity is included in ſuch a bleſſing! How often does the *Iſraeliſh* prince exult in the aſſurance, that this unutterable and boundleſs good is his own? Intereſted in this, he bids defiance to every evil that can be dreaded, and reſts in certain expectation of every bleſſing that can be deſired. The *LORD is my light and my ſalvation; whom then ſhall I fear? The LORD*, with an air of exultation, he repeats both his affiance, and his challenge, *is the ſtrength of my life; of whom then ſhall I be afraid* †? Nothing ſo effectual, as this appropriating faith, to inſpire a dignity of mind, ſuperior to tranſitory trifles; or to create a calmneſs of temper, unalarmed by vulgar fears, unappalled by death itſelf.——*The LORD is my Shepherd*, ſays the ſame truly gallant and heroic perſonage: *therefore ſhall I lack nothing* ‡. How is it poſſible, he ſhould ſuffer want, who has the all-ſufficient fulneſs for his ſupply? So long as unerring wiſdom is capable of contriving the means, ſo long as uncontrollable power is able to execute them; ſuch a one cannot fail of being ſafe and happy, whether he continue amidſt the viciſſitudes of time, or depart into the unchangeable eternity.

Here, let us ſtand a moment, and humbly contemplate this great GOD, together with ourſelves, in a relative view.—If we reflect on the works of *material* nature, their number is incomprehenſible, and their extent unmeaſurable; each of them apart, ſo admirably framed; the connections of the whole ſo exquiſitely regulated; and all derived from one and the ſame glorious Agent;——If we recollect the far more noble accompliſhments of elegant taſte, and diſcerning judgment; of refined affections, and exalted ſentiments; which are to be found among the ſeveral orders of *intelligent* exiſtence; and all of them flowing, in rich emanations, from the one ſole fountain of intellectual light;—If we farther conſider this Author of material beauty, and moral excellency, as a *Guardian*, a *Governor*, and *Benefactor* to all his creatures; ſupporting the

fallen nature, as a moſt benign ſcheme of *recovering* grace; as the ſure and only method of obtaining life and immortality.

* *And I*, ſays our LORD, *if I be lifted up from the earth*, and extended on the croſs, *will draw all men unto me*; will give ſuch a rich and tranſcendent diſplay of *my* love, as ſhall conſtitute the moſt powerful and prevailing attractive of *theirs*. *John* xii. 32.

† Alluding to *Iſ.* vi. 6.

‡ For this *quotation*, and ſeveral valuable *hints*, I acknowledge myſelf indebted to thoſe beautiful and ſublime poems, entitled, *Night-Thoughts*.—Of which I ſhall only ſay, that I receive freſh pleaſure, and richer improvement, from every renewed peruſal. And, I think, I ſhall have reaſon to bleſs the indulgent Beſtower of all wiſdom, for thoſe inſtructive and animating compoſitions, even in my laſt moments. Than which nothing can more emphatically ſpeak their *ſuperior excellence*, nor give a more ſolid ſatisfaction to their worthy author.—Happy ſhould I think myſelf, if theſe little ſketches of contemplative devotion might be honoured with the *moſt inferior* degree of the ſame ſucceſs; might receive a teſtimony, not from the voice of fame, but from the dying lips of ſome edified Chriſtian.

* Heb. viii. 10. † Pſal. xxvii. 1. ‡ Pſal. xxiii. 1.

whole ſyſtem, and protecting each individual, by an ever-watchful providence; preſiding over the minuteſt affairs, and cauſing all events to terminate in the moſt extenſive good; heaping, with unremitted liberality, his benefits upon every capable object, and making the circuit of the univerſe a ſeminary of happineſs:—Is it poſſible for the human heart, under ſuch captivating views, to be *indifferent* towards this moſt benign, moſt bountiful Original of being and of bliſs? Can any be ſo immerſed in ſtupidity, as to ſay unto the Almighty, —in the language of an irreligious temper, and licentious life, to ſay, "Depart from us; we implore not "thy favour; nor deſire the knowledge of thy ways." —Wonder, O *heavens!* be amazed, O *earth!* and let the inhabitants of *both* expreſs their aſtoniſhment at this unparalleled complication of diſingenuous, ungrateful, deſtructive perverſeneſs!

If we conſider our *fallen* and *imperfect* ſtate; frail in our bodies; enfeebled in our minds; in every part of our conſtitution, and in all the occurrences of life, "like a tottering wall, or a broken hedge:"—If we ſurvey our *indigent* and *infirm* ſtate, without holineſs, without ſpiritual ſtrength; our poſſeſſion of preſent conveniences entirely dependent on GOD's ſovereign pleaſure; yea, forfeited, juſtly forfeited, with every future hope, by a thouſand aggravated iniquities:—If we add the various *diſaſters* of our condition; agitated as we are by tumultuous paſſions; oppreſſed with diſpiriting fears; held in ſuſpenſe by a variety of perplexing * cares; liable to pains, and expoſed to troubles; troubles from every quarter; troubles of every kind:—Can we, amidſt ſo many wants, under ſuch deplorable infirmities, and ſubject to ſuch diſaſtrous accidents,—can we be unconcerned, whether GOD's omnipotent, irreſiſtible, all-conducting hand be *againſt* us, or *for* us? Imagination itſelf ſhudders at the thought!—Can we reſt ſatisfied, without a well grounded perſuaſion, that we are *reconciled* to this ſupreme LORD, and the objects of his unchangeable goodneſs!——If there be an abandoned wretch, whoſe apprehenſions are ſo fatally blinded; who is ſo utterly loſt to all ſenſe of his duty, and of his intereſt; let me bewail his *miſery*, while I abhor his impiety: bewail his miſery; though Popularity, with her choiceſt laurels, adorn his brow; though Affluence, with her richeſt delicacies, load his table; though half a nation, or half a world, conſpire to call him *happy*.

May I, by a believing application, ſolace myſelf in this everlaſting ſource of love, perfection, and joy! Grant me this requeſt, and I aſk no more.—Only, that I may expect, not with a reluctant anxiety, but with a ready chearfulneſs, the arrival of that important hour, when this veil of fleſh ſhall drop, and the ſhadows of mortality flee away: when I ſhall no longer complain of *obſcure* knowledge, *languid* affections, and *imperfect* fruition;—but ſhall ſee the uncreated and immortal Majeſty; *ſee* him, not in this diſtant and unaffecting method of reaſoning from his works; but with the moſt clear and direct intuition of the mind:—when I ſhall *love* him, not with a cold and contracted ſpirit; but with the moſt lively and enlarged emotions of gratitude:—when I ſhall inceſſantly *enjoy* the light of his countenance; and be united, inſeparably united to his all-glorious GODHEAD.——Take, ye ambitious, unenvied and unoppoſed, take to yourſelves the toys of ſtate. May I be enabled to *rejoice* in this bleſſed hope; and to *triumph* in that amiable, that adorable, that delightful name, the LORD MY GOD! And I ſhall ſcarce beſtow a thought on the ſplendid pageantry of the world, unleſs it be to *deſpiſe* its empty pomp, and to *pity* its deluded admirers.

ALL theſe bodies, though immenſe in their ſize, and almoſt infinite in their multitude, are *obedient* to the divine command. The GOD of wiſdom "telleth their "numbers," and is intimately acquainted with their various properties. The GOD of power "calleth them "all by their names," and aſſigns them whatſoever office he pleaſes. He *marſhals* all the ſtarry legions, with infinitely greater eaſe, and nicer order, than the moſt expert general arranges his diſciplined troops. He appoints their *poſts*; he marks their *route*; he fixes the time for their *return*. The poſts which he appoints, they occupy without fail. In the route which he ſettles they perſevere, without the leaſt deviation. And to the inſtant * which he fixes for their return, they are preciſely punctual.—He has given them a *law*, which, through a long revolution of ages, ſhall not be broken, unleſs his ſovereign will interpoſes for its *repeal*. Then, indeed, the motion of the celeſtial orbs is controlled; their action remains ſuſpended; or their influence receives a new direction.—The *ſun*, at his creation, iſſued forth with a command, to travel perpetually through the heavens. Since which, he has never neglected to perform the great circuit; "rejoicing as a giant to run "his race." But, when it is requiſite to accompliſh the purpoſes of divine love, the orders are countermanded; the flaming courier remits his career; *ſtand ſtill in Gibeon* †; and, for the conveniency of the choſen people, holds back the falling day.—The *moon* was diſpatched with a charge, never to intermit her revolving courſe, till day and night come to an end. But when the children of providence are to be favoured with an uncommon continuance of light, ſhe halts in her march, makes a ſolemn pauſe *in the valley of Ajalon*‡, and delays to bring on her attendant train of ſhadows.——When the enemies of the LORD are to be diſcomfited, the *ſtars* are levied into the ſervice; the ſtars are armed, and take the field; *the ſtars, in their courſes fought againſt Siſera* §.

* *Perplexing.*—Thoſe who read the original language of the New Teſtament, are ſufficiently appriſed, that ſuch is the *ſignificancy* of that benevolent diſſuaſive urged by our LORD, μὴ μεριμνᾶτε *Matt.* vi. 25.——I beg leave, for the ſake of the *unlearned* reader, to obſerve, that our tranſlation, though for the moſt part faithful and excellent, has here miſrepreſented our divine Maſter's meaning. *Take no thought* for your food, for your raiment, for your bodily welfare, is not only not the true ſenſe, but the very reverſe of this ſcriptural doctrine. We are required to take a *prudent* and *moderate* thought for the neceſſaries of life. The ſluggard who neglects this decent precaution, is ſeverely reprimanded; is ſent to one of the meaneſt animals, to bluſh for his folly; and learn diſcretion from her conduct, *Prov.* vi. 6. Our Saviour's precept, and the exact ſenſe of his expreſſion, is, Take no *anxious* thought; indulge no *perplexing* care; no ſuch care, as may argue an unreaſonable *diſtruſt* of providence, or may *rend* and *tear* your minds with diſtreſſing, with pernicious ſolicitude.

* "The planets, and all the innumerable hoſt of heavenly "bodies, perform their courſes and revolutions, with ſo much "certainty and exactneſs, as never once to fail; but, for al-"moſt 6000 years, come conſtantly about to the ſame period, "in the hundredth part of a minute." STACKHOUSE's *Hiſt. Bible.*

† This is ſpoken in conformity to the ſcripture-language, and according to the common notion. With reſpect to the power which effected the alteration, it is much the ſame thing, and alike miraculous, whether the ſun, or the earth, be ſuppoſed to move.

‡ *Joſh.* x. 12, 13.—The prophet *Habbakuk*, according to his lofty manner, celebrates this event; and points out, in very poetical diction, the deſign of ſo ſurpriſing a miracle.——*The ſun and moon ſtood ſtill in their habitation: in the light*, the long-continued and miraculous light, *thy arrows*, edged with deſtruction, *walked* on their awful errand; *in the clear ſhining* of the day, protracted for this very purpoſe, *thy glittering ſpear*, launched by thy people, but guided by thy hand, ſprung to its prey, *Hab.* iii. 11.

§ *Judg.* v. 20.—The ſcriptural phraſe *fought againſt*, will, I hope, be a proper *warrant* for every expreſſion I have uſed on this occaſion.——The paſſage is generally ſuppoſed to ſignify, that ſome very dreadful *meteors*, (which the ſtars were thought to influence) ſuch as fierce flaſhes of *lightning*, impetuous ſhowers of *rain*, and rapid ſtorms of *hail*, were employed by the

So dutiful is material nature! ſo obſequious, in *all* her *forms*, to her Creator's pleaſure!—The bellowing thunders liſten to his voice; and the volleyed lightnings obſerve the direction of his eye. The flying ſtorm and impetuous whirlwind, wear his yoke. The raging waves revere his nod; they ſhake the earth; they daſh the ſkies; yet never offer to paſs the limits which he has preſcribed.—Even the planetary ſpheres, though vaſtly *larger* than this wide-extended earth, are in his hand, as *clay* in the hands of the potter. Though, *ſwifter* than the northern blaſt, they ſweep the long tracts of æther; yet are they guided by his reins, and execute whatever he enjoins.——All thoſe enormous globes of *central* fire, which beam through the boundleſs azure, in compariſon of which an army of planets were like a ſwarm of ſummer-inſects; thoſe, even thoſe, are conformable to his will, as the *melting wax* to the impreſſed ſeal.—Since *all*, ALL is obedient, throughout the whole aſcent of things, ſhall man be the *only rebel* againſt the almighty Maker? Shall theſe unruly *appetites* reject his government, and refuſe their allegiance? Shall theſe headſtrong *paſſions* break looſe from divine reſtraint, and run wild, in exorbitant ſallies, after their own imaginations?

O my ſoul, be ſtung with remorſe, and overwhelmed with confuſion, at the thought! Is it not a righteous thing, that the bleſſed GOD ſhould ſway the ſceptre, with the moſt abſolute authority, over all the creatures which his power has formed? eſpecially over thoſe creatures, whom his diſtinguiſhing favour has endued with the noble principle of reaſon, and made capable of a bliſsful immortality? Sure, if all the ranks of inanimate exiſtence conform to their Maker's decree, by the *neceſſity* of their nature; this more excellent race of beings ſhould pay their equal homage, by the *willing* compliance of their affections *.—Come then, all ye *faculties* of my *mind*; come, all ye *powers* of my *body*; give up yourſelves, without a moment's delay, without the leaſt reſerve, to his governance. Stand like dutiful ſervants, at his footſtool; in an everlaſting readineſs to *do* whatſoever he requires; to *be* whatſoever he appoints: to further, with united efforts, the purpoſes of his glory in this earthly ſcene; or elſe to ſeparate, without reluctance at his ſummons; the *one*, to ſleep in the ſilent duſt; the *other*, to advance his honour, in ſome remoter colony of his kingdom.——Thus may I join with all the works of the LORD, in all places of his dominion, to recognize his univerſal ſupremacy; and proclaim him Sovereign of ſouls, as well as Ruler of worlds.

AT my firſt coming abroad, all theſe luminaries were *eclipſed*, by the overpowering luſtre of the ſun. They were all placed in the very ſame ſtations, and played the ſame ſprightly beams; yet not one of them was ſeen. As the day-light wore away, and the ſober ſhades advanced; *Heſperus*, who leads the ſtarry train, diſcloſed his radiant forehead, and catched my eye. While I ſtood gazing on his bright and beautiful aſpect, ſeveral of his attendants peeped through the blue curtains.—— Scarce had I turned to obſerve theſe freſh emanations of ſplendor, but others dropt the veil, others ſtole into view. When lo! faſter and more numerous multitudes ſprung from obſcurity; they poured, in ſhining troops, and in ſweet confuſion, over all the empyrean plain; till the firmament ſeemed like one vaſt conſtellation; and "a flood of glory burſt from all the ſkies."

Is not ſuch the *riſe*, and ſuch the *progreſs* of a true *converſion*, in the prejudiced infidel, or inattentive ſinner? During the period of his vainer years, a thouſand intereſting truths lay utterly undiſcovered; a thouſand momentous concerns were entirely diſregarded. But, when divine grace diſſipates the deluſive glitter, which dazzled his underſtanding, and beguiled his affections; then he begins to diſcern, dimly to diſcern, the things which belong unto his peace. Some admonition of ſcripture darts conviction into his ſoul, as the glimmering of a ſtar pierces the gloom of night.——Then, perhaps, another awful, or chearing text, impreſſes terror, or diffuſes comfort. A *threatening* alarms his fears, or a *promiſe* awakens his hopes. This, poſſibly, is ſucceeded by ſome *afflictive* diſpenſation of providence; and improved by ſome edifying and inſtructive converſation. All which is eſtabliſhed as to its continuance, and enlarged as to its influence, by a diligent ſtudy of the ſacred word.—By this means, new truths continually pour their evidence. Scenes of refined and exalted, but hitherto unknown delight, addreſs him with their attractives. New deſires take wing; new purſuits are ſet on foot. A new turn of mind forms his temper; a new habit of converſation regulates his life. In a word, *old things are paſſed away, and all things become new.* He who was ſometimes darkneſs, is now light, and life, and joy in the LORD.

THE more attentively I view the cryſtal concave, the more fully I diſcern the richneſs of its decorations. Abundance of minuter lights, which lay concealed from a *ſuperficial* notice, are viſible on a *cloſer* examination. Eſpecially in thoſe tracts of the ſky, which are called the *galaxy*; and are diſtinguiſhable by a ſort of milky path. There the ſtars are crouded, rather than diſſeminated. The region ſeems to be all on a blaze, with their ſplendid rays.——Beſides this vaſt profuſion, which in my preſent ſituation the eye diſcovers; was I to make my ſurvey, from any other part of the globe, lying nearer the ſouthern pole, I ſhould behold a *new choir* of ſtarry bodies, which have never appeared within our horizon.——Was I (which is ſtill more wonderful) either here or there, to view the firmament with the virtuoſo's glaſs; I ſhould find a prodigious multitude of flaming orbs, which, immerſed in depths of æther, eſcape the keeneſt unaſſiſted ſight *. —Yet, in theſe various ſituations, even with the aid

of

the Almighty to terrify, annoy, and overthrow the enemies of *Iſrael*. If ſo, there cannot be a more clear and lively paraphraſe on the text, than thoſe fine lines of a *Jewiſh* writer.—*His ſevere wrath ſhall HE ſharpen for a ſword; and* the world *ſhall* fight *with him* againſt *the ungodly. Then ſhall the* right-aiming thunderbolts *go abroad; and from the* clouds, *as from a* well-drawn bow, *ſhall they fly to the mark. And* hail-ſtones, *full of wrath, ſhall be caſt out as a ſtone bow; and the* water *of the ſea ſhall rage againſt them: and the* floods (as was the caſe of the river *Kiſhon*) *ſhall cruelly drown them; yea, a mighty wind ſhall ſtand up againſt them; and, like a ſtorm, ſhall blow them away.* Wiſd. v. 20. 21. 22. 23.

* This argument, I acknowledge, is not abſolutely concluſive. But it is popular and ſtriking. Nor can I think myſelf obliged, in ſuch a work, where *fancy* bears a conſiderable ſway, to proceed always with the caution and exactneſs of a *diſputer* in the *ſchools*. If there be ſome appearance of analogy between the fact and the inference, it ſeems ſufficient for my purpoſe; though the deduction ſhould not be neceſſary, nor the proceſs ſtrictly ſyllogiſtical.—One of the *apoſtolic fathers* has an affecting and ſublime paragraph, which runs entirely in this form: Ηλιος τε και σελήνη, αστερων τε χοροι, κατα την διαλαγην αυτων εν ομονοια, διχα παντος παρεκβασεως, εξελισσουσιν τους προτεταγμενους αυτοις ορισμους. *The ſun, the moon, and the ſtarry choir, without the leaſt deviation, and with the utmoſt harmony, perform the revolutions appointed them by the ſupreme decree.* From which remark, and abundance of other ſimilar inſtances, obſervable in the œconomy of nature; he exhorts Chriſtians to a cordial *unanimity* among themſelves, and a dutiful *obedience* to GOD. Vid. *Clem. Roman.* 1 *ep. ad Corinth. ſect.* 20.—See alſo a beautiful ode in Dr Watts's Lyric Poems, entitled, *The Compariſon and Complaint*, which turns upon this very thought.

* Come forth, O man, yon azure round ſurvey,
And view thoſe lamps, which yield eternal day.
Bring forth thy glaſſes: clear thy wond'ring eyes:
Millions beyond the former millions riſe:
Look farther;—millions more blaze from remoter ſkies.
See an ingenious poem, entitled, The Univerſe.

of the teleſcopic tube, I ſhould not be able to deſcry the half, perhaps not a *thouſandth* part, of thoſe majeſtic luminaries, which the vaſt expanſive heavens contain *. —So, the more diligently I purſue my ſearch into thoſe oracles of eternal truth, the *ſcriptures*; I perceive a wider, a deeper, and ever-increaſing fund of ſpiritual treaſures. I perceive the brighter ſtrokes of wiſdom, and the richer diſplays of goodneſs; a more tranſcendent excellency in the illuſtrious Meſſiah, and a more deplorable vileneſs in fallen man; a more immaculate purity in GOD's law, and more precious privileges in his goſpel. Yet, after a courſe of ſtudy, ever ſo aſſiduous, ever ſo prolonged, I ſhould have reaſon to own myſelf a mere *babe* in heavenly knowledge; or, at moſt, but a *puerile* proficient in the ſchool of CHRIST.

AFTER all my moſt accurate inſpection, thoſe ſtarry orbs appear but as *glittering points*. Even the planets, though ſo much nearer our earthly manſion, ſeem only like burning *bullets*. If then we have ſuch *imperfect apprehenſions* of viſible and material things; how much more ſcanty and inadequate muſt be our notions of inviſible and immortal objects!——We behold the ſtars. Though every one is incomparably bigger than the globe we inhabit, yet they dwindle, upon our ſurvey, into the moſt diminutive forms. Thus, we ſee by faith the glories of the bleſſed JESUS; the atoning efficacy of his death; the juſtifying merit of his righteouſneſs; and the joys which are reſerved for his followers. But, alas! even our moſt *exalted* ideas are vaſtly *below* the truth; as much below the truth, as the report which our eyes make of thoſe celeſtial edifices, is inferior to their real grandeur.—Should we take in all the *magnifying* aſſiſtances which art has contrived; thoſe luminous bodies would elude our ſkill, and appear as *ſmall* as ever. Should an inhabitant of the earth travel towards the cope of heaven; and be carried forwards, in his aerial journey, more than a hundred and ſixty millions of miles †; even in that advanced ſituation, thoſe *oceans* of *flame* would look no larger than *radiant ſpecks*.——In like manner, conceive ever ſo magnificently of the Redeemer's honours, and of the bliſs which he has purchaſed for his people; yet you will fall ſhort. Raiſe your imagination *higher*; ſtretch your invention *wider*; give them *all* the ſcope which a ſoaring and excurſive fancy can take; ſtill your conceptions will be extremely *diſproportionate* to their genuine perfections. Vaſt are the bodies which roll in the expanſe of heaven; vaſter far are thoſe fields of æther, through which they run their endleſs round: but the excellency of JESUS, and the happineſs laid up for his ſervants, are greater than *either*, than *both*, than *all*. An inſpired writer calls the former, "the unſearchable riches of CHRIST;" and ſtyles the latter, "an exceeding great and eternal weight "of glory."

IF thoſe ſtars are ſo many inexhauſtible magazines of fire, and immenſe *reſervoirs* of light; there is no reaſon to doubt, but they have ſome very *grand uſes*, ſuitable to the magnificence of their nature. To ſpecify or explain the particular purpoſes they anſwer, is altogether impoſſible, in our preſent ſtate of diſtance and ignorance. This, however, we may clearly diſcern; they are diſpoſed in that very manner which is moſt *pleaſing* and moſt *ſerviceable* to mankind.—They are not placed at an *infinite remove*, ſo as to lie beyond our ſight; neither are they brought *ſo near* our abode, as to annoy us with their beams. We ſee them ſhine on every ſide. The deep azure, which ſerves them as a ground, heightens their ſplendor. At the ſame time, their influence is gentle, and their rays are deſtitute of heat. So that we are ſurrounded with a multitude of fiery globes, which beautify and illuminate the firmament, without any riſk either to the *coolneſs* of our night, or the *quiet* of our repoſe.—Who can ſufficiently admire that wonderous benignity, which, on our account, ſtrews the *earth* with bleſſings of every kind, and vouchſafes to make the *very heavens* ſubſervient to our delight?

It is not ſolely to adorn the roof of our palace with coſtly gildings, that GOD commands the celeſtial luminaries to glitter through the gloom. We alſo reap conſiderable benefits from their miniſtry.—They *divide* our *time*, and fix its ſolemn periods. They ſettle the *order* of our *works*; and are, according to the deſtination mentioned in ſacred writ, "for ſigns and for ſeaſons; "for days and for years." The returns of heat and cold alone, would have been too precarious a rule.—But theſe radiant bodies, by the *variation*, and alſo by the *regularity*, of their motions, afford a method of calculating, abſolutely certain, and ſufficiently obvious. By this, the *farmer* is inſtructed when to commit his grain to the furrows; and how to conduct the operations of huſbandry. By this, the *ſailor* knows when to proceed on his voyage with leaſt peril, and how to carry on the buſineſs of navigation with moſt ſucceſs.

Why ſhould not the Chriſtian, the probationer for eternity, learn from the ſame monitors, to *number*—for nobler purpoſes, to number his *days*; and duly to tranſact the grand, grand affairs of his everlaſting ſalvation? Since GOD has appointed ſo many bright meaſurers of our time, to determine its larger periods, and to minute down its ordinary ſtages; ſure this moſt ſtrongly inculcates its *value*, and ſhould powerfully prompt us to *improve* it.—Behold! the ſupreme LORD marks the progreſs of our life, in that moſt conſpicuous kalender above. Does not ſuch an ordination tell us, and in the moſt emphatical language, that our life is given for *uſe*, not for *waſte*? that no portion of it is delivered, but under a ſtrict account; that all of it is entered, as it paſſes, in the divine regiſter; and, therefore, that the ſtewards of ſuch a talent are to expect a future reckoning? Behold! the very heavens are bidden to be the *accountants* of our years, and months, and days. O! may this induce us to manage them with a vigilant frugality; to part with them, as miſers with their *hoarded treaſure*, warily and circumſpectly; and, if poſſible, as merchants with their *rich commodities*, not without an equivalent, either in perſonal improvement, or ſocial uſefulneſs!

How *bright* the ſtarry diamonds ſhine! The ambition of eaſtern monarchs could imagine no diſtinction more noble and ſublime, than that of being likened to thoſe beaming orbs *. They form night's *richeſt dreſs*; and ſparkle upon her ſable robe, like jewels of the fineſt luſtre. Like jewels! I wrong their character. The lucid ſtone has no brilliancy; quenched is the flame even of the golden topaz; compared with thoſe glowing decorations of heaven. How widely are their radiant honours *diffuſed!* No nation ſo remote, but ſees their beauty, and rejoices in their uſefulneſs!

* How noble, conſidered in this view, are the celebrations of the Divine Majeſty, which frequently occur in the ſacred writings! *It is the LORD that made the heavens.* Pſal. xcvi. 5.—What a prodigious dignity does ſuch a ſenſe of things give to that devout aſcription of praiſe! *Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou haſt made heaven, the heaven of heavens with all their hoſt.*—Nehem. ix. 6.—Examined by this rule, the beautiful climax in our inſpired hymn is ſublime beyond compare. *Praiſe HIM, ſun and moon: praiſe HIM, all ye ſtars of light: praiſe HIM, ye heaven of heavens.* Pſal. cxlviii. 3. 4.

† This, incredible as it may ſeem, is not a mere ſuppoſition, but a real fact. For, about the twenty-firſt of *December*, we are above 160,000,000 of miles nearer the northern parts of the ſky, than we were at the twenty-firſt of *June*. And yet, with regard to the ſtars ſituate in that quarter, we perceive no *change* in their *aſpect*, nor any *augmentation* of their *magnitude*.

* Numb. xxiv. 17. Dan. viii. 10.

They have been admired by all preceding generations; and every riſing age will gaze on their charms, with renewed delight.—How *animating*, then, is that promiſe made to the faithful miniſters of the goſpel! "They "that turn many to righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine as the ſtars "for ever and ever *." Is not this a moſt winning encouragement, "to ſpend and be ſpent" in the ſervice of ſouls? Methinks, the ſtars beckon, as they twinkle. Methinks, they ſhew me their ſplendors, on purpoſe to inſpire me with *alacrity* in the race ſet before me; on purpoſe to enliven my *activity* in the work that is given me to do.—Yes; ye majeſtic monitors, I underſtand your meaning. If honour has any charms; if true glory, the glory which cometh from GOD, is any attractive; you diſplay the moſt powerful incitements to exerciſe all aſſiduity in my holy vocation. I will, henceforth, obſerve your intimation; and, when zeal becomes *languid*, have recourſe to your heavenly lamps; if ſo be I may *rekindle* its ardor at thoſe inextinguiſhable fires.

OF the *polar* ſtar, it is obſervable, that, while other luminaries *alter* their ſituation, this ſeems invariably *fixed* †. While other luminaries, now, mount the battlements of heaven, and appear upon duty; now retire beneath the horizon, and reſign to a freſh ſet the watches of the night; this never departs from its ſtation. This, in every ſeaſon, maintains an uniform poſition; and is always to be found in the ſame tract of the northern ſky.—How often has this beamed bright intelligence on the *ſailor*; and conducted the keel to its deſired haven! In early ages, thoſe who went down to the ſea in ſhips, and occupied their buſineſs in great waters, had ſcarce any other ſure guide for their wandering veſſel. This therefore they viewed with the moſt ſolicitous attention. By this they formed their obſervations, and regulated their voyage. When this was obſcured by clouds, or enveloped in miſts, the trembling mariner was *bewildered* on the watery waſte. His thoughts fluctuated, as much as the floating ſurge; and he knew not *where* he was advanced, or *whither* he ſhould ſteer. But, when this auſpicious ſtar broke through the gloom, it diſſipated the anxiety of his mind, and cleared up his dubious paſſage. He re-aſſumed, with alacrity, the management of the helm; and was able to ſhape his courſe, with ſome tolerable degree of ſatisfaction and certainty.

Such, only much clearer in its light, and much ſurer in its direction, is the *holy word* of GOD, to thoſe myriads of intellectual beings, who are bound for the eternal ſhores; who, embarked in a veſſel of feeble fleſh, are to paſs the waves of this tempeſtuous and perilous world. In all *difficulties*, thoſe ſacred pages ſhed an encouraging ray; in all *uncertainties*, they ſuggeſt the right determination, and point out the proper procedure. What is ſtill more an ineſtimable advantage, they, like the ſtar which conducted the eaſtern ſages, make plain the way of acceſs to a *Redeemer*. They diſplay his unſpeakable merits; they diſcover the method of being intereſted in this great atonement; and lead the weary ſoul, *toſſed* by troubles, and *ſhattered* by temptations, to that only harbour of peaceful repoſe.—Let us, therefore, attend to this *unerring* directory, with the ſame conſtancy of regard, as the ſea-faring man obſerves his compaſs. Let us become as thoroughly acquainted with this ſacred chart, as the pilot is with every truſty mark, that gives notice of a lurking rock; and with every open road, that yields a ſafe paſſage into the port. Above all, let us commit ourſelves to this infallible guidance, with the ſame implicit reſignation; let us conform our conduct to its exalted precepts, with the ſame ſedulous care, as the children of *Iſrael*, when ſojourning in the trackleſs deſert, followed the pillar of fire, and the motions of the miraculous cloud.—So will it introduce us, not into an earthly *Canaan*, flowing with milk and honey; but into an *immortal* paradiſe, where is the fulneſs of joy, and where are pleaſures for evermore. It will introduce us into thoſe happy, happy regions, where *our ſun ſhall no more go down, nor our moon withdraw itſelf; for the* LORD *ſhall be our everlaſting light, and the days of our mourning*, together with the fatigues of our pilgrimage, *ſhall be ended* *.

I PERCEIVE a great *variety* in the ſize and ſplendor of thoſe gems of heaven. Some are of the firſt magnitude; others of an inferior order. Some *glow* with intenſe flames; others *glimmer* with fainter beams. Yet *all* are beautiful; all have their peculiar luſtre, and diſtinct uſe; all tend, in their different degrees, to enamel the cope of heaven, and embroider the robe of night.—This circumſtance is remarked by an author, whoſe ſentiments are a ſource of wiſdom, and the very ſtandard of truth. "One ſtar," ſays the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, "*differeth* from another ſtar in glory: ſo alſo is the reſur-"rection of the dead."

In the world above, are various *degrees* of happineſs, various ſeats of honour. Some will riſe to more illuſtrious diſtinctions, and richer joys †. Some, like veſſels of ample capacity, will admit more copious acceſſions of light and excellence. Yet there will be no want, no deficiency, in any; but a fulneſs both of divine ſatisfactions, and perſonal perfections. *Each* will enjoy *all* the good, and be adorned with *all* the glory, that his heart can wiſh, or his condition receive. None will know what it is to envy. Not the leaſt malevolence, nor the leaſt ſelfiſhneſs, but everlaſting friendſhip prevails, and a mutual complacency in each other's delight. Love, cordial love, will give every particular ſaint a participation of all the fruitions ‡, which are diffuſed through the whole aſſembly of the bleſſed.—No one *eclipſes*, but each *reflects light* upon his brother. A ſweet interchange of rays ſubſiſts; all enlightened by the great Fountain, and all enlightening one another. By which reciprocal communication of pleaſure and amity, each will be continually *receiving from*, each inceſſantly *adding to*, the general felicity.

Happy, ſupremely happy they, who are admitted into the celeſtial manſions. Better to be a door-keeper in thoſe "ivory palaces ‖," than to fill the moſt gorgeous throne on earth. The very loweſt place at GOD's right hand, is diſtinguiſhed honour, and conſummate bliſs.—O! that we may, in ſome meaſure, anticipate that beatific ſtate, while we remain in our baniſhment below! May we, *by rejoicing* in the ſuperior proſperity of another, make it *our own!* and, provided the general reſult is harmony, be content, be pleaſed with whatſoever part is aſſigned to our ſhare in the univerſal choir of affairs.

WHILE I am conſidering the heavenly bodies, I muſt not entirely forget thoſe fundamental laws of our modern aſtronomy, *projection* and *attraction*. One of which is the all-combining cement, the other is the ever-operative ſpring, of the mighty frame.—In the beginning, the all-creating FIAT impreſſed a proper

* Dan. xii. 3.

† I ſpeak in conformity to the *appearance* of the object. For though this remarkable ſtar revolves round the pole, its motion is ſo *ſlow*, and the circle it deſcribes, ſo *ſmall*, as render both the revolution and change of ſituation hardly perceivable.

* Iſ. lx. 20.

† 1 *Cor.* xv. 41. 42. The great Mr *Mede prefers* the ſenſe here given; and the learned Dr *Hammond admits* it into his paraphraſe: whoſe joint authority, though far from excluding any *other*, yet is a ſufficient warrant for *this* application of the words.

‡ *Tolle invidiam, et tuum eſt quod habeo: tolle invidiam, et meum eſt quod habes.* AUGUSTINE. ‖ *Pſal.* xlv. 8.

degree of motion on each of thoſe whirling orbs. Which, if not controlled, would have carried them on, in ſtrait lines, and to endleſs lengths; till they were even loſt in the abyſs of ſpace. But the *gravitating* property, being added to the *projectile* force, determined their courſes to a *circular* * form; and obliged the reluctant rovers to perform their deſtined rounds.—Were either of thoſe cauſes to ſuſpend their action, all the harmoniouſly-moving ſpheres would be diſconcerted; would degenerate into ſluggiſh inactive maſſes; and, falling into the central fire, be burnt to aſhes; or elſe would exorbitate into wild confuſion; and each, by the rapidity of its whirl, be *diſſipated* into atoms. But the impulſive and attractive energy being moſt nicely attempered to each other; and under the immediate operation of the Almighty, exerting themſelves in perpetual concert; the various globes run their radiant races, without the leaſt interruption or the leaſt deviation; ſo as to create the alternate changes of *day* and *night*, and diſtribute the uſeful viciſſitudes of *ſucceeding* ſeaſons; ſo as to anſwer all the great ends of a gracious providence, and procure every comfortable convenience for univerſal nature.

Does not this conſtitution of the material, very naturally lead the thoughts to thoſe grand principles of the moral and devotional world, *faith* and *love*?—Theſe are often celebrated by the inſpired apoſtle, as a comprehenſive ſummary of the goſpel †. Theſe inſpirit the breaſt, and regulate the progreſs, of each private Chriſtian. Theſe unite the whole congregation of the faithful to GOD, and one another: to GOD, the great centre, in the bonds of gratitude and devotion; to one another, by a reciprocal intercourſe of brotherly affections, and friendly offices.—If you aſk, Why is it impoſſible for the true believer to live at all adventures? to *ſtagnate* in ſloth, or habitually to *deviate* from duty?—We anſwer, It is owing to "his faith working by love ‡." He aſſuredly truſts, that CHRIST has ſuſtained the infamy, and endured the torment due to his ſins. He firmly relies on that divine propitiation, for the pardon of all his guilt; and humbly expects everlaſting ſalvation, as the purchaſe of his Saviour's merits. This produces ſuch a ſpirit of gratitude, as refines his inclinations, and animates his whole behaviour. He cannot, he cannot run to exceſs of riot; becauſe love to his adorable Redeemer, like a ſtrong, but ſilken *curb*, ſweetly reſtrains him. He cannot, he cannot lie lulled in a lethargic indolence, becauſe love to the ſame infinite Benefactor, like a pungent, but endearing *ſpur*, pleaſingly excites him.—In a word, faith ſupplies the powerful impulſe, while love gives the determining bias; and leads the willing feet, through the whole circle of GOD's commandments. By the united efficacy of theſe *heavenly graces*, the Chriſtian conduct is preſerved, in the uniformity and beauty of holineſs; as, by the blended power of thoſe *Newtonian principles*, the ſolar ſyſtem revolves, in a ſteady and magnificent regularity.

How admirable, how extenſive, how diverſified, is the force of this ſingle principle, *attraction* *!—This penetrates the very eſſence of all bodies, and diffuſes itſelf to the remoteſt limits of the mundane ſyſtem.—By this, the worlds impreſſed with motion, hang *ſelf-balanced* on their centres †; and, though orbs of immenſe magnitude, require nothing but this amazing property for their ſupport.—To this we aſcribe a phænomenon, of a very different kind, the *preſſure* of the atmoſphere; which, though a yielding and expanſive fluid, yet conſtipated by an attractive energy, ſurrounds the whole globe, and incloſes every creature, as it were with a tight bandage. An expedient this, abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve the texture of our bodies; and indeed, to maintain every ſpecies of animal exiſtence.—Attraction! Urged by this wonderful impetus, the *rivers* circulate, copious and unintermitted, among all the nations of the earth; ſweeping with rapidity down the ſteeps, or ſoftly ebbing through the plains. Impelled, by the ſame myſterious force, the *nutritious juices* are detached from the ſoil; and, aſcending the trees, find their way through millions of the fineſt meanders, in order to tranſfuſe vegetative life into all the branches.—This confines the *ocean* within proper bounds. Though the waves thereof roar; though they toſs themſelves, with all the madneſs of indignant rage; yet, checked by this potent, this inevitable curb, they are unable to paſs even the ſlight barrier of ſand. To this the mountains owe that unſhaken firmneſs, which laughs at the ſhock of careering winds; and bids the tempeſt, with all its mingled horrors, impotently rave. By virtue of this inviſible mechaniſm, without the aid of crane or pulley, or any inſtrument of human device, many thouſand tons of water are *raiſed*, every moment, into the regions of the firmament. By this, they continue *ſuſpended* in thin air, without any capacious ciſtern to contain their ſubſtance, or any maſſy pillars to ſuſtain their weight. By this ſame variouſly-acting power, they return to the place of their native reſidence; *diſtilled* in gentle falls of dew, or *precipitated* in impetuous ſhowers of rain. They *ſlide* into the fields in fleecy flights of ſnow, or are *darted* upon the houſes in clattering ſtorms of hail. This occaſions the ſtrong *coheſion* of ſolid bodies. Without which, our large machines could exert themſelves with no vigour; and the nicer utenſils of life would elude our expectations of ſervice. This affords a foundation for all thoſe delicate or noble mechanic arts, which furniſh mankind with numberleſs conveniencies, both of ornament and delight.—In ſhort, this is the prodigious *ballaſt*, which compoſes the equilibrium, and conſtitutes the ſtability of things; this the great *chain*, which forms the connections of univerſal nature; and the mighty *engine*, which prompts, facilitates, and, in good meaſure, accompliſhes all her operations. What complicated effects from a *ſingle* cauſe ‡! What profuſion amidſt frugality! An unknown profuſion of benefits, with the utmoſt frugality of expence!

And what *is* this attraction? Is it a quality, in its exiſtence, inſeparable from matter; and, in its acting, independent on the DEITY?——Quite the reverſe. It is the very *finger* of GOD; the conſtant impreſſion of divine power; a principle neither innate in matter, nor intelligible by mortals.——Does it not, however, bear a conſiderable analogy to the *agency* of the HOLY GHOST, in the Chriſtian œconomy? Are not the gracious operations of the bleſſed Spirit, thus *extenſive*, thus *admirable*, thus *various*?——That almighty Being tranſmits his gifts through every age, and communicates his graces to every adherent on the Redeemer.

* I am aware, the planetary orbits are not ſtrictly circular, but rather *elliptical*. However, as they are but a ſmall remove from the perfectly round figure, and partake of it incomparably more than the trajectories of the comets, I chuſe to repreſent the thing in this view. Eſpecially, becauſe the notion of a circle is ſo much more intelligible to the generality of readers, than that of an ellipſis; and becauſe I laid it down for a rule, not to admit any ſuch *abſtruſe* ſentiment, or *difficult* expreſſion, as ſhould demand a painful attention, inſtead of raiſing an agreeable idea. For which reaſon, I have avoided *technical* terms; have taken no notice of *Jupiter*'s ſatellites, or *Saturn*'s ring; have not ſo much as mentioned the names of the planets, nor attempted to wade into any depths of the ſcience; leſt, to thoſe who have no opportunity of uſing the teleſcope, or of acquainting themſelves with a ſyſtem of aſtronomy, I ſhould propound riddles, rather than diſplay *entertaining* and *edifying* truths.

† Col. i. 4. Philem. ver. 5. ‡ Gal. v. 6.

* I mean the attraction both of *gravitation* and *coheſion*.

† *Ponderibus librata ſuis.* OVID.

‡ See another remarkable inſtance of this kind, in the *Reflections on a Flower-Garden*, page 41, col. 2.—together with a fine obſervation, quoted in the correſponding note *.

Redeemer. All, either of illuſtrious memory, or of beneficial tendency; in a word, "all the good that is "done upon earth, he doth it himſelf." Strong in *his* aid, and in the power of *his* might, the ſaints of all times have trod vice under their feet; have triumphed over this abject world; and converſed in heaven, while they dwelt on earth. *Not I, but the grace of GOD which was with me* *, is the unanimous acknowledgment of them all.——By the ſame kindly ſuccours, the whole church is ſtill enlightened, quickened, and governed. Through his benign influences, the ſcales of *ignorance* fall from the underſtanding; the leproſy of *evil* concupiſcence is purged from the will; and the fetters, the more than adamantine fetters of *habitual* iniquity, drop off from the converſation. He breathes even upon dry bones †, and they live: they are animated with faith; they pant with ardent and heavenly deſire; they exerciſe themſelves in all the duties of godlineſs.——His real, though ſecret, inſpiration, diſſolves the flint in the impenitent breaſt, and binds up the ſorrows of the broken heart; raiſes the thoughts high, in the elevations of holy hope; yet lays them low in the humiliations of inward abaſement; *ſteels* the ſoul with impenetrable reſolution, and perſevering fortitude; at the ſame time, *ſoftens* it into a dove-like meekneſs, and *melts* it in penitential ſorrow.

WHEN I contemplate thoſe ample and magnificent ſtructures, erected over all the æthereal plains:——when I look upon them as ſo many ſplendid repoſitories of light, or fruitful abodes of life:——when I remember, that there may be other orbs, vaſtly more remote than thoſe which appear to our unaided ſight; orbs, whoſe effulgence, though travelling ever ſince the creation, is not yet arrived upon our coaſts ‡:——when I ſtretch my thoughts to the innumerable orders of being, which inhabit all thoſe ſpacious ſyſtems; from the *loftieſt ſeraph*, to the loweſt reptile; from the armies of angels, which ſurround the throne of JEHOVAH, to the *puny nations*, which tinge with blue the ſurface of the plum ‖, or mantle the ſtanding pool with green:——how various appear the links in this immenſe chain! how vaſt the gradations in this univerſal ſcale of exiſtence! Yet all theſe, though ever ſo vaſt and various, are the *work* of GOD's hand, and are full of his preſence.

He rounded in his palm thoſe dreadfully-large globes, which are pendulous in the vault of heaven.

He kindled thoſe aſtoniſhingly-bright fires, which fill the firmament with a flood of glory. By him they are ſuſpended in *fluid* æther, and cannot be ſhaken: by him they diſpenſe a *perpetual* tide of beams, and are never exhauſted.—He formed, with inexpreſſible nicety, that delicately-fine collection of tubes; that unknown multiplicity of ſubtile ſprings, which organize and actuate the frame of the minuteſt inſect. He bids the crimſon current roll; the vital movements play; and aſſociates a world of wonders, even in an *animated point* *.—In all theſe is a ſignal exhibition of creating power; to all theſe are extended the ſpecial regards of preſerving goodneſs. From hence let me learn to rely on the providence, and to revere the preſence, of the Supreme Majeſty.

To *rely* on his *providence*.—For, amidſt that inconceivable number and variety of beings, which ſwarm through the regions of creation, not one is overlooked, not one is neglected, by the great omnipotent Cauſe of all. However inconſiderable in its character, or diminutive in its ſize, it is ſtill the production of the univerſal Maker, and belongs to the family of the almighty Father?—What? though inthorned archangels enjoy the *ſmiles* of his *countenance!* yet the low inhabitants of the earth, the moſt deſpicable worms of the ground, are not excluded from his *providential care*. Though the manifeſtation of his perfections is vouchſafed to holy and intellectual eſſences; his ear is open to the cries of the young raven. His eye is attentive to the wants, and to the welfare, of the very meaneſt births of nature.——How much leſs, then, are his own people diſregarded? thoſe, for whom he has delivered his beloved Son to death, and for whom he has prepared habitations of eternal joy. *They* diſregarded! No. THEY are "kept as the apple of an eye." The very hairs of their head are all numbered. The fondeſt mother may *forget* the infant, that is "dandled "upon her knees," and ſucks at her breaſt †, much ſooner

* 1 Cor. xv. 10.

* There are living creatures abundantly ſmaller than the mite. Mr *Bradley*, in his treatiſe on gardening, mentions an inſect, which, after accurate examination, he found to be a thouſand times *leſs* than the *leaſt* viſible grain of ſand. Yet ſuch an inſect, though quite imperceptible to the naked eye, is an elephant, is a whale, compared with other animalcules almoſt infinitely more minute, diſcovered by Mr *Lewenhoeck*.—If we conſider the ſeveral limbs which compoſe ſuch an organized particle; the different muſcles which actuate ſuch a ſet of limbs; the flow of ſpirits, incomparably more attenuated, which put thoſe muſcles in motion; the various fluids which circulate; the different ſecretions which are performed; together with the peculiar minuteneſs of the ſolids, before they arrive at their full growth; not to mention other *more aſtoniſhing* modes of diminution:—ſure, we ſhall have the utmoſt reaſon to acknowledge, that the adored Maker is—MAXIMUS IN MINIMIS; *greatly glorious* even in his *ſmalleſt* works.

† See that beautiful piece of ſacred and allegorical imagery diſplayed, *Ezek.* xxxvii.

‡ If this conjecture (which has no leſs a perſon than the celebrated Mr *Huygens* for its author) concerning *unſeen ſtars*, be true;—if, to this obſervation, be added, what is affirmed by our ſkilful aſtronomers, that the motion of the rays of light is ſo *ſurpriſingly ſwift*, as to paſs through ten millions of miles in a ſingle minute:—how vaſt! beyond imagination vaſt and unmeaſurable are the ſpaces of the univerſe!—While the mind is diſtended with the *grand idea*: or rather, while ſhe is diſpatching her ableſt powers of piercing judgment, and excurſive fancy; and finds them all *dropt ſhort*; all baffled by the amazing ſubject: permit me to apply that ſpirited exclamation, and noble remark—

—— Say, proud arch,
Built with divine ambition; in diſdain
Of limit built; built in the taſte of heav'n!
Vaſt concave! ample dome! waſt thou deſign'd
A *meet* apartment for the DEITY?
Not ſo: that thought alone thy ſtate impairs:
Thy *lofty* ſinks; and ſhallows thy *profound*:
And ſtreightens thy *diffuſive*.—

Night-Thoughts, No. IX.

‖ Ev'n the *blue down* the purple plum ſurrounds,
A *living world*, thy failing ſight confounds.
To HIM a peopled habitation ſhews,
Where millions taſte the bounty GOD beſtows.

See a beautiful and inſtructive poem, ſtyled—DEITY.

† *If.* xlix. 15. *Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? Yea, they may forget: yet will I not forget thee.*——How delicate and expreſſive are the images in this charming ſcripture? How full of *beauty*, if beheld in a critical, how rich with *conſolation*, if conſidered in a believing, view!——Can a *woman!* one of the ſofter ſex; whoſe nature is moſt impreſſible, and whoſe paſſions are remarkably tender;——can ſuch a one, not barely diſregard, but entirely *forget*; not ſuſpend her care for a while, but utterly eraſe the very memory——of her *child*; her own child, not another's; a child that was formed in her *womb*, and is a part of herſelf?——her *ſon*; the more important, and therefore more deſirable ſpecies; to whom it peculiarly belongs to preſerve the name, and build up the family:—her *only* ſon; for the word is ſingular, and refers to a caſe, where the offſpring, not being numerous, but centered in a ſingle birth, muſt be productive of the fondeſt endearment:—Can ſhe diveſt herſelf of all concern for ſuch a child; not when he is grown up to maturity, or gone abroad from her houſe; but while he continues in an infantile ſtate, and muſt owe his whole ſafety to her kind attendance; while he lies in her boſom, reſts on her arm, and even *ſucks* at her breaſt?—Eſpecially, if the poor innocent be racked with pain, or ſeized by ſome ſevere affliction; and ſo become an object of *compaſſion*, as well as of love. Can ſhe hear

than the Father of everlasting compassions can *discontinue*, or *remit*, his watchful tenderness to his people—his children—his heirs.

Let this teach me also a more lively sense of the *divine presence*.—All the rolling worlds above, all the living atoms below, together with all the beings that intervene betwixt these wide extremes, are vouchers for an ever-present Deity. "GOD has not left himself without witness." The marks of his footsteps are evident in every place, and the touches of his finger distinguishable in every creature. "*Thy name is so nigh*, O thou all-supporting, all-informing LORD; *and that do thy wondrous works declare* *. Thy goodness warms in the morning-sun, and refreshes in the evening-breeze. Thy glory shines in the lamps of midnight, and smiles in the blossoms of spring. We see *a trace* of thy incomprehensible grandeur in the *boundless* extent of things; and a *sketch* of thy exquisite skill, in those almost *evanescent* sparks of life, the insect race."----How stupid is this heart of mine, that, amidst such a multitude of remembrancers, thronging on every side, I should forget thee a single moment! Grant me, thou great I AM; thou source and support of universal existence;—O grant me, an enlightened eye, to *discern* thee in every object; and a devout heart, to *adore* thee on every occasion. Instead of living without GOD in the world, may I be ever with him, and see all things full of him!

——*The glitt'ring stars,*
By the deep ear of meditation heard,
Still in their midnight-watches sing of HIM.
He nods a calm. The tempest blows his wrath.
The thunder is his voice; and the red flash
His speedy sword of justice. At his touch
The mountains flame. He shakes the solid earth,
And rocks the nations. Nor in these alone,
In ev'ry common instance *GOD is seen.*

THOMSON'S Spring.

IF the beautiful spangles which a clear night pours on the beholder's eye; if those other fires which beam, in remoter skies, and are discoverable only by, that revelation to the sight, the telescope; if all those *bright millions* are so many fountains of day, enriched with native and independent lustre, illuminating planets, and enlivening systems of their own †: what pomp, how majestic and splendid, is disclosed in the midnight-scene! What *riches* are disseminated through all those numberless provinces of the great JEHOVAH's empire!—Grandeur beyond expression!——Yet there is not the meanest slave, but carries *greater* wealth in his own bosom, possesses *superior* dignity in his own person. The *soul*, that informs his clay;—the soul, that teaches him to think, and enables him to chuse; that qualifies him to relish rational pleasure, and to breathe sublime desire ‡;—the soul, that is endowed with such noble faculties, and, above all, is distinguished with the *dreadful*, the *glorious* capacity, of being pained, or blessed for ever;—this soul surpasses in worth, whatever the eye can see; whatever of material the fancy can imagine.—Before one such intellectual being, all the treasure and all the magnificence of unintelligent creation becomes poor and contemptible *. For this soul, Omnipotence itself has waked, and worked, through every age. To *convince* this soul, the fundamental laws of nature have been controlled; and the most amazing miracles have alarmed all the ends of the earth. To *instruct* this soul, the wisdom of heaven has been transfused into the sacred page; and missionaries have been sent from the great King, who resides in light unapproachable. To *sanctify* this soul, the almighty Comforter takes the wings of a dove; and, with a sweet transforming influence, broods on the human heart. And O! to *redeem* this soul from guilt, to rescue it from hell, the heaven of heavens was bowed, and GOD himself came down to dwell in dust.

Let me pause a while on this important subject.—What are the schemes which engage the attention of eminent statesmen, and mighty monarchs, compared with the grand interests of an immortal soul? The support of commerce, and the success of armies, though extremely weighty affairs; yet, if laid in the balance against the salvation of a soul, are lighter than the downy feather, poised against talents of gold. To save a navy from *shipwreck*, or a kingdom from *slavery*, are deliverances of the most momentous nature, which the transactions of mortality can admit. But O! how they shrink into an inconsiderable trifle, if (their aspect upon immortality forgot) they are set in competition with the delivery of a single soul, from the anguish and horrors of a *distressed eternity* †!

Is such the importance of the soul! what vigilance then can be *too much*, or rather what holy solicitude can be *sufficient*, for the overseers of the Saviour's flock, and the guardians of this great, this venerable, this invaluable charge?——Since such is the importance of the soul, wilt thou not, O man, be watchful for the preservation of thy own? Shall every casual incident awaken thy concern; every transitory toy command thy regard? And shall the welfare of thy soul, a work of continual occurrence, a work of endless consequence, sue, in vain, for thy serious care. Thy soul, thy soul is thy all. If this be *secured*, thou art greatly rich, and wilt be unspeakably happy. If this be *lost*, a whole world acquired, will leave thee in poverty; and all its delights enjoyed, will abandon thee to misery.

I HAVE often been charmed, and awed, at the sight of the nocturnal heavens; even before I knew how to consider them in their proper circumstances of majesty and beauty. *Something*, like *magic*, has struck my mind, on a transient and unthinking survey of the æthereal vault, tinged throughout with the purest azure, and decorated with innumerable starry lamps. I have felt, I know not what, powerful and aggrandizing impulse; which seemed to snatch me from the low intanglements of vanity, and prompted an ardent sigh for *sublimer objects*. Methought, I heard, even from the silent spheres, a commanding call, to spurn

hear its piercing cries; can she see it all restless, all helpless, under its misery; and feel no emotions of parental pity!—If *one* such monster of inhumanity might be found; could *all* (here the prophet, to give his comparison the utmost energy, changes the singular number into the plural. It is not גם היא, or גם אחת but גם אלה) could *all* mothers be so degenerate? This, sure, cannot be suspected, need not be feared. Much less need the true believer be apprehensive of the failure of my kindness. An *universal* extinction of those *strongest* affections of nature, is a more supposable case, than that I should ever be unmindful of my people, or regardless of their interests.

* Psal. lxxv. 2.

† Consult with Reason, Reason will reply,
Each *lucid point*, which glows in yonder sky,
Informs a *system* in the boundless space,
And fills, with glory, its appointed place:
With beams unborrow'd brightens other skies;
And worlds, to thee unknown, with heat and life supplies.
The Universe.

‡ In *this* respect, as vested with such capacities, the soul even of fallen men has an unquestionable greatness and dignity; is *majestic, though in ruin.*

* I beg leave to transcribe a pertinent passage, from that celebrated master of reason, and universal literature, Dr *Bentley*: whom no one can be tempted to suspect either tinctured with enthusiasm, or warped to bigotry.—"If we consider," says he, "the dignity of an intelligent being, and put that in the scale "against brute and inanimate matter, we may affirm, without "overvaluing human nature, that the soul of one virtuous and "religious man is of greater worth and excellency, than the sun, "and his planets, and all the stars in the world."——See his sermons at *Boyle*'s lect. No 8.

† Not all yon luminaries quench'd at once;
Were half so sad, as one benighted mind,
Which gropes for happiness, and meets despair.
Night-Thoughts, No. IX.

the

he abject earth, and pant after unſeen delights.—Hence-
orward, I hope to imbibe more copiouſly this *moral ema-*
nation of the ſkies, when, in ſome ſuch manner as the
receding, they are rationally ſeen, and the ſight is
uly improved. The ſtars, I truſt, will *teach* as well as
ine; and help to diſpel, both nature's gloom, and my
ntellectual darkneſs. To ſome people, they diſcharge
o better a ſervice, than that of holding a flam-
eau to their feet, and ſoftening the horrors of their
ight. To me and my friends, may they act as miniſ-
ers of a ſuperior order, as counſellors of wiſdom, and
uides to happineſs! Nor will they fail to execute this
obler office, if they gently light our way into the know-
dge of their adored Maker; if they point out, with
eir ſilver rays, our path to his beatific preſence.

I gaze, I ponder. I ponder, I gaze; and think in-
ffable things.—I roll an eye of awe and admiration.
gain and again I repeat my raviſhed views; and can
ever ſatiate either my curioſity, or my inquiry. I ſpring
y thoughts into this immenſe field, till even fancy tires
pon her wing. I find wonders *ever new*; wonders
ore and *more amazing*.—Yet, after all my preſent in-
uiries, what a mere *nothing* do I know; by all my future
arches, how *little* ſhall I be able to learn, of thoſe vaſtly
iſtant ſuns, and their circling retinue of worlds! Could
pry with *Newton*'s piercing ſagacity, or launch into his
xtenſive ſurveys; even then my apprehenſions would
e little better, than thoſe dim and ſcanty images, which
he *mole*, juſt emerged from her cavern, receives on her
eeble optic.——This, ſure, ſhould repreſs all impatient
r immoderate ardor to pry into the ſecrets of the ſtarry
tructures, and make me more particularly careful to cul-
ivate my heart. To fathom the depths of the divine eſ-
ence, or to ſcan univerſal nature with a critical exact-
eſs, is an attempt which ſets the *accuteſt philoſopher* very
early on a level with *the idiot*; ſince it is almoſt, if not
ltogether, as impracticable by the former, as by the
atter.

Be it, then, my chief ſtudy, not to purſue what is ab-
olutely unattainable; but rather to ſeek what is obvious
o find, eaſy to be acquired, and of ineſtimable advan-
age when poſſeſſed. O! let me ſeek *that charity* which
edifieth*, *that faith* which purifieth. Love, humble
ove, not conceited ſcience, keeps the door of heaven.
aith, a child like faith in JESUS; not the haughty ſelf-
ufficient, which ſcorns to be ignorant of any thing; pre-
ents a key † to thoſe abodes of bliſs. This preſent ſtate is
he ſcene deſtined to the *exerciſe of devotion*; the inviſible
world is the place appointed for the *enjoyment* of *know-*
ledge. There the dawn of our infantile minds will be
advanced to the maturity of perfect day; or rather, there
our midnight-ſhades will be brightened into all the luſtre
of noon. There the ſouls which come from the ſchool
of faith, and bring with them the principles of love, will
dwell in light itſelf; will be obſcured with no darkneſs
at all; will know, even as they are known *.—Such an
acquaintance, therefore, do I deſire to form, and to
carry on ſuch a correſpondence, with the heavenly bo-
dies, as may ſhed a benign influence on the ſeeds of
grace implanted in my breaſt. Let the exalted tracts
of the firmament ſink my ſoul into *deep humiliation*.—
Let thoſe eternal fires kindle in my heart an *adoring gra-*
titude to their almighty Sovereign. Let yonder ponde-
rous and enormous globes, which reſt on his ſupporting
arm, teach me an *unſhaken affiance* in their incarnate
Maker. Then ſhall I be—if not wiſe as the aſtronomi-
cal adept, yet WISE UNTO SALVATION.

HAVING now walked and worſhipped in this *univer-*
ſal temple, that is arched with ſkies, emblazed with ſtars,
and extended even to immenſity: having caſt an eye,
like the enraptured patriarch †; an eye of *reaſon* and
devotion, through the magnificent ſcene: with the for-
mer, having diſcovered an infinitude of worlds; and
with the latter, having met the Deity in every view:—
having beheld, as *Moſes* in the flaming buſh, a *glimpſe*
of JEHOVAH's excellencies! reflected from the ſeveral
planets, and ſtreaming from myriads of celeſtial lumina-
ries:—having read various leſſons in that ſtupendous
book of *wiſdom* ‡, where unmeaſurable ſheets of azure
compoſe the page; and orbs of radiance write in ever-
laſting characters, a *comment* on our creed:—what re-
mains, but that I cloſe the midnight-ſolemnity, as our
LORD concluded his grand ſacramental inſtitution, with
a *ſong* of *praiſe*?—And behold a hymn, ſuited to the
ſublime occaſion, indited by ‖ inſpiration itſelf, trans-
ferred into our language, by § one of the happieſt ef-
forts of human ingenuity.

The ſpacious firmament on high,
With all the blue æthereal ſky,
And ſpangled heav'ns, a ſhining frame,
Their great Original proclaim:
Th' unweary'd Sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's pow'r diſplay;
And publiſhes to ev'ry land,
The work of an almighty hand.

Soon as the ev'ning-ſhades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous tale;
And nightly, to the liſt'ning Earth,
Repeats the ſtory of her birth:
While all the ſtars, that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And ſpread the truth from pole to pole.

What though, in ſolemn ſilence, all
Move round the dark terreſtrial ball?
What though nor real voice nor ſound
Amid their radiant orbs be found?
In Reaſon's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
For ever ſinging, as they ſhine,
The hand that made us, is divine!

* 1 *Cor.* viii. 1. I need not inform my reader, that in this text, in that admirable chapter, 1 *Cor.* xiii. and in various other paſſages of ſcripture, the word *charity* ſhould by no means be confined to the particular act of *alms-giving*, or external beneficence. It is of a much more exalted and extenſive nature. It ſignifies that divinely-precious grace, which warms the ſoul with *ſupreme love* to GOD, and enlarges it with *diſintereſted affection* for men. Which renders it the reigning care of the life, and chief delight of the heart, to promote the happineſs of the one, and the glory of the other.—*This, this*, is that charity of which ſo many excellent things are every where ſpoken; which can never be too highly extolled, or too earneſtly coveted, ſince it is the image of GOD, and the very ſpirit of heaven.

† The righteouſneſs of CHRIST. This is what MILTON beautifully ſtyles,

——*The golden key,*
That opes the palace of Eternity.

* 1 Cor. xiii. 12. † Gen. xv. 5.

‡ ——For heaven
Is as the *book of* GOD before thee ſet,
Wherein to read his wondrous works.—MILT.

‖ Pſal. xix.

§ ADDISON, *Spect.* vol. VI. No. 465.

A WINTER-PIECE.

Storms and Tempeſts may calm *the ſoul—Snow and Ice be taught to* warm *the heart, and praiſe the Creator.*

Anonym. Lett. to the Author. See note below.

THIS true, in the delightful ſeaſons, HIS tenderneſs and HIS love are moſt eminently diſplayed.—In the *vernal* months, all is beauty to the eye, and muſic to the ear. The clouds drop fatneſs; the air ſoftens into balm; and flowers in rich abundance ſpring where-ever we tread, bloom where-ever we look.—Amidſt the burning heats of *ſummer*, HE expands the leaves, and thickens the ſhades. He ſpreads the cooling arbor to receive us, and awakes the gentle breeze to fan us. The moſs ſwells into a couch, for the repoſe of our bodies; while the rivulet ſoftly rolls, and ſweetly murmurs, to ſoothe our imagination.—In *autumn*, HIS bounty covers the fields with a profuſion of nutrimental treaſure, and bends the boughs with loads of delicious fruit. He furniſhes his hoſpitable board with preſent plenty, and prepares a copious magazine for future wants.—But is it *only* in theſe ſmiling periods of the year, that GOD, the all-gracious GOD, is ſeen? Has *winter*, ſtern winter, no tokens of his preſence? Yes: all things are eloquent of his praiſe. "His way is in the whirlwind." Storms and tempeſts fulfil his word and extol his power. Even piercing froſts bear witneſs to his goodneſs, while they bid the ſhivering nations tremble at his wrath.——Be winter then, for a while, our theme *. Perhaps, thoſe *barren* ſcenes may be *fruitful* of intellectual improvement. Perhaps that rigorous cold, which binds the earth in icy chains, may ſerve to enlarge our hearts, and warm them with holy love.

SEE! how the *day* is *ſhortened!*—The ſun, detained in fairer climes, or engaged in more agreeable ſervices, riſes, like an unwilling viſitant, with tardy and reluctant ſteps. He walks, with a ſhy indifference, along the edges of the ſouthern ſky; caſting an oblique glance, he juſt looks upon our dejected world; and ſcarcely ſcatters light through the thick air. Dim is his appearance, languid are his gleams, while he continues. Or, if he chance to wear a brighter aſpect, and a cloudleſs brow; yet, like the young and gay in the houſe of mourning, he ſeems uneaſy, till he is gone, is in haſte to depart.—And let him depart. Why ſhould we wiſh for his longer ſtay, ſince he can ſhew us nothing but the creation in diſtreſs? The flowery families lie dead, and the tuneful tribes are ſtruck dumb. The trees ſtript of their verdure, and laſhed by ſtorms, ſpread their naked arms to the enraged and relentleſs heavens. Fragrance no longer floats in the air; but chilling damps hover, or cutting gales blow. Nature, diveſted of all her beautiful robes, ſits, like a forlorn diſconſolate widow, in her weeds. While winds, in doleful accents, howl; and rains, in repeated ſhowers, weep.

We regret not, therefore, the ſpeedy departure of the day. When the room is hung with *funeral black*, and diſmal objects are all around; who would deſire to have the *glimmering taper* kept alive? which can only diſcover ſpectacles of ſorrow, can only make the horror viſible.—And, ſince this mortal life is little better than a continual conflict with ſin, or an unremitted ſtruggle with miſery; is it not a *gracious* ordination, which has reduced our age to a *ſpan?* Fourſcore years of trial, for the virtuous, are ſufficiently long; and more than ſuch a term allowed to the wicked, would render them beyond all meaſure vile. Our way to the kingdom of heaven lies through tribulations. Shall we then *accuſe*, ſhall we not rather *bleſs*, the providence, which has made the paſſage ſhort? Soon, ſoon we croſs the vale of tears; and then arrive on the happy hills, where light for ever ſhines, where joy for ever ſmiles.

SOMETIMES the day is rendered ſhorter ſtill; is almoſt blotted out from the year *. The vapours gather; they thicken into an impenetrable gloom, and obſcure the face of the ſky. At length, the *rains* deſcend. The ſluices of the firmament are opened; and the low-hung clouds pour their congregated ſtores. Copious and unintermitted, ſtill they pour, and ſtill are unexhauſted. The waters drop inceſſantly from the eaves, and ruſh in rapid ſtreams from the ſpouts. They roar along the channelled pavements, and ſtand in foul ſhallows amidſt the village-ſtreets. Now, if the inattentive eye, or negligent hand, has left the roof but ſeantily covered; the inſinuating element finds its way into every flaw, and oozing through the ceiling, at once upbraids and chaſtiſes the careleſs inhabitant. The ploughman, ſoaked to the ſkin, leaves his half-tilled acre. The poor poultry, dripping with wet, croud into ſhelter. The tenants of the bough fold up their wings, afraid to launch into the ſtreaming air. The beaſts, joyleſs and diſpirited, ruminate under their ſheds. The roads ſwim and the brooks ſwell.——The *river*, amidſt all this watery ferment, long contained itſelf within

* A ſketch of this nature, I muſt acknowledge, is quite different from the ſubject of the book; and I cannot but declare, was as far diſtant from the thoughts of the author. But the deſire of *ſeveral* acquaintance, together with an intimation of its uſefulneſs, by a very *polite letter* from an *unknown* hand (which has *undeſignedly* furniſhed me with the beſt motto I could recollect), prevailed with me to add a few deſcriptive touches, and improving hints, on what is ſo often experienced in theſe northern regions. I hope, the attempt I have made to oblige theſe gentlemen, will obtain the *approbation*, or, at leaſt, the *excuſe*, of my other readers.

* Involvere diem nimbi, et *nox humida* cœlum
Abſtulit.— VIRG.

within its appointed bounds: but, ſwollen by innumerable currents, and roufed at laſt into uncontrollable rage, burſts over its banks, ſhoots into the plain, bears down all oppoſition, ſpreads itſelf far and wide, and buries the meadow under a brown, ſluggiſh, ſoaking *deluge*.

How happy for man, that this inundation comes, when there are no flowery crops in the valley, to be overwhelmed; no fields ſtanding thick with corn, to be laid waſte! At *ſuch* a juncture, it would have been *ruin* to the huſbandman and his family: but, *thus* timed, it yields *manure* for his ground, and promiſes him *riches* in reverſion.—How often, and how long, has the divine Majeſty bore with the moſt injurious affronts from ſinners! His goodneſs triumphed over their perverſeneſs, and graciouſly refuſed to be exaſperated. But, O preſumptuous creatures, multiply no longer your provocations. Urge not, by repeated iniquities, the almighty arm to ſtrike; leſt his long-ſuffering ceaſe, and his fierce anger break forth; break forth like a *flood of waters* *, and ſweep you away into irrecoverable and everlaſting perdition.

How mighty! how majeſtic! and O how myſterious are thy works, thou GOD of heaven, and LORD of nature! When the air is calm, where ſleep the *ſtormy winds?* In what chambers are they repoſed, or in what dungeons confined! till thou art pleaſed to awaken their rage, and throw open their priſon-doors. Then, with irreſiſtible impetuoſity they fly forth, ſcattering dread, and menacing deſtruction.

The atmoſphere is hurled into the moſt tumultuous confuſion. The aerial torrent burſts its way over mountains, ſeas, and continents. All things feel the dreadful ſhock. All things tremble before the furious blaſt. The *foreſt*, vexed and tore, groans under the ſcourge. Her ſturdy ſons are ſtrained to the very root, and almoſt ſweep the ſoil they were wont to ſhade. The ſtubborn oak, that diſdains to bend, is daſhed headlong to the ground; and, with ſhattered arms, with proſtrate trunk, blocks the road.——While the flexile reed, that ſprings up in the marſh, yielding to the guſt, (as the *meek* and pliant temper to injuries, or the *reſigned* and patient ſpirit to misfortunes), eludes the force of the ſtorm, and ſurvives amidſt the wide-ſpread havock.

For a moment, the turbulent and outrageous ſky ſeems to be aſſuaged; but it intermits its wrath, only to increaſe its ſtrength. Soon the ſounding ſquadrons of the air return to the attack, and renew their ravages with redoubled fury. The ſtately dome rocks amidſt the wheeling clouds. The impregnable tower totters on its baſis, and threatens to overwhelm whom it was intended to protect. The ragged rock is rent in pieces †? and even the hills, the perpetual hills, on their deep foundations, are ſcarcely ſecure.——Where now is the place of ſafety? when the *city* reels, and houſes become heaps! Sleep affrighted flies. Diverſion is turned into horror. All is uproar in the element; all is conſternation among mortals; and nothing, but one wide ſcene of rueful devaſtation, through the land.——Yet this is only an *inferior* miniſter of divine diſpleaſure; the executioner of *milder* indignation. How then,——O! *how will the lofty looks of man be humbled, and the haughtineſs of men be bowed down* ‡, when the LORD GOD omnipotent ſhall *meditate* terror,—when he ſhall ſet *all* his terrors in array,—when he riſes to judge the nations, and to *ſhake terribly* the earth?

The *ocean* ſwells with tremendous commotions. The ponderous waves are heaved from their capacious bed, and almoſt lay bare the unfathomable deep. Flung into the moſt rapid agitation, they ſweep over the rocks; they laſh the lofty cliffs; and toſs themſelves into the clouds. Navies are rent from their anchors; and, with all their enormous load, are whirled ſwift as the arrow, wild as the winds, along the vaſt abyſs.——Now they climb the rolling mountain; they plough the frightful ridge; and ſeem to ſkim the ſkies. Anon they plunge into the opening gulf; they loſe the ſight of day; and are loſt themſelves to every eye. How vain is the pilot's art! how impotent the mariner's ſtrength! They reel to and fro, and ſtagger in the jarring hold; or cling to the cordage, while burſting ſeas foam over the deck. *Deſpair* is in every face, and *death* ſits threatening on every ſurge.—But why, O ye aſtoniſhed mariners, why ſhould you abandon yourſelves to deſpair? Is the LORD's hand *ſhortened*, becauſe the waves of the ſea rage horribly? Is his ear *deafened* by the roaring thunders, and the bellowing tempeſt? Cry, cry unto HIM, who "holdeth the winds in his fiſt, and the waters in the "hollow of his hand." HE is all-gracious to hear, and almighty to ſave. If HE command, the ſtorm ſhall be huſhed to ſilence; the billows ſhall ſubſide into a calm; the lightnings ſhall lay their fiery bolts aſide; and, inſtead of ſinking in a watery grave, you ſhall find yourſelves brought to the deſired haven.

SOMETIMES, after a joyleſs day, a more diſmal *night* ſucceeds.—The lazy, louring vapours had wove ſo thick a veil, as the meridian ſun could ſcarcely penetrate. What gloom then muſt overwhelm the nocturnal hours! The moon withdraws her ſhining. Not a ſingle ſtar is able to ſtruggle through the deep arrangement of ſhades. All is *pitchy darkneſs*, without one enlivening ray. How ſolemn! how awful! 'Tis like the ſhroud of nature, or the return of chaos. I don't wonder, that it is the parent of terrors, and ſo apt to engender melancholy. —Lately the tempeſt marked its rapid way with *miſchief;* now the night dreſſes her ſilent pavilion with *horror*.

I have *ſometimes* left the beaming tapers, withdrawn from the ruddy fire, and plunged into the thickeſt of theſe ſooty ſhades; without regretting the change, rather exulting in it as a welcome deliverance. The very gloom was pleaſing, was exhilarating, compared with the converſation I quitted. The ſpeech of my companions (how does it grieve me, that I ſhould *even once* have occaſion to call them by *that* name!) was the language of darkneſs; was horror to the ſoul, and torture to the ear *.—*Their teeth were ſpears and arrows*,

* Hoſ. v. 10.

† 1 Kings xix. 11.

‡ ——— *Mortalia corda*
Per gentes humilis ſtravit pavor.—

One would almoſt imagine, that *Virgil* had read *Iſaiah*, and borrowed his ideas from chap. ii. ver. 11. The *humilis* and *ſtravit* of the one ſo exactly correſpond with the—*humbled*—*bowed down*—of the other. But, in one circumſtance, the prophet is very much ſuperior to the poet. The prophet, by giving a ſtriking *contraſt* to his ſentiments, repreſents them with incomparably-greater energy. He ſays not, *men* in the groſs, or the *human heart* in general: but men of the moſt *elated* looks; hearts big with the moſt *arrogant* imaginations: even *theſe* ſhall ſtoop from their ſupercilious heights, even *theſe* ſhall grovel in the duſt of abaſement, and ſhudder with all the extremes of an abject puſillanimity.

* What has been ſaid, I aſk'd my ſoul, what done?
How flow'd our mirth? or whence the ſource begun?
Perhaps, the jeſt, that charm'd the ſprightly croud,
And made the jovial table laugh ſo loud,
To ſome *falſe* notion ow'd its poor pretence,
To an ambiguous word's perverted ſenſe;
To a wild ſonnet, or a wanton air,
Offence and torture to the ſober ear.
Perhaps, alas! the pleaſing ſtream was brought
From this man's error, from another's fault;
From topics, which good-nature would forget,
And *prudence* mention with the laſt regret.

and

and their tongue a ſharp ſword, to ſtab and aſſaſſinate their neighbour's character. *Their throat was an open ſepulchre*, gaping to devour the reputation of the innocent, or tainting the air with their virulent and polluted breath.—— Sometimes, their licentious and ungovernable diſcourſe ſhot arrows of *profaneneſs* againſt heaven itſelf; and, in proud defiance, challenged the reſentment of Omnipotence.——Sometimes, as if it was the glory of human nature, to cheriſh the *groſſeſt* appetites of the brute; or the mark of a gentleman, to have ſerved an apprenticeſhip in a brothel; the filthieſt jeſts of the ſtews (if low *obſcenity* can be a jeſt) were nauſeouſly obtruded on the company. All the *modeſt* part were offended and grieved; while the other beſotted creatures laughed aloud, though the leproſy of uncleanneſs appeared on their lips. Are not theſe perſons *priſoners* of *darkneſs*, though blazing ſconces pour artificial day through their rooms? Are not their ſouls immured in the moſt baleful ſhades, though the noon-tide ſun is brightened by flaming on their gilded chariots?—They diſcern not that great and adorable Being, who fills the univerſe with his infinite and glorious preſence; who is *all eye*, to obſerve their actions; *all ear*, to examine their words. They know not the all-ſufficient Redeemer, nor the unſpeakable bleſſedneſs of his heavenly kingdom. They are groping for the prize of happineſs; but will certainly graſp the thorn of anxiety. They are wantonly ſporting on the brink of a precipice; and are every moment in danger of falling headlong into *irretrievable* ruin, and *endleſs* deſpair.

They have forced me out, and are, perhaps, deriding me in my abſence; are charging my reverence for the ever-preſent GOD, and my concern for the dignity of our *rational* nature, to the account of humour and ſingularity; to narrowneſs of thought, or ſourneſs of temper. Be it ſo. I will indulge no indignation againſt them. If any thing like it *ſhould* ariſe, I will convert it into prayer: "Pity them, O thou Father of mercies! Shew "them the madneſs of their profaneneſs! Shew them "the baſeneſs of their vile ribaldry! Let their diſſo"lute rant be turned into ſilent ſorrow and confuſion; "till they open their lips, to adore thine *inſulted* Majeſty, "and to implore thy gracious pardon. Till they de"vote to thy ſervice, thoſe ſocial hours, and thoſe ſupe"rior faculties, which they are now abuſing, to the diſ"honour of thy name, to the contamination of their own "ſouls, and (unleſs timely repentance intervene) to their "everlaſting infamy and perdition."

I ride home amidſt the gloomy void. All darkling and ſolitary, I can ſcarce diſcern my horſe's head; and only gueſs out my blind road. *No companion*, but danger; or, perhaps, "deſtruction ready at my ſide *."

But, why do I fancy myſelf *ſolitary?* Is not the Father of lights, the GOD of my life, the great and everlaſting friend, always at my right hand? Becauſe the day is excluded, is his omnipreſence vacated? Though I have no earthly acquaintance near, to aſſiſt in caſe of a misfortune; or to beguile the time, and divert uneaſy ſuſpicions, by entertaining conferences; may I not lay my help upon the Almighty, and converſe with GOD by humble ſupplication? For this exerciſe no place is improper, no hour unſeaſonable, and no poſture incommodious. This is *ſociety*, the beſt of ſociety, even in ſolitude. This is a fund of delights, eaſily portable, and quite inexhauſtible. A *treaſure* this of unknown value; liable to no hazard from wrong or robbery; but perfectly ſecure to the lonely wanderer, in the moſt darkſome paths.

And why ſhould I diſtreſs myſelf with apprehenſions of *peril?* This acceſs to GOD is not only an indefeaſible privilege, but a kind of *ambulatory garriſon*. Thoſe who make known their requeſts unto GOD, and rely upon his protecting care; he gives *his angels* charge over their welfare. His angels are commiſſioned to eſcort them in their travelling; and to hold up their goings, that they daſh not their foot againſt a ſtone *. Nay, *he himſelf* condeſcends to be their guardian, and "keeps all "their bones, ſo that not one of them is broken." Between theſe perſons, and the moſt miſchievous objects, a treaty of peace is concluded. The articles of this grand alliance are recorded in the book of revelation; and will, when it is for the real benefit of believers, aſſuredly be made good, in the adminiſtrations of Providence. *In that day*, ſaith the LORD, *will I make a covenant for them with the beaſts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground*; and they *ſhall be in league with the ſtones of the field* †. Though they fall headlong on the flints; even the flints, fitted to fracture the ſkull, ſhall receive them as into the arms of friendſhip, and not offer to hurt whom the LORD is pleaſed to preſerve.

May I then enjoy the preſence of this gracious GOD, and darkneſs and light ſhall be both alike. Let HIM whiſper peace to my conſcience; and this dread ſilence ſhall be more charming than the voice of eloquence, or the ſtrains of muſic. Let HIM reveal his raviſhing perfections in my ſoul; and I ſhall not want the ſaffron beauties of the morn, the golden glories of noon, or the impurpled evening-ſky. I ſhall ſigh only for thoſe moſt deſirable and diſtinguiſhed realms, where the light of HIS countenance *perpetually* ſhines, and conſequently "there is ‡ no night there."

How ſurpriſing are the alterations of nature! I left her, the preceding evening, plain and unadorned. But, now, a *thick rime* has ſhed its hoary honours over all. It has ſhagged the fleeces of the ſheep, and criſped the traveller's locks. The hedges are richly fringed, and all the ground is profuſely powdered. The downward branches are taſſeled with ſilver, and the upright are feathered with the plumy wave.

The *fine* are not always the *valuable*. The air, amidſt all theſe gaudy decorations, is charged with chilling and *unwholeſome* damps. The raw hazy influence ſpreads wide; ſits deep; hangs heavy and oppreſſive on the ſprings of life. A liſtleſs languor clogs the animal functions, and the purple ſtream glides but faintly through its channels. In vain, the ruler of the day exerts his beaming powers: in vain, he attempts to diſperſe this inſurrection of vapours. The ſullen, malignant cloud refuſes to depart. It envelops the world, and intercepts the *proſpect*. I look abroad for the neighbouring village; I ſend my eye in queſt of the riſing turret; but am ſcarce able to diſcern the very next houſe. Where are the blue arches of heaven? Where is the radiant countenance of the ſun? where the boundleſs ſcenes of creation? Loſt, loſt are their beauties; quenched their glories. The thronged theatre of the univerſe ſeems an empty void; and all its elegant pictures, an undiſtinguiſhed blank.—Thus would it have been with our intellectual views, if the *goſpel* had not come in to our relief. We ſhould have known neither our true good, nor real evil. We had been a riddle to ourſelves; the preſent ſtate all confuſion, and the future impenetrable darkneſs. But the Sun of Righteouſneſs, ariſing with potent and triumphant beams, has diſſipated the interpoſing cloud; has opened a proſpect more beautiful than the bloſſoms of ſpring, more chearing than the treaſures of autumn, and far more enlarged than the extent of the viſible ſyſtem: which, having led the eye of the mind through fields of grace, over rivers of righteouſneſs, and hills crowned with knowledge, terminates, at length, in

* Job xviii. 12.

* Pſal. xci. 11. 12. † Job v. 23. Hoſ. ii. 18.

‡ Rev. xxi. 25.

the

the heavens; ſweetly loſing itſelf in regions of infinite bliſs, and endleſs glory.

As I walk along the fog, it ſeems, at ſome little diſtance, to be almoſt ſolid gloom; ſuch as would ſhut out every glimpſe of light, and totally impriſon me in obſcurity. But when I approach, and enter it, I find myſelf agreeably miſtaken, and the miſt much *thinner* than it *appeared*.——Such is the caſe with regard to the ſufferings of the preſent life; they are not, when experienced, ſo dreadful as a timorous imagination ſurmiſed. Such alſo is the caſe with reference to the *gratifications* of *ſenſe*; they prove not, when enjoyed, ſo ſubſtantial as a ſanguine expectation repreſented. In both inſtances, we are graciouſly diſappointed. The keen edge of the calamity is blunted, that it may not wound us with incurable anguiſh: the exquiſite reliſh of the proſperity is palled, that it may not captivate our affections, and enſlave them to inferior delights.

SOMETIMES the face of things wears a more pleaſing form; the very reverſe of the foregoing. The ſober evening advances, to cloſe the ſhort-lived day. The firmament, clear and unſullied, puts on its brighteſt blue. The ſtars, in thronging multitudes, and with a peculiar brilliancy, glitter through the fair expanſe. While the *froſt* pours its ſubtile and penetrating influence all around. Sharp and intenſely ſevere, all the long night, the rigid æther continues its operations. When, late and ſlow, the morning opens her pale eye; in what a curious and amuſing diſguiſe is nature dreſſed! The icicles, jagged and uneven, are pendent on the houſes. A whitiſh film incruſts the windows, where mimic landſcapes riſe, and fancied figures ſwell. The fruitful fields are hardened to iron; the moiſtened meadows are congealed to marble; and both reſound (an effect unknown before) with the peaſant's haſty tread. The ſtream is arreſted in its career, and its ever-flowing ſurface chained to the banks. The fluid paths become a ſolid road; where the finny ſhoals were wont to rove, the ſportive youth ſlide, or the rattling chariots roll *. And (what would ſeem, to an inhabitant of the ſouthern world, as unaccountable as the deepeſt myſteries of our religion) that very ſame breath of heaven, which *cements* the lakes into a cryſtal pavement, *cleaves* the oaks as it were with inviſible wedges: "breaks in pieces the northern iron, "and the ſteel;" even while it *builds* a bridge of icy rock over the ſeas †.

The air is all ſerenity. Refined by the nitrous particles, it affords the moſt diſtinct views, and extenſive proſpects. The ſeeds of *infection* are killed; and the *peſtilence* deſtroyed, even in embryo. So, the cold of *affliction* tends to mortify our corruptions, and ſubdue our vitious habits.—The crouding atmoſphere conſtringes our bodies, and braces our nerves. The ſpirits are buoyant, and ſally briſkly on the execution of their office. In the ſummer-months, ſuch an unclouded ſky, and ſo bright a ſun, would have melted us with heat, and ſoftened us into ſupineneſs. We ſhould have been ready to throw our limbs under the ſpreading beech, and to lie at eaſe by the murmuring brook. But now none loiters in his path; none is ſeen with folded arms. All is in motion; all is activity. Choice, prompted by the weather, ſupplies the ſpur of neceſſity. Thus, the *rugged* ſchool of miſfortune often trains up the mind to a vigorous exertion of its faculties. The *bleak* climate of *adverſity* often inſpirits us with a manly reſolution. When a ſoft and downy affluence, perhaps, would have relaxed all the generous ſpring of the ſoul, and have left it enervated with pleaſure, or diſſolved in indolence.

"*COLD* cometh out of the north *." The winds, having ſwept thoſe deſerts of ſnow, arm themſelves with millions of frozen particles, and make a fierce deſcent upon our iſle. Under black and ſcowling clouds, they drive, dreadfully whizzing, through the darkened air. They growl around our houſes; aſſault our doors; and, eager for entrance, faſten on our windows. Walls can ſcarce reſtrain them; bars are unable to exclude them; through every cranny they force their way. Ice is on their wings; they ſcatter agues through the land; and winter, all winter, rages as they go. Their breath is as a ſearing † iron to the little verdure left in the plains. Vaſtly more pernicious to the tender plants than the ſharpeſt knife, they kill their branches, and wound the very root. Let not the corn venture to peep too freely from the entrenchment of the furrow; let not the fruit-bearing bloſſoms dare to come abroad from their lodgment in the bark; leſt theſe murderous blaſts intercept and ſeize the unwary ſtrangers, and deſtroy the hopes of the advancing year.

O, 'tis ſeverely cold! Who is ſo hardy, as not to ſhrink at this *exceſſively-pinching* weather? See! Every face is pale. Even the blooming cheeks contract a gelid hue, and the teeth hardly forbear chattering.—Ye that ſit eaſy and joyous, amidſt your commodious apartments, ſolacing yourſelves in the diffuſive warmth of your fire, be mindful of your brethren in the chearleſs tenement of poverty. *Their* ſhattered panes are open to the piercing winds; a tattered garment ſcarcely covers their ſhivering fleſh; while a few faint and dying embers on the ſqualid hearth, rather mock their wiſhes, than warm their limbs.—While the generous juices of *Oporto* ſparkle in your glaſſes; or the ſtreams, beautifully tinged and deliciouſly flavoured with the *Chineſe* leaf, ſmoke in the elegant porcelain; O remember, that many of your fellow-creatures, amidſt all the rigour of theſe inclement ſkies, are emaciated with ſickneſs, benumbed with age, and pining with hunger. Let "their loins bleſs you," for comfortable cloathing. Reſtore them with medicine; regale them with food; and baffle the raging year. So, may you never know any of their diſtreſſes, but only by the hearing of the ear, the ſeeing of the eye, or the feeling of a tender commiſeration!—Methinks, the bitter bluſtering winds plead for the poor indigents. May they breathe pity into *your* breaſts, while they blow hardſhips into *their* huts!—— Obſerve thoſe blue flames, and ruddy coals, in your chimney: quickened by the cold, they look more lively, and glow more ſtrongly. Silent, but ſeaſonable admonition to the gay circle, that chat and ſmile around them! *Thus*, may your hearts, at ſuch a juncture of need, kindle into a peculiar benevolence! Detain not your ſuperfluous piles of wood. Let them haſten to the relief of the ſtarving family. Bid them expire in many a willing blaze, to mitigate the ſeverity of the ſeaſon, and chear the bleak abodes of want. So ſhall they aſcend, mingled with thankſgivings to GOD, and ardent prayers for your welfare;—aſcend, more grateful to heaven than columns of the moſt coſtly incenſe.

* *Concreſcunt ſubito currenti in flumine cruſtæ;*
Undaque jam tergo ferratos ſuſtinet orbes,
Puppibus illa prius patulis, nunc hoſpita plauſtris
Æraque diſſiliunt vulgo. VIRG.

† *Job* xxxviii. 30. The *waters are hid*, locked up from the cattle's lips, and ſecured from the fiſher's net, as wells were wont to be cloſed with a ponderous and impenetrable *ſtone*. *And* not only lakes and rivers, but *the ſurface of the* great *deep*, with its reſtleſs and uncontrollable ſurges, *is taken captive* יתלכדו by the froſt, and bound in ſhining fetters.

* Job xxxvii. 9.

† This, I ſuppoſe, is the meaning of that figurative expreſſion uſed by the prophet *Habakkuk*; who, ſpeaking of the *Chaldæans* invading *Judæa*, ſays,—*Their faces*, or the incurſions they make, *ſhall ſup up*, ſhall ſwallow greedily, ſhall devour utterly, the inhabitants of the country, and their valuable effects; *as the* keen, corroding blaſts of the *eaſt wind* deſtroy every green thing in the field. *Hab.* i. 9.

Now the winds ceaſe. Having brought their load, they are diſmiſſed from ſervice. They have waſted an immenſe cargo of clouds, which empty themſelves in *ſnow*. At firſt, a few ſcattered ſhreds come wandering down the ſaddened ſky. This ſlight ſkirmiſh is ſucceeded by a general onſet. The flakes, large and numerous, and thick-wavering, deſcend. They dim the air, and haſten the approach of night. Through all the night, in ſofteſt ſilence, and with a continual flow, this fleecy ſhower falls. In the morning, when we awake, what a ſurpriſing change appears!—Is this the ſame world? Here is no diverſity of colour! I can hardly diſtinguiſh the trees from the hills on which they grow. Which are the meadows, and which the plains? Where are the green paſtures, and where the fallow lands? All things lie blended in bright confuſion; ſo bright, that it heightens the ſplendor of day, and even dazzles the organs of ſight.—The lawn is not ſo fair, as this ſnowy mantle, which inveſts the fields; and even the lily, was the lily to appear, would look tarniſhed in its preſence. I can think of but *one* thing, which *excels* or equals the glittering robe of winter. Is any perſon deſirous to know my meaning? He may find it explained in that admirable hymn *, compoſed by the royal penitent. Is any deſirous to poſſeſs this matchleſs ornament? He would find it offered to his acceptance in every page of the goſpel.

See! (for the eye cannot ſatisfy itſelf without viewing again and again the curious, the delicate ſcene), ſee! how the hedges are habited, like ſpotleſs veſtals! The houſes are roofed with uniformity and luſtre. The meadows are covered with a carpet of the fineſt ermine†. The groves bow beneath the lovely burden; and all, all below, is one wide, immenſe, ſhining waſte of white.—By deep ſnows, and heavy rains, GOD *ſealeth up the hand of every man*. And for this purpoſe, adds our ſacred philoſopher, *that all men may know his work* ‡. He confines them within their doors, and puts a ſtop to their ſecular buſineſs; that they may conſider the things which belong to their ſpiritual welfare; that, having a vacation from their ordinary employ, they may obſerve the works of his power, and become acquainted with the myſteries of his grace.

And worthy, worthy of all obſervation, are the works of the great Creator. They are prodigiouſly various, and perfectly amazing. How pliant and ductile is nature under his forming hand! At his command, the ſelf-ſame ſubſtance aſſumes the moſt different ſhapes, and is transformed into an endleſs multiplicity of figures. If HE ordains, the water is *moulded* into hail, and diſcharged upon the earth like a volley of ſhot; or it is *conſolidated* into ice, and defends the rivers, "as it were with a breaſt-plate." At the bare intimation of his will, the very ſame element is ſcattered in hoar-froſt, like a ſprinkling of the moſt *attenuated* aſhes; or is ſpread over the ſurface of the ground, in theſe couches of ſwelling and *flaky* down.

The ſnow, however it may carry the appearance of cold, affords a *warm* garment for the corn; ſcreens it from nipping froſts, and cheriſhes its infant growth. It will abide for a while, to exert a protecting care, and exerciſe a ſoftening influence. Then, touched by the ſun, or thawed by a ſoftening gale, the furry veſture melts into genial moiſture; ſinks deep into the ſoil, and ſaturates its pores with the diſſolving nitre; repleniſhing the glebe with thoſe principles of vegetative life, which will open into the bloom of ſpring, and ripen into the fruits of autumn.—Beautiful emblem this, and comfortable repreſentation of the divine *word*, both in the ſucceſsful and advantageous iſſue of its operation! *As the rain cometh down, and the ſnow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give ſeed to the ſower, and bread to the eater: ſo ſhall my word be, that goeth forth out of my mouth: it ſhall not return unto me void, but ſhall accompliſh that which I pleaſe, and it ſhall proſper in the thing whereunto I ſent it* *.

NATURE, at length, puts off her lucid veil. She drops it in a trickling *thaw*. The looſened ſnow rolls in ſheets from the houſes. Various openings ſpot the hills; which, even while we look, become larger, and more numerous. The trees rid themſelves, by degrees, of the hoary incumberance. Shook from the ſpringing boughs, part falls heavy to the ground, part flies abroad in ſhining atoms. Our fields and gardens, lately buried beneath the drifted heaps, riſe plain and diſtinct to view.—Since we ſee nature once again, has ſhe no verdant traces, no beautiful features, left? They are, like real friends, very rare; and therefore the more particularly to be regarded, the more highly to be valued.—Here and there the *holly* hangs out her glowing berries; the *lauruſtinus* ſpreads her graceful tufts; and both under a covert of unfading foliage.—The plain, but hardy *ivy*, clothes the decrepit, crazy wall; nor ſhrinks from the friendly office, though the ſkies frown, and the ſtorm roars.—The *laurel*, firm, erect, and bold, expands its leaf of vivid green. In ſpite of the united, the repeated attacks of wind, and rain, and froſt, it preſerves an undiſmayed lively look; and maintains its poſt, while withering millions fall around. Worthy, by vanquiſhing the rugged force of winter, worthy to adorn the triumphant conqueror's brow.——Nor muſt I forget the *bay-tree*; which ſcorns to be a mean penſioner on a few tranſient ſunny gleams; or, with a ſervile obſequiouſneſs, to vary its appearance, in conformity to the changing ſeaſons: by ſuch indications of ſterling worth, and ſtaunch reſolution, reading a lecture to the poet's genius, while it weaves the chaplet for his temples.——Theſe, and a few other plants, clad with native verdure, retain their comely aſpect, in the bleakeſt climes, and in the coldeſt months.

Such, and ſo durable, are the accompliſhments of a *refined* underſtanding, and an *amiable* temper. The tawdry ornaments of dreſs, which catch the unthinking vulgar, ſoon become inſipid and deſpicable. The rubied lip, and the roſy cheek fade. Even the ſparkling wit †, as well as the ſparkling eye, pleaſe but for a moment. But the virtuous mind has charms, which ſurvive the decay of every inferior embelliſhment; charms, which add to the fragrancy of the flower, the *permanency* of the *ever-green*.

* Iſ. lv. 10. 11.

† "How little does GOD eſteem the things that men count "great; the endowments of *wit* and eloquence, that *men* admire "in ſome! Alas! how poor are they to him! He reſpecteth not "any who are wiſe in heart: they are nothing, and leſs than no-"thing, in his eyes. Even *wiſe* men admire, how little it is that "men know; how ſmall a matter lies under the ſound of theſe "popular wonders, a learned man, a great ſcholar, a great ſtateſ-"man. How much more doth the all-wiſe GOD meanly account "of theſe! He often diſcovers, even to the world, their mean-"neſs. He *befools* them. So valour, or birth, or wordly great-"neſs, theſe he gives, and gives as things he makes no great "reckoning of, to ſuch as ſhall never ſee his face; and calls to "the inheritance of glory poor deſpiſed creatures, that are looked "on as the *off-ſcourings* and *refuſe* of the world."

——*THUS* ſays an excellent author; who writes with the moſt amiable ſpirit of benevolence; with the moſt unaffected air of humility; and, like the ſacred originals, from which he copies with a majeſtic ſimplicity of ſtyle.——Whoſe *ſelect works* I may venture to recommend, not only as a treaſure, but as a MINE of genuine, ſterling, evangelical piety.——See page 520, of]

* Can any thing be whiter than ſnow? Yes, ſaith *David*: If GOD be pleaſed to waſh me from my ſins in the blood of CHRIST, *I ſhall be even whiter than ſnow*. Pſal. li. 7. See page 87.]

† This animal is milk-white. As for thoſe *black ſpots*, which we generally ſee in linings of ermine, they are added by the furrier, in order to diverſify the appearance, or heighten the beauty, of the native colour.

‡ Job xxxvii. 7.

Such, likewiſe, is the happineſs of the ſincerely-religious; like a tree, ſays the inſpired moraliſt, "whoſe "leaf ſhall not fall." He borrows not his peace from external circumſtances; but has a fund within, and is "ſatisfied from himſelf *." Even though impoveriſhed by calamitous accidents, he is rich in the *poſſeſſion* of *grace*, and richer in the *hope* of *glory*. His joys are infinitely ſuperior to, as well as nobly independent on, the tranſitory glow of ſenſual delight, or the capricious favours of what the world calls fortune.

If the *ſnow* compoſes the light-armed troops of the ſky, methinks the *hail* conſtitutes its heavy artillery †. When driven by a vehement wind, with what dreadful impetuoſity does that ſtony ſhower fall! How it rebounds from the frozen ground, and rattles on the reſounding dome! It attenuates the rivers into ſmoke, or ſcourges them into foam. It cruſhes the infant flowers; cuts in pieces the gardener's early plants; and batters the feeble fortification of his glaſſes into ſhivers. It darts into the traveller's face: he turns, with haſte, from the ſtroke; or feels, on his cheek, for the guſhing blood. If he would retreat into the houſe, it follows him even thither; and, like a determined enemy, that puſhes the purſuit, daſhes through the crackling panes.—But the fierce attack is quickly over. The clouds have ſoon ſpent their ſhafts; ſoon unſtrung their bow. Happy for the inhabitants of the earth, that a ſally ſo dreadfully *furious*, ſhould be ſo remarkably *ſhort!* What elſe could endure the ſhock, or eſcape deſtruction?

But behold a *bow*, of no hoſtile intention! a bow, painted in variegated colours, on the diſburdened cloud. How vaſt is the extent, how delicate the texture, of that *ſhowery arch!* It compaſſeth the heavens with a glorious circle, and teaches us to forget the horrors of the ſtorm. Elegant its form, and rich its tincture; but more delightful its ſacred ſignificancy. While the violet and the roſe bluſh in its beautiful aſpect, the olive-branch ſmiles in its gracious import. It writes, in radiant dyes, what the angels ſung in harmonious ſtrains; "peace "on earth, and good-will towards men." It is the ſtamp of *inſurance*, for the continuance of ſeed-time and harveſt; for the preſervation and ſecurity of the viſible world *. It is the comfortable *token* † of a better ſtate, and a happier kingdom;—a kingdom, where ſin ſhall ceaſe, and miſery be aboliſhed; where ſtorms ſhall beat, and winter pierce no more; but holineſs, happineſs, and joy, like one unbounded *ſpring*, for ever, ever bloom.

of Archbiſhop LEIGHTON's *ſelect works*, the *Edinburgh* edition, octavo. Which it is neceſſary to ſpecify, becauſe the *London* edition does not contain that part of his writings which has ſupplied me with the preceding *quotation*.

* Prov. xiv. 14.

† *He caſteth forth his ice like morſels.* Pſal. cxlvii. 17. Which, in modern language, might be thus expreſſed: *He poureth his hail like a volley of ſhot.* The word פתים, inadequately tranſlated *morſels*, alludes, I think, to thoſe *fragments* of the rock, or thoſe *ſmooth ſtones* from the brook, which, in the day of battle, the warriors hurled from their ſlings.

* Gen. ix. 12.—16. † Rev. iv. 3.

An IMITATION of MR HERVEY'S MEDITATIONS.

Wrote by a young Lady, in 1750.

☞ *See above, p. 25—50.*

THE ſhortening days, the ſullen clouds, grown dark and ponderous with the gathering rain; the frigid air, which ſtrikes unwelcome on the tender frame, (but ſhews what *Albion*'s ſons could once endure), proclaim the approach of winter. —See! how the trees, as though they felt a ſhock like human diſſolution, now drop their leafy honours:—ſome, you may obſerve, like feeble old age, hang tottering in the air, till a gentle breeze breaks the tender fibre that ſupports them and throws them relentleſs on the ground. They fall unlamented, when they can no longer delight our eyes; and are no ſooner diſſolved, than forgot: one ſummer's beauty is all they can pretend to; whilſt the lofty fir, though greatly eclipſed by theſe gay ſtrangers in the bloom of their youth, yet far exceeds them in the duration of her charms. The beauty of the fir is always the ſame, and periſhes only with her exiſtence.

A lively emblem this, of the inſtability and worthleſſneſs of mortal charms.—How mutable is the happineſs of thoſe thoughtleſs women, who place all their felicity in admiration!—Admiration from whom? Not from the wiſe and prudent, that were well worth their aim; but from perſons light and trifling as themſelves: for ſuch alone pay court to poliſhed duſt.—— Perhaps, they paſs the bloom of their youth without one ſerious thought; and what a fund of impertinence do they then treaſure up for the remainder of their days! which, when all theſe gay fantaſtic viſions fade, when every outward charm is fled, grows quite inſupportable.—How can they bear the ſhock of approaching age? which (like autumn by the trees) diſrobes them of every attractive grace.——The perfections we are by the flattering world allowed, whilſt we have beauty, too often, at leaſt the praiſe of them, vaniſh with it, and leave nothing but malice and envy to fill up the great void of uncultivated ſenſe:—they drop like the withered leaves, neglected if not deſpiſed; and, like the path of a ſwift arrow through the inviſible air, leave no traces of virtue or goodneſs, whereby they may be remembered.—How much happier they, who, in the midſt of their childiſh, innocent amuſements, experience the effects of a true parental care; who are taught "to remember their Creator in the "days of their youth, while the evil days come not, "and the years wherein they ſhall (truly) ſay, I have "no pleaſure in them;" and are early informed (before the trifling joys of this world have made too deep an impreſſion on their tender minds), that all is vanity; that religion, wiſdom, and virtue, are the only permanent enjoyments in this world, and will be their only conſolation when they ſink into another. Beauty is no farther of advantage to us than as it is an embelliſhment to ſenſe, and makes virtue appear more amiable: but when it is only a maſk to vice or folly; when it perſuades the owner to neglect the attainment of all other accom-

accomplishments, the blessing then degenerates into a curse, and we quickly despise the idle flatterer; in short, "the praise that is worth ambition, is attained by good "sense alone, with dignity of mind;" and a woman of true sense will be always ambitious,—not of gaining admiration, but of deserving it.

I must own myself obliged to Mr *Hervey*'s *Meditations*, for this poor imitation of him. The two volumes published under that title, cannot, I think, be sufficiently admired: His *Reflections* are so easy and natural, that, upon reading them, you cannot help being surprised, that the objects which furnished him with those beautiful ideas, did not in the same manner affect you upon the like occasions, till you consider the dignity of style in which they are wrote:—You are then immediately convinced, that this is only to be attained by a bright understanding, refined by a liberal education.—I can't, for my own part, conceive any thing (in this world) to be more thoroughly conducive to happiness than such a genius, where every object round him raises his admiration, and excites his thankfulness to that Being, whose blessings he only truly enjoys, who PROPERLY esteems them; there is nothing such a one beholds, but what he can apply to the good of himself, and of his fellow-creatures.

A TABLE OF THE TEXTS

More or *less* illustrated in this WORK.

N. B. As Dr *Shaw*, in the supplement to his *excellent* book of Travels, and several other authors of the *greatest* eminence, have given an index of Scriptures, occasionally explained in their writings; I doubt not, but I shall oblige *many* of my readers, by what I *here* subjoin; those especially, whose taste is happily formed to relish the beauties of the sacred records.

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THE END OF THE MEDITATIONS.

THERON AND ASPASIO:

OR, A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES

AND

LETTERS,

UPON THE

Moſt *important* and *intereſting* SUBJECTS.

The memorial of thine abundant kindneſs *ſhall be ſhewed, and men ſhall ſing of thy* righteouſneſs, Pſal. cxlv. 7.
My mouth ſhall daily ſpeak of thy righteouſneſs *and* ſalvation; *for I know no end thereof.* Pſal. lxxi. 13.
For Zion's *ſake will I not hold my peace, and for* Jeruſalem's *ſake I will not reſt, until the* righteouſneſs *thereof go forth as brightneſs, and the* ſalvation *thereof as a lamp that burneth.* Iſ. lxii. 1.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

Lady FRANCES SHIRLEY.

MADAM,

IF Chriſtianity was inconſiſtent with true *politeneſs*, or prejudicial to real *happineſs*, I ſhould be extremely injudicious, and inexcuſably ungrateful, in preſenting theſe eſſays to your LADYSHIP. But as the religion of *JESUS* is the grand ornament of our nature, and a ſource of the ſublimeſt joy, the purport of the following pages cannot be unworthy the countenance and protection of the *moſt accompliſhed* perſon. Neither can there be a wiſh more ſuitable to the obligations or the dictates of *a grateful* heart, than that you may experience what you read, and *be* what you patronize.

DID religion conſiſt in a *formal* round of external obſervances, or a *forced* ſubmiſſion to ſome rigorous auſterities, I ſhould not ſcruple to join with the infidel and the ſenſualiſt, to dread it in one view, and to deſpiſe it in another. You need not be informed MADAM, that it is as much ſuperior to all ſuch *low* and *forbidding* ſingularities, as the heavens are higher than the earth. It is deſcribed by an author, who learned its theory in the regions of paradiſe, and who diſplayed its efficacy in his own moſt exemplary converſation;—it is thus deſcribed by that incomparable author; *The kingdom of GOD is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the HOLY GHOST.*

To be reconciled to the omnipotent GOD;——to be intereſted in the unſearchable riches of *CHRIST*;——to be renewed in our hearts, and influenced in our lives, by the ſanctifying opera-

tious of the divine SPIRIT;—this is *evangelical* right-eousneſs; this is *genuine* religion; this, MADAM, is the kingdom of GOD eſtabliſhed in the ſoul.—How benign and inviting is ſuch an inſtitution! How honourable and advantageous ſuch a ſtate! And from ſuch privileges, what other effects can flow, but that *peace, which paſſeth all underſtanding?* that *joy, which is unſpeakable and glorious?*

Is there any thing in the amuſements of the gay, and purſuits of the ambitious, of greater, of equal, of comparable value? Is not all that wealth can purchaſe, all that grandeur can beſtow, ſomewhat like thoſe glittering bubbles, which when viewed are *emptineſs*, when graſped are *nothing?* Whereas, the comforts, the benefits, the hopes of Chriſtianity, are at once ſupremely excellent, and infinitely durable: a portion, ſuited to the dignity of a rational ſoul; large as its faculties, and immortal as its being.

ALL theſe bleſſings are centered in *CHRIST*, were purchaſed by *CHRIST*; are communicated from *CHRIST*.——It is for want of knowing thoſe boundleſs and everlaſting treaſures of *pardoning, juſtifying, ſaving* merit, which the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* poſſeſſes, and which he freely diſpenſes even to ſinners, that ſo many *unthinking* perſons are attached to ignoble objects, and beguiled by deluſory pleaſures. *Unhappy* creatures! what can they do, but catch at ſhadows, and ſtoop at trifles, while they are ignorant of the grand, the ſubſtantial, the exalted good?—It is for want of duly attending to that fulneſs of grace, and that plenteouſneſs of redemption, which dwell in our moſt adorable SAVIOUR, that ſo many *ſerious* perſons are ſtrangers to the tranquillity and ſweetneſs of religion; are ſubject to all its reſtraints, but enjoy few, if any, of its delights. *Miſtaken* zealots! how can they avoid the gloomy ſituation and the uncomfortable circumſtance, ſo long as they withdraw themſelves from the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and his all-chearing beams?

MAY your LADYSHIP live continually under his heavenly light and healing wings! be more fully aſſured of his dying love, and have brighter, ſtill brighter manifeſtations of his immenſe perfections! By theſe delightful views, and by that precious faith, may your heart be transformed into his *holy*, his *amiable*, his *divine* image! Your happineſs will then be juſt ſuch as is wiſhed, but far greater than can be expreſſed by,

MADAM,

Your moſt obliged, and

Moſt obedient, humble ſervant,

Weſton-Favell,
Jan. 6. 1755.

JAMES HERVEY.

PREFACE.

THE reader will probably expect ſome account of the enſuing work; and to gratify him in this particular, will be a real pleaſure to the author.

The beauty and excellency of the *Scriptures*;—the ruin and *depravity* of human nature;—its happy *recovery*, founded on the atonement, and effected by the SPIRIT, of *CHRIST*;—theſe are *ſome* of the chief points, vindicated, illuſtrated, and applied in the following ſheets.——But the *grand* article, that which makes the principal figure, is the IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS of our divine LORD; from whence ariſes our juſtification before GOD and our title to every heavenly bleſſing: An article, which, though eminent for its importance, ſeems to be little underſtood, and leſs regarded; if not much miſtaken, and almoſt forgotten.

The *importance* of this great evangelical doctrine,—how worthy it is of the moſt attentive conſideration, and of univerſal acceptance,—is hinted in the ſecond dialogue. So that I need, in this place, do nothing more, than give the ſenſe of a paſſage from *Witſius*, which is there introduced in the notes.—"The doctrine of juſti-"fication," ſays that excellent author. "ſpreads itſelf "through the whole ſyſtem of divinity. As this is "either ſolidly eſtabliſhed, or ſuperficially touched; "fully ſtated, or ſlightly diſmiſſed; accordingly, the "whole ſtructure of religion, either riſes graceful and "magnificent, ſuperior to aſſault, and beyond the power "of decay; or elſe it appears diſproportionate and de-"fective, totters on its foundation, and threatens an op-"probrious fall."

The deſign is executed in the form of *dialogue*; thoſe parts only excepted, in which it was not eaſy to carry on a converſation, and aſſign to each perſon a proper degree of ſignificancy. Here, to avoid the common imputation, of bringing upon the ſtage a *mute* or a *ſhadow*,—one who fights without weapons, and ſub-

mits

mits without a conteſt,—the ſcene ſhifts. Our gentlemen ſeparate; and, inſtead of converſing, enter upon an *epiſtolary* correſpondence.

The dialogue-form ſeems, on many conſiderations, a very eligible way of writing.——Hereby the author gives an air both of dignity and of modeſty to his ſentiments. *Of dignity*; by delivering them from the mouths of perſons in every reſpect ſuperior to himſelf. *Of modeſty*; becauſe we no longer conſider him in the raiſed, but invidious capacity of a teacher. Inſtead of calling us to his feet, and dictating his precepts, he gratifies our *curioſity*. He turns back a curtain, and admits us to ſome remarkable interviews, or intereſting conferences. We overhear, by a kind of innocent or imaginary ſtealth, the debates which paſs in the receſſes of privacy; which are carried on with the moſt unreſerved freedom of ſpeech, and openneſs of heart.——A circumſtance, which will *apologize* for ſome peculiarities, that might otherwiſe be inconſiſtent with humility, or offenſive to delicacy. Particularly, it may obviate the diſguſt which generally, and indeed deſervedly, attends the frequent intruſion of that ambitious and uſurping little monoſyllable, *I*.

The *names* of the perſons are prefixed, each to his reſpective ſhare of the diſcourſe; in imitation of *Cicero*, and for the reaſons which he aſſigns. *Quaſi enim ipſos induxi loquentes: ne* inquam *et* inquit *ſæpius interponerentur. Atque id eo feci, ut tanquam præſentibus coram haberi ſermo videretur* *. This method, he very juſtly intimates, is removed fartheſt from the narrative, and makes the neareſt approaches to *life* and *reality*. It quite ſecretes the author; and, by introducing the perſons themſelves, renders all that paſſes entirely their own.——It prevents likewiſe the repetition of thoſe interlocutory words, *He ſaid, he replied*. Which, unleſs the ſpeeches are very long, muſt frequently recur, and have no pleaſing effect upon the ear. And, if the ſpeeches are long, the ſpirit of converſation is loſt. The aſſociates are no longer talking; but one of them, or the author, is *lecturing*.

Though I have ſo much to ſay in behalf of the model, I have very little to ſay with regard to the *execution*,—unleſs it be to confeſs the deficiency. There is not, I am ſenſible, that *peculiar* air and *diſtinguiſhing* turn, which ſhould mark and characteriſe each ſpeaker. This is what the nature of finiſhed dialogue requires, and what the author applauds in ſome very ſuperior writers. But not having the ability to copy it, he has not the vanity to affect it.——Nevertheleſs, the attentive reader will, all along, perceive a difference in the *ſentiment*, if not in the language. The materials vary, even when they run into the ſame mould, and take the ſame form.——In the diction alſo there muſt be *ſome* diverſity; becauſe ſeveral of the objections are propoſed in the very words of one or two eminent writers, who have appeared on the other ſide of the queſtion. Theſe are not particularized by the mark of quotation; becauſe the man of *reading* will have no occaſion for the aſſiſtance of ſuch an index, and the man of *taſte* will probably diſcern them by the ſingularity of the ſtyle.

Some of the following pieces it muſt be acknowledged, are of the *controverſial* kind: A ſpecies of writing, leaſt ſuſceptible of the graces which embelliſh compoſition; or rather, moſt deſtitute of the attractives which engage attention, and create delight.—Yet I have ſometimes thought, that it is not abſolutely impoſſible to make even the *ſtern* face of controverſy wear a ſmile, and to reap ſome valuable fruit from the *rugged* furrows of diſputation. Whether this is effected in the preſent work, the public muſt judge; that it has been attempted, the author may be permitted to declare.

To ſoften the aſperities of argument, *views* of *nature* are interſperſed. That, if the former ſhould carry the appearance of a rude entangled foreſt, or of a frowning gloomy receſs, there may be ſome agreeable *openings*, and lightſome *avenues*, to admit a proſpect of the country; which is always arrayed in charms, and never fails to pleaſe.

The author confeſſes a very peculiar fondneſs for the amiable ſcenes of creation. It is therefore not at all improbable, but his excurſions, on this topic, may be of the *diffuſive* kind, and his deſcriptions ſomewhat *luxuriant*. It is hoped, however, that the benevolent reader will indulge him in this favourite foible.——If any ſhould feel the ſame prevailing paſſion for the beauties of nature, 'tis poſſible theſe perſons may be inclined, not only to *excuſe*, but to *approve* the fault; and may take part with the lover, even in oppoſition to the critic.

Farther to diverſify the piece, *ſketches* of *philoſophy* are introduced; eaſy to be underſtood, and calculated to entertain the imagination, as well as to improve the heart; more particularly, to diſplay the *wiſe* and *beneficent* deſign of Providence, in the various appearances and numberleſs productions of the material world. Neither are theſe remarks altogether foreign to the main point; but, as far as the wonders of creation may comport with the riches of grace, *ſubſerve* the general end.

As to the *choice* of my ſubjects;——ſome people have deſired to ſee an invective againſt the *faſhionable* and *predominant* vices of the age. This, I apprehend, would be like picking off the leaves, or clipping away the twigs, from ſome overgrown and noxious tree. Waving this tedious and ineffectual toil, I would rather lay the axe to the root. Let the knowledge and love of CHRIST take place in the heart, and not only a *few* of the *branches*, but the *whole body* of ſin, will fall at once.

Some would have the author inſiſt upon the conſcientious obſervation of the ſabbath, inculcate the daily worſhip of GOD in the family, and urge a devout attendance on the public ordinances of religion.——But when a perſon is convinced of ſin, and made ſenſible of miſery; when he has *taſted the good word of GOD* *, *and ſeen by faith the LORD*'s CHRIST †; he will want no ſolicitation or incitement to theſe means of grace, and exerciſes of godlineſs. He will have juſt the ſame diſpoſition to them all, as the *hungry* appetite has to wholeſome food, or the *new-born* babe ‡ to the milk of the breaſt.

Others may imagine, that I have neglected the intereſts of *morality*; becauſe here is no profeſſed attempt to delineate its duties, or enforce its practice.——Let theſe *perſons* remember, that morality never makes ſuch *vigorous* ſhoots, never produces ſuch *generous* fruit, as when ingrafted on evangelical principles.——And if I do not crop the pink, the roſe, and the carnation; if I do not gather the peach, the nectarine, and the pine-apple; and put them into my reader's hand, for his immediate enjoyment: I am endeavouring to ſow the *ſeeds*, and plant the *roots* in his garden; which, if cheriſhed by the favourable influence of heaven, will yield him, not an *occaſional*, but a *conſtant* ſupply of all.

As ſeveral texts of ſcripture come under conſideration, *criticiſms* upon the original are frequently ſubjoined; in order to clear up ſome difficulties, to rectify ſome miſtranſlations, or point out the many delicate and maſterly ſtrokes, which occur in the *Bible*.——And glad ſhould I be, extremely glad, if I might recommend and endear that invaluable book; if, as the divine REDEEMER *rideth on in the word of truth, of meekneſs, and righteouſneſs* ‖,

* De Amicitia.

* Heb. vi. 5. † Luke ii. 26.

‡ 1 Pet. ii. 2. This compariſon is, perhaps, the moſt *exact* and *expreſſive* that words can form, or fancy conceive. Babes covet nothing but the milk of the breaſt. They are indifferent about all other things. Give them riches, give them honours, give them whatever you pleaſe, without this rich, delicious, balmy nutriment, they will not, they cannot be ſatisfied.—How finely does this illuſtrate, and how forcibly inculcate, what our LORD ſtyles, *the ſingle eye*, and *the one thing needful*! or the ſalutary doctrines and delightful privileges of the goſpel; together with that ſupreme value for them, and undivided complacency in them, which are the diſtinguiſhing character of *the Chriſtian*!

‖ Pſal. xlv. 4.

this

this hand might ſcatter a palm-branch, or this performance might lie as a floweret, to ſtrew his way *, and ſolemnize his triumph.

In the courſe of the diſputation, I dare not ſuppoſe that I have diſcuſſed *all* the *arguments*, which ſagacity may deviſe, or ſophiſtry urge. Perhaps, I have not removed *all* the *ſcruples*, which may awaken prejudice, or embarraſs integrity. This, however, I may venture to affirm, that I myſelf have met with no conſiderable objection, which is not either expreſsly anſwered, or virtually refuted, in theſe conferences.—And, though I ſhould neither ſatisfy nor ſilence the gainſayer, I ſhall think my endeavours happily employed, if they may throw light upon the *dim* apprehenſion; eſtabliſh the *wavering* faith; or comfort the *afflicted* conſcience.

If any ſhould burleſque or ridicule theſe venerable truths, and exalted privileges, I ſhall only ſay with my divine MASTER; *O! that thou hadſt known, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! but now they are hid*, it is evident from ſuch a procedure, *they are hid from thine eyes* †.—Should any, in the ſpirit of *deceney* and *candor*, either ſtart new, or revive old objections, I doubt not but they will receive both a due examination and a proper reply. As theſe doctrines enter into the very *eſſence* of the goſpel, and conſtitute the *glory* of our religion, they can never want a ſucceſſion of advocates, ſo long as the ſun and moon endure.—For my own part, I muſt beg leave to retire from the liſts, and lay down the weapons of controverſy. *Virgil*'s language is my reſolution;

Diſcedam, explebo numerum, reddarque tenebris.

This declaration is made, not from any the leaſt ſuſpicion, that my tenets are *indefenſible*; but becauſe I would apprize my friends, and the friends of our common Chriſtianity, that the field is *clear* and *open* for them to advance; that I reſign to others the glorious combat; and ſhall content myſelf with wiſhing them ſucceſs in the name of the LORD.—Becauſe it becomes a perſon in my *declining* ſtate, to be more peculiarly intent upon encountering a different adverſary; who is ſure to overcome, and never allows quarter. Yet, by this *word of my teſtimony*, and *by the blood of the LAMB* ‡, I hope to triumph even when I fall; and to be more than conqueror, through JEHOVAH *my righteouſneſs*.

* Alluding to Matth. xxi. 8.

† Luke xix. 42. ‡ Rev. xii. 11.

Should any thing be urged, forcible enough to overthrow my arguments, or detect a miſtake in my ſentiments, the world may depend upon ſeeing a *free* and *undiſſembled* retractation. I ſhall look upon it as a duty, which I owe to my conſcience, to my readers, and to my GOD, publicly to acknowledge the error.—It is one thing to be *ſilent*; another to be *obſtinate*. As I ſhall inflexibly adhere to the firſt, I would with equal ſteadineſs renounce the laſt. Though I withdraw from the ſtrife of pens and of tongues, I ſhall take care to preſerve a mind ever acceſſible to truth, ever open to conviction; a mind infinitely more concerned for the *purity* and *proſperity* of the everlaſting goſpel, than for the prevalence of my own opinion, or the credit of my own performance.

As I have the happineſs of being a member, and the honour of being a miniſter, of the reformed *eſtabliſhed church*; I cannot but reflect, with a peculiar pleaſure, that every doctrine of note, maintained in theſe dialogues and letters, is either implied in our *liturgy*, aſſerted in our *articles*, or taught in our *homilies*.—It affords me likewiſe ſome degree of ſatisfaction to obſerve, that the moſt material of the ſentiments have been adopted by *Milton*; are incorporated into his *Paradiſe Loſt*; and add dignity to the ſublimeſt poem in the world.—To have the higheſt human authority, and the firſt genius of the nation, on a writer's ſide, is no contemptible ſupport. This muſt ſurely give a ſanction, where-ever our religious *eſtabliſhment* is reverenced, or polite *literature* is held in repute. Yet even this ſanction, compared with the oracle of revelation, is only like a range of cyphers, connected with the initial figure: which, were they *detached*, would be inſignificant; but, in ſuch a *ſubordination*, are conſiderable.

Perhaps it ſhould be farther acknowledged, that I have not alwaysconfined myſelf to the method of our *ſyſtematic* writers, nor followed their train of thoughts with a ſcrupulous regularity. I would conduct my fellow-creature to the ſupreme and eternal good, *CHRIST JESUS*. I have choſen the path which ſeemed moſt *agreeable* and *inviting*, rather than moſt beaten and frequented. If this leads, with equal certainty, to the great and deſirable end, I dare promiſe myſelf an eaſy excuſe. —However, that *method* and *order*, in the doctrinal parts of the plan, are not wholly neglected, the following ſummary of contents may ſhew.

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THERON AND ASPASIO:

OR, A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES.

DIALOGUE I.

THERON was a gentleman of fine taſte; of accurate rather than extenſive reading; and particularly charmed with the ſtudy of nature. He traced the planets in their courſes, and examined the formation of the meaneſt vegetable; not merely to gratify a *refined* curioſity, but chiefly to cultivate the *nobler* principles of religion and morality. Several diſcoveries he made, and every diſcovery he improved, to this important end,—to raiſe in his mind more exalted apprehenſions of the SUPREME BEING,—and to enlarge his affections with *diſintereſted* benevolence, conformable, in ſome degree, to that boundleſs liberality which pervades and animates the whole creation.

ASPASIO was not without his ſhare of polite literature, and philoſophical knowledge. He had taken a tour through the circle of the ſciences; and, having tranſiently ſurveyed the productions of *human* learning, devoted his final attention to the *inſpired* writings. Theſe he ſtudied with the unbiaſſed impartiality of a critic, yet with the reverential ſimplicity of a Chriſtian. Theſe he regarded, as the *unerring* ſtandard of duty,—the *authentic* charter of ſalvation,—and the *brighteſt* mirror of the DEITY; affording the moſt ſatisfactory and ſublime diſplay of all the divine attributes.

Theron was ſomewhat warm in his temper; and would, upon occaſion, make uſe of a little innocent raillery; not to expoſe his friend, but to enliven the converſation; ſometimes *diſguiſing* his real ſentiments, in order to ſift the ſubject, or diſcover the opinion of others.——*Aſpaſio* ſeldom indulges the humorous or ſatirical vein, but argues with *meekneſs of wiſdom* *: never puts on the appearance of guile, but always ſpeaks the dictates of his heart.

Aſpaſio was on a viſit at *Theron*'s ſeat.——One evening, when ſome neighbouring gentlemen we juſt gone, and had left them alone, the converſation took the following turn.

Aſp.—I would always be ready, both to acknowledge and applaud whatever is amiable in the conduct of others. The gentlemen who gave us their company at dinner, ſeem to be all of a *different* character: yet each, in his own way, is extremely *agreeable*.

Lyſander has lively parts, and is quick at repartee; but he never abuſes his wit to create uneaſineſs in the honeſt heart, and fluſh the modeſt cheek with confuſion.——What ſolidity of judgment, and depth of penetration, appear in *Crito*! yet how free are his diſcourſes from the magiſterial tone, or the dictatorial ſolemnity!——*Philenor*'s taſte in the polite arts is remarkably correct; yet without the leaſt tincture of vanity, or any weak fondneſs for applauſe. He never interrupts the progreſs, or wreſts the topic of converſation, in order to ſhine in his particular province.——*Trebonius*, I find, has ſignalized his valour in ſeveral campaigns. Though a warrior and a traveller, he gives himſelf no overbearing or oſtentatious airs. In *Tribonius*, you ſee the brave officer, regulated by all the decency of the academic, and ſweetened with all the affability of the courtier.

No one affects *moroſe* ſilence, or aſſumes an *immoderate* loquacity *. To ingroſs the talk, is tyrannical; to ſeal up the lips, is monkiſh. Every one, therefore, from a fund of good ſenſe, contributes his quota; and each ſpeaks, not with an ambition to *ſet off* himſelf, but from a deſire to *pleaſe* the company.

Ther. Indeed, *Aſpaſio*, I think myſelf happy in this accompliſhed ſet of acquaintance; who add all the complaiſance and politeneſs of the gentleman, to the benevolence and fidelity of the friend.

Their converſation is as innocent, as their taſte is refined.——They have a noble abhorrence of *ſlander*, and deteſt the low ungenerous artifices of *detraction*.——No *looſe jeſt* has either the ſervice of their tongue, or the ſanction of their ſmile.——Was you to be with them, even in their freeſt moments, you would hear nothing that ſo much as borders upon *profaneneſs*, or is in the leaſt injurious to *purity* of morals.

Aſp. There is but *one* qualification wanting to render your friends completely valuable, and their ſocial interviews a continual bleſſing.

Ther. Pray, what is that?

Aſp. A turn for *more ſerious* conferences.——Their literary debates are beautiful ſketches of whatever is moſt curious in the ſciences, or moſt delicate in the arts. From their remarks on our national affairs, and on foreign occurrences, a perſon may almoſt form a ſyſtem of politics.—But they never touch up-

* *Mitis ſapientis Lalia,* HOR.
is a moſt amiable character, and delicately drawn; but is, I think, expreſſed with greater ſtrength and ſuperior beauty by the ſacred penman; *Let him ſhew out of a good converſation his works with* meekneſs of wiſdom. *Jam.* iii. 13.

* *Zeno* being preſent, where a perſon of this loquacious diſpoſition played himſelf off, ſaid, with an air of concern in his countenance, *That poor gentleman is ill, he has a violent flux upon him.* The company was alarmed, and the rhetorician ſtopped in his career. *Yes*, added the philoſopher, *the flux is ſo violent, that it has carried his ears into his tongue.*

on

on any topic of *morality*; never celebrate the *ſublime perfections* of the DEITY; never illuſtrate the beauties, nor enforce the truths——

Ther. Fie upon you, *Aſpaſio*, for your unpolite hint! Who can forbear interrupting the harangue, which pleads for ſuch an outrageous violation of the *mode*? would introduce *edifying* talk into our *faſhionable* aſſemblies! How is it that you, who, in other inſtances, are a gentleman of refinement, can be ſo ſtrangely inelegant in this particular?

Aſp. For ſuch a practice, *Theron*, we have no inconſiderable precedents.—Thus *Socrates* *, the wiſeſt of the *Athenian* ſages; thus *Scipio* †, the moſt accompliſhed of the *Roman* generals, converſed.——Thus *Cicero* ‡, the prince of orators, improved his elegant retirement at the *Tuſculan* villa. And *Horace* ‖, the brigheſt genius in the court of *Auguſtus*, formed the moſt agreeable hours of his converſation upon this very plan.

Was I to enumerate all the patrons of this, forgive me if I ſay *more honourable* mode; the moſt illuſtrious names of antiquity would appear on the liſt.

Ther. This practice, however extolled by the philoſophic gentry of ancient times, would make a very *ſingular* figure in the preſent age.

Aſp. And ſhould not the *copy*, after which the generality of mankind write, be *ſingularly correct*? Perſons of exalted fortune are the pattern for general imitation; are the copy, in conformity to which the inferior world adjuſt their manners, and regulate their behaviour. *They*, therefore, are under the ſtrongeſt obligations, not to give a *contemptible* ſtamp to the faſhion.—Benevolence to their fellow-creatures calls loudly upon them, a concern for the public good challenges it at their hands, that *they* ſignalize themſelves by a pre-eminence in all that is excellent.

Ther. Away, away with theſe *auſtere* notions! Such a ſtrain of converſation would *damp* the gaiety of our ſpirits, and *flatten* the reliſh of ſociety. It would turn the aſſembly into a conventicle, and make it lent all the year round.

Aſp. Can it then it be an auſtere practice, to cultivate the underſtanding, and improve the heart?—Can it damp the gaiety of our ſpirits, to refine them upon the plan of the higheſt perfection?—Or, will it flatten the reliſh of ſociety, to ſecure and anticipate everlaſting delights?

Ther. Everlaſting delights, Aſpaſio!—To talk of ſuch a ſubject, would be termed, in every circle of wit and gallantry, an uſurpation of the parſon's office; a *low* method of retailing by ſcraps, in the parlour, what the man in black vends by wholeſale from the pulpit.—It would infallibly marks us out for *pedants*; and, for ought I know, might expoſe us to the ſuſpicion of *enthuſiaſm*.

Aſp. Your men of wit muſt excuſe me, if I cannot perſuade myſelf to admire either the *delicacy* of their language, or the *juſtneſs* of their opinion.

The firſt, be it ever ſo *humane* and *graceful*, I reſign to themſelves.—As for the other, I would beg leave to enquire, "Are the clergy, then, the *only* perſons, who "ſhould act the *becoming* part, and converſe like *rational* beings? Is ſolid wiſdom, and ſacred truth, the "privilege of their order; while nothing is left for "you and me, but the play of fancy, or the luxuries of "ſenſe?"

I would farther aſk the circles of gallantry, "Where "is the impropriety of interweaving the *noble* doctrines "diſplayed by the preacher, with our common diſ"courſe? or, what the inconvenience of introducing the "*amiable* graces, recommended by his lectures, into our "ordinary practice?"

Will *ſuch* an exerciſe of our ſpeech rank us among pedants? Is *this* the badge of enthuſiaſm? A ſplendid and honourable badge truly! ſuch as muſt add weight to any cauſe, and worth to any character.

Ther. This would curb the ſprightly ſallies of *wit*, and extinguiſh that engaging glow of *good-humour* which enlivens our genteel intercourſes. Accordingly, you may obſerve, that if any *formal creature* takes upon him to mention, in polite company, a religious truth, or a text of ſcripture; the pretty chat, though ever ſo profuſely flowing, ſtagnates in an inſtant. Each voluble and facetious tongue ſeems to be ſtruck with a ſudden palſy. Every one wonders at the ſtrange man's face; and they all conclude him either *mad* or a *Methodiſt*.

Aſp. Agreeable ſtrokes of wit are by no means incompatible with uſeful converſation; unleſs we miſtake an *inſipid* vivacity or *fantaſtic* levity, for wit and facetiouſneſs.——Neither have I heard, that, among all our acts of parliament, any one has paſſed to *divorce* good-ſenſe and good-humour. Why may they not both reſide on the ſame lips, and both circulate through the ſame aſſembly?—For my own part, I would neither have our diſcourſe *ſoured* with auſterity, nor *evaporate* into impertinence; but unite (as a judicious ancient adviſes) the benefits of improvement, with the blandiſhments of pleaſantry *.——And as to your polite people: if they can find no more muſic in the *magpye*'s voice, than in the *nightingale*'s note; I muſt own myſelf as much ſurpriſed at *their* ears, as they are at the ſtrange man's face.

Ther. With all your grey-headed authorities, I fancy you will find very few proſelytes among the profeſſors of modern refinement. *Faſhion* is, with the world, the ſtandard of morals, as well as of cloaths; and he muſt be of a very *peculiar* turn indeed, who would chuſe to be ridiculous in either.

Aſp. Rather, *Theron*, he muſt be of a very *pliant* turn, who tamely delivers up his conduct to be moulded by a faſhion, which has neither true elegance to dignify it, nor the leaſt uſefulneſs to recommend it.

And which, I beſeech you, is moſt ridiculous?—He who ſervilely imitates every *idle* faſhion, and is the very *ape* of corrupt cuſtom?—Or he who aſſerts his native liberty, and reſolutely follows where *wiſdom* and *truth* lead the way?

Ther. Would you then obtrude religious diſcourſe upon *every* company? Conſider, *Aſpaſio*, what a *motley* figure this would make.—A wedding, and a ſermon!—quadrille, and St *Paul!*—the laſt new play, and primitive Chriſtianity!

Aſp. You know the rule, *Theron*, which is given by the great MASTER of our aſſemblies; *Caſt not your pearls before ſwine* †. Some there are ſo immerſed in ſenſuality, that they can reliſh nothing, but the coarſeſt huſks of converſation. To theſe, neither offer your pearls, nor proſtitute your intimacy.

But, when perſons of a liberal education, and elevated ſentiments,—when *theſe* meet together, why ſhould not their diſcourſe be ſuitable to the eminence of their rank, and the ſuperiority of their genius; raiſed far above the level of that *trite* and *effeminate* ſtrain,—"Upon my "honour, the actreſs topt her part. Heavens! how "charmingly ſhe ſung! how gracefully ſhe trod the "ſtage!"

Ther. Indeed, my *Aſpaſio*, I am entirely in your way of thinking; however I have hitherto put on the maſk.——The gift of ſpeech is one great prerogative of our rational nature. And 'tis pity that ſuch a ſuperi-

* Vid. *Socratis Memorabilia*, per Xenoph.

† See *Cicero*'s dialogue *de amicitia*; in which we are informed, that it was a cuſtomary practice with *Scipio*, with his polite friend *Lelius*, and ſome of the moſt diſtinguiſhed nobility of *Rome*, to diſcourſe upon the intereſts of the republic, and the immortality of the ſoul.

‡ Vid. *Tuſcul. Queſt.*

‖ Such were the interviews, of which he ſpeaks with a kind of rapture,

O noctes, cœnæque deum!

* *Cum quadam illecebra ac voluptate utiles.* AUL. GEL.

† Matth. vii. 6.

or

er faculty ſhould be debaſed to the meaneſt purpoſes.—Suppoſe all our ſtately veſſels, that paſs and repaſs the ocean, were to carry out nothing but tinſel, and theatrical decorations; were to import nothing but glittering baubles, and nicely-fancied toys: would ſuch a method of trading be well-judged in itſelf, or beneficial in its conſequences?—Articulate ſpeech is the inſtrument of a much nobler commerce, intended to tranſmit and diffuſe the treaſures of the mind. And will not the practice be altogether *as injudicious*, muſt not the iſſue be infinitely *more dertrimental*, if this vehicle of intellectual wealth is freighted only with *pleaſing fopperies?*

Aſp. Such folly and extravagance would be hiſſed out of the *commercial* world. Why then are they admitted and cheriſhed in the *ſocial?*

Ther. Why indeed? He muſt be far more acute than your *Theron*, who can aſſign a ſingle reaſon to countenance them. To explode them, ten thouſand arguments occur.—A continual round of gay and trifling converſation *, of viſits quite modiſh, and entertainments not moral, muſt give an indolent turn to the mind; ſuch as will *enervate* its powers, *indiſpoſe* it for generous action, and gradually *ſap* the very foundation of virtue.—Whereas, a frequent conference on the glories of the GODHEAD, or the wonders of creation, would invigorate and ennoble the ſoul; would enlarge her faculties, and elevate her deſires.

Aſp. Did not our hearts burn within us, ſaid the travellers at *Emmaus*, *while HE talked with us by the way* †? Thoſe diſcourſes, 'tis true, were conducted with a ſpirit, and enforced with an energy, abſolutely unequalled; yet the ſame happy effects would, in *ſome* degree, reſult from our friendly conferences, if they turned upon the ſame important points. We alſo ſhould feel our hearts *warmed* with holy zeal, and *glowing* with heavenly love.

Ther. Such conferences would not only be productive of *preſent* advantage, but yield a renewed pleaſure in the retroſpect, We might *reflect*, with real complacency, on hours ſpent in ſo rational a manner. And who would not prefer the ſilent applauſe of the heart, to all thoſe tumultuous joys, which wanton jeſts create, or the circling glaſs inſpires?

Aſp. One ‡ who thoroughly knew mankind, and had tried the merits of the jovial board, very pertinently compares ſuch flaſhes of mirth to the *crackling of thorns under a pot* ‖. The tranſient blaze of the one, and the ſenſeleſs noiſe of the other, continue but for a moment; and then expire, *that* in ſmoke and darkneſs, *this* in ſpleen and melancholy.

I ſaid, *ſpleen and melancholy.*—For however jauntee and alert the various methods of modiſh trifling may ſeem; whatever eaſe and grace they are ſuppoſed to give the converſation; ſure am I, it will be afflicted, to *look back* upon interviews ſquandered away in very vanity; and ſhocking, to *look forward* upon the account which we muſt all ſhortly render.—What figure will *ſuch* an article make in the final reckoning, and at the deciſive bar! "Our ſocial hours, which might have promoted "our mutual edification, and been ſubſervient to our "CREATOR's glory, all *loſt* in merriment and whim; "or *worſe than loſt*, in flattery and detraction. A *blank*, "or a *blot*."

Ther. Venus, we find, has her zealous knight-errants, and *Bacchus* his profeſſed votaries, in almoſt every company. And is it not truly deplorable, that the GOD of nature alone has none to aſſert his honour, none to celebrate his perfections? though HE is the *original* of all *beauty*, and *parent* of all *good*.

When I have taken my morning-walk amidſt dews and flowers: with the ſun ſhedding luſtre round him, and unveiling the happy landſcape; how has my eye been charmed with the lovely proſpect! how has my ear been raviſhed with the muſic of the grove! Methought every note was a *tribute* of harmony; and all nature ſeemed one *grand chorus*, ſwelling with the CREATOR's praiſe.—But how has the ſcene been reverſed, when, leaving my rural elyſium, I entered the haunts of men! where I ſaw faculties divine, meanly engaging in trifles; where I heard the tongue, prompt to utter, and fluent to expreſs, every thing but its MAKER's glory.

I aſſure you, I have often been chagrined on this occaſion; and ſometimes ſaid within myſelf,—"What! "ſhall *trifles* be regarded, and the MAJESTY of heaven neglected? Shall every friend, and every viſitant, "receive his ſhare of reſpect? and no acknowledgment "be paid to that exalted BEING, who is worthy, more "than worthy, of all our veneration?"

Aſp. This will be ſtill more afflictive to an ingenuous mind, if we conſider, that the infinite and glorious GOD is *preſent* at all our interviews; vouchſafes to expreſs his ſatisfaction, and acknowledges himſelf *magnified*, when with admiration and love, we talk of his tranſcendent excellencies.—Nay, we are aſſured, that the LORD of all lords not only hearkens, but keeps a *book of remembrance*; and will diſtinguiſh ſuch perſons, at the day of univerſal retribution. When the looſe train of licentious talkers are driven away as the deſpicable *chaff*; theſe ſhall be ſelected for his peculiar treaſure, and numbered among the *jewels* of JEHOVAH *.

Ther. If the gentlemen who make high pretenſions to reaſon, think themſelves diſcharged from theſe doctrines of revelation, they ſhould not forget *their own* ſcriptures.—A *philoſopher* will tell them the *duty* of employing their time, as in the awful preſence, and under the immediate inſpection, of the SUPREME BEING †.—An *orator* will ſhew them the egregious *impropriety* of waſting their friendly interviews, in the fumes of drollery, or the froth of impertinence ‡.

Aſp. Who then, that is wiſe, would not habituate himſelf to a practice, which comes recommended by the voice of reaſon, and is enforced by the authority of GOD?—A practice, which will adminiſter *preſent good*,—will afford *pleaſing reviews*,—and terminate in *everlaſting honour?*

Ther. 'Tis ſtrange, that ſubjects which deſerve to be received as the univerſal topic, are almoſt univerſally baniſhed from our diſcourſe.——Was this cabinet enriched with a ſeries of antique *medals*, or a collection of the fineſt *gems*; my friends would naturally expect to be entertained with a ſight of thoſe rarities, and an explanation of their meaning. Why ſhould we not as naturally expect, and as conſtantly agree, to entertain each other with remarks on thoſe *admirable curioſities*, which are depoſited in the boundleſs *muſæum* ‖ of the univerſe?

When a *general* has won ſome important victory, or an *admiral* has deſtroyed the enemy's fleet; every com-

* The *ſignificancy* and *importance* of ſuch converſation was ſmartly repreſented by the philoſopher; who, being aſked, how he left the company employed? made anſwer; *Some in milking the cow, others in holding the pail.*

† Luke xxvi. 32. ‡ King *Solomon.* ‖ Eccl. vii. 6.

* *Mal.* iii. 16. 17. This is a paſſage much to be obſerved. A moſt emphatical recommendation of religious diſcourſe! perhaps the moſt *emphatical* that ever was uſed, and the moſt *endearing* that can poſſibly be conceived.

† *Sic certe vivendum eſt, tanquam in conſpectu vivamus: ſic cogitandum, tanquam aliquis in pectus intimum inſpicere poſſit: et poteſt. Quid enim proſit ab homine aliquid eſſe ſecretum? Nihil Deo clauſum eſt. Intereſt animis noſtris, et cogitationibus mediis intervenit.* SENEC. epiſt. 83.

‡ *Cicero* ſays, with an air of graceful indignation; *Quaſi vero clarorum virorum aut tacitos congreſſus eſſe oportent, aut ludicros ſermones, aut rerum colloquia leviorum.* Academ. Quæſt. lib. IV.

‖ *Muſæum*—alluding to a remarkable edifice in the city of *Oxford*, diſtinguiſhed by this name; and appropriated to the reception of curioſities, both natural and artificial; and to the Britiſh Muſæum in *London*.

company resounds with their achievements; every tongue is the trumpet of their fame. And why should we not celebrate, with equal delight and ardor, that ALMIGHTY *hand*, which formed the structure, and furnished the regions, of this stupendous system?

Asp. Especially, if to his *immensely-glorious*, we add his *supremely-amiable* perfections.—When the victorious commander is our most cordial friend; when he has professed the tenderest love, done us the most signal good, and promised us a perpetual enjoyment of his favours; it will be impossible to neglect such an *illustrious* and *generous* person. His name must be engraven upon our hearts; must slide insensibly into our tongues; and be as music to our ears.

Is not all this true, and in the most super-eminent degree, with regard to the blessed GOD!—Can greater *kindness* be exercised, or greater *love* be conceived, than to deliver up his own Son to torments and death, for the expiation of our sins?—Can *benefits* more desirable be granted than to adopt us for his children, and sanctify us by his SPIRIT?—Can *promises* more invaluable be made, than those which insure to us the preferments of heaven, and the riches of eternity?

All this is attested, concerning the almighty MAJESTY, in the scriptures of truth. What a fund, therefore, for pleasing and delicate conversation, are *the scriptures*?

Ther. Here also I have the pleasure of concurring with my *Aspasio*: though I believe he suspects me to be somewhat wavering or defective in my veneration for the scriptures.

Asp. No, *Theron*; I have a better opinion of your taste and discernment, than to harbour any such suspicion.

Ther. The scriptures are certainly an inexhaustible fund of materials for the most delightful and ennobling discourse. When we consider the author of those sacred books,—that they came originally from *heaven*,—were dictated by *divine* wisdom,—have the same *consummate* excellence as the works of creation;—it is really surprising, that we are not always searching, by study, by meditation, or converse, into one or other of those grand volumes.

Asp. When *Secker* preaches, or *Murray* pleads, the church is crouded, and the bar thronged. When *Spence* produces the refinements of criticism, or *Young* displays the graces of poetry; the press toils, yet is scarce able to supply the demands of the public.——Are we *eager* to hear, and *impatient* to purchase, what proceeds from such eloquent tongues, and masterly pens? And can we be *coldly indifferent*, when—not the most accomplished of mankind,—not the most exalted of creatures,—but the adorable AUTHOR of all wisdom, speaks in his revealed word? Strange! that our attention does not *hang* * upon the venerable accents, and our talk *dwell* upon the incomparable truths!

Ther. I admire, I must confess, the very *language* of the Bible. In this, methinks, I discern a conformity between the *book* of *nature* and the *book* of *scripture*.

In the book of nature, the divine TEACHER speaks, not barely to our ears, but to all our senses. And it is very remarkable, how he *varies* his address!——Observe his grand and august works. In these he uses the style of majesty. We may call it the true *sublime*. It strikes with awe, and transports the mind.—View his ordinary operations. Here he descends to a plainer dialect. This may be termed the *familiar* style. We comprehend it with ease, and attend to it with pleasure.—In the more ornamented parts of the creation, he clothes his meaning with elegance. All is rich and brilliant. We are delighted; we are charmed. And what is this, but the *florid* style?

A variety, somewhat similar, runs through the scriptures.—Would you see *history* in all her *simplicity*, and all her *force*; most beautifully easy, yet irresistibly striking?—See her, or rather *feel* her energy, touching the nicest movements of the soul, and triumphing over our passions, in the inimitable narrative of *Joseph*'s life.—The representation of *Esau*'s bitter distress †; the conversation-pieces of *Jonathan*, and his gallant friend ‡; the memorable journal of the disciples going to *Emmaus* ‡; are finished models of the *impassioned* and *affecting*.—Here is nothing studied; no flights of fancy; no embellishments of oratory. Yet how inferior is the episode of Nisus and Euryalus, though worked up by the most masterly hand in the world, to the undissembled artless fervency of these scriptural sketches ‖!

Are we pleased with the elevation and dignity of an *heroic poem*, or the tenderness and perplexity of a *dramatic* performance? In the book of *Job*, they are both united, and both unequalled.—Conformably to the exactest rules of art, as the action advances, the incidents are more alarming, and the images more magnificent. The language glows, and the pathos swells; till, at last, the DEITY himself makes his entrance. He speaks from the whirlwind, and summons the creation: summons heaven, and all its shining host; the elements, and their most wonderful productions; to vouch for the wisdom of his providential dispensations.—His word strikes terror, and flashes conviction; decides the momentous controversy, and closes the august drama, with all possible solemnity and grandeur.

If we sometimes chuse a *plaintive* strain; such as softens the mind, and soothes an agreeable melancholy; are any of the ancient tragedies superior, in the eloquence of mourning, to *David*'s pathetic elegy on his beloved *Jonathan* §; to his most passionate and inconsolable moan ¶ over the lovely but unhappy *Absalom*; or to that melodious woe, which warbles and bleeds, in every line of *Jeremiah*'s Lamentations?

Would we be entertained with the daring sublimity of *Homer*, or the correct majesty of *Virgil*? with the expressive delicacy of *Horace*, or the rapid excursions of *Pindar*? Behold them joined, behold them excelled, in the odes of *Moses*, and the eucharistic hymn of *De-*

* St *Luke*, in his evangelical history, uses this beautiful image, ἐκρεμαστο. The people *hung upon* the lips of their all-wise TEACHER. *Luke* xix. 48. Which implies two very strong ideas;—an *attention* that nothing could interrupt,—and an *eagerness* scarce ever to be satisfied.

——*Pendetque loquentis ab ore.* VIRG.

† Gen. xxvii. 30. &c. ‡ 1 Sam. xviii. 19. 20.

‡ Luke xxiv. 13. &c.

‖ Let a person of true taste peruse, in a *critical* view, the two first chapters of St *Luke*. He will there find a series of the most surprising incidents, related with the greatest *simplicity*, yet with the utmost *majesty*. All which, *extremely* affecting in themselves, are heightened and illuminated, by a judicious intermixture of the sublimest pieces of poetry. For my own part, I know not how to characterize them more properly than by *Solomon*'s elegant comparison:—*They are as gold rings set with the beryl, or as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.* Cant. v. 14.

§ 2 Sam. i. 19. &c.

¶ 2 Sam. xviii. 33. *The king was* vehemently affected (נרגז) *and went up to the chamber, and wept: and as he went, he said, O my son* Absalom! *my son, my son* Absalom! *Would to* GOD *I had died for thee! O* Absalom, *my son, my son!*—Such a picture, and so much pathos; so artless both, and both so exquisite; I must acknowledge, I never met with, among all the representations of dignity in distress.—The king's troops had gained a signal victory. His crown and his life were rescued from the most imminent danger. Yet all the honours and all the joys of this successful day, were swallowed up and lost in the news of *Absalom*'s death.—The news of *Absalom*'s death struck, like a dagger, the afflicted father. He starts from his seat. He hastens into retirement, there to pour out his soul in copious lamentation. But his anguish is too impetuous to bear a moment's restraint. He bursts immediately into a flood of tears; and cries, as he goes, *O Absalom*, &c.

What says *Mezentius*, when his son is slain? when, to sharpen his sorrow, the pale corpse, the miserable spectacle, is before his eyes, and within his arms! The most pathetic word he utters, is,

——*Heu! nunc misero mihi demum*
Exilium infelix, nunc alte vulnus adactum.

How *languid* is *Virgil*! how *inexpressive* the pince of *Latin* poetry! compared with the royal mourner in *Israel*! Most evident, from this and many other instances, is the superiority of the scriptures, in copying nature, and painting the passions.

borah; in the exalted devotion of the pſalms, and the glorious euthuſiaſm of the prophets.

Aſp. Only with this difference, that the former are *tuneful trifiers* *, and amuſe the fancy with empty fiction; the latter are teachers ſent from GOD, and make the ſoul *wiſe unto ſalvation.*—The Bible is not only the brighteſt ornament, but the moſt invaluable depoſitum. On a right, a practical knowledge of theſe *lively oracles*, depends the preſent comfort, and the endleſs felicity of mankind. Whatever, therefore, in ſtudy or converſation, has no connection with their divine contents, may be reckoned among the *toys* of literature, or the *cyphers* of diſcourſe.

Ther. Here again the book of ſcripture is ſomewhat like the magazine of nature. What can we deſire for our *accommodation* and *delight*, which this ſtore-houſe of conveniencies does not afford? What can we wiſh for our *edification* and *improvement*, which that fund of knowledge does not ſupply? Of theſe we may truly affirm, each, in its reſpective kind, *is profitable unto all things.*

Are we admirers of *antiquity?*—Here we are led back, beyond the univerſal deluge, and far beyond the date of any other annals.—We are introduced among the earlieſt inhabitants of the earth. We take a view of mankind in their undiſguiſed primitive plainneſs, when the days of their life were but little ſhort of a *thouſand years.*—We are brought acquainted with the original of nations; with the creation of the world; and with the birth of time itſelf.

Are we delighted with *vaſt* achievements?—Where is any thing comparable to the miracles in *Egypt*, and the wonders in the field of *Zoan?* to the memoirs of the *Iſraelites*, paſſing through the depths of the ſea, ſojourning amidſt the unhoſpitable deſerts, and conquering the kingdoms of *Canaan?*—Where ſhall we meet with inſtances of martial bravery, equal to the prodigious exploits of the *judges;* or the adventurous deeds of *Jeſſe*'s valiant ſon, and his matchleſs band of *worthies* †?—Here we behold the fundamental laws of the univerſe, ſometimes ſuſpended, ſometimes reverſed; and not only the current of *Jordan*, but the courſe of nature controlled. In ſhort, when we enter the field of ſcripture, we tread —on *enchanted*, ſhall I ſay? rather—on *conſecrated* ground; where aſtoniſhment and awe are awakened at every turn; where is all, more than all, the *marvellous* of romance ‡, connected with all the preciſion and ſanctity of truth.

If we want *maxims* of *wiſdom*, or have a taſte for the *laconic ſtyle;* how copiouſly may our wants be ſupplied, and how delicately our taſte gratified! eſpecially, in the book of *Proverbs*, *Eccleſiaſtes*, and ſome of the *minor* prophets.——Here are the moſt ſage leſſons of inſtruction, adapted to every circumſtance of life, formed upon the experience of all preceding ages, and perfected by the unerring SPIRIT of inſpiration.—Theſe delivered with ſuch remarkable conciſeneſs, that one might venture to ſay, every word is a ſentence ‖. At leaſt, every ſentence may be called an *apophthegm*, ſparkling with brightneſs of thought, or weighty with ſolidity of ſenſe. The whole, like a profuſion of pearls,—*each* containing, in a very ſmall compaſs, a value almoſt immenſe,—*all* heaped up (as an ingenious critic ſpeaks) with a confuſed magnificence, above the little niceties of order.

If we look for the *ſtrength* of *reaſoning*, and the *warmth* of *exhortation;* the *inſinuating arts* of genteel addreſs, or the *manly boldneſs* of impartial reproof; all the thunder of the orator, without any of his oſtentation; all the politeneſs of the courtier, without any of his flattery:—let us have recourſe to the acts of the apoſtles, and to the epiſtles of St Paul *. Theſe are a *ſpecimen*, or rather theſe are the *ſtandard*, of them all.

I do not wonder, therefore, that a taſte ſo refined, and a judgment ſo correct as *Milton*'s, ſhould diſcern higher attractives in the volume of inſpiration, than in the moſt celebrated authors of *Greece* and *Rome.*

——Yet not the more
Ceaſe I to wander, where the muſes haunt,
Clear ſpring, or ſhady grove, or ſunny hill,
Smit with the love of ſacred ſong: but CHIEF
Thee, Sion, *and the flowery banks beneath,*
That waſh thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I viſit †.

Aſp. Another recommendation of the ſcriptures, is, That they afford the moſt *awful* and moſt *amiable* manifeſtations of the GODHEAD. His glory ſhines, and his goodneſs ſmiles, in thoſe divine pages, with unparallelled luſtre.——Here we have a ſatisfactory explanation of *our own ſtate.* The origin of evil is traced; the cauſe of all our miſery diſcovered; and the remedy, the *infallible* remedy, both clearly ſhewn, and freely offered.—The merits of the bleeding *JESUS* lay a firm foundation for all our hopes; while gratitude for his dying love ſuggeſts the moſt winning incitements to every duty.—Morality, *Theron, your* (and let me add, *my*) admired morality, is delineated in all its branches, is placed upon its proper baſis, and raiſed to its higheſt elevation.—The SPIRIT of GOD is promiſed to enlighten the darkneſs of our underſtandings, and ſtrengthen the imbecillity of our wills. What an ample—Can you indulge me, on this favourite topic?

Ther. It is, I aſſure you, equally pleaſing to myſelf. Your enlargements, therefore, need no apology.

Aſp. What ample proviſion is made, by theſe bleſſed books, for *all* our ſpiritual wants! And, in this reſpect, how indiſputable is their ſuperiority to all other compoſitions!

Is any one convinced of *guilt*, as provoking heaven, and ruining the ſoul?—Let him aſk *Reaſon* to point out a means of reconciliation, and a refuge of ſafety. Reaſon heſitates, as ſhe replies; "The DEITY *may*, perhaps, accept our ſupplications, and grant forgiveneſs."—But the ſcriptures leaves us not to the *ſad uncertainty* of conjecture. They ſpeak the language of clear aſſurance. GOD *has* ſet forth a propitiation ‡: He *does* forgive our iniquities ‖: He *will* remember our ſins no more §.

Are we *aſſaulted* by temptation, or *averſe* to duty?—*Philoſophy* may attempt to parry the thruſt, or to ſtir up the reluctant mind, by diſcloſing the *deformity* of vice, and urging the *fitneſs* of things. Feeble expedients! Juſt as well calculated to accompliſh the ends propoſed, as the flimſy fortification of a cobweb to defend us from the ball of a cannon; or, as the gentle vibrations of a lady's fan to make a wind-bound navy ſail.——The Bible recommends no ſuch incompetent ſuccours. *My grace*, ſays its almighty AUTHOR,

* *Ludit amabiliter.*

† See 2 Sam. xxiii. 8. &c. 1 Chron. xi. 10. &c.

‡ *——Heroum fabula veris*
Kincitur hiſtoriis.

‖ What *Cicero* ſaid of *Thucydides*, is more eminently true concerning our royal moraliſt, and his rich collection of ethics; concerning our evangelical hiſtorians, and their copious variety of facts. *Eum adeo eſſe rebus plenum refertumque, ut prope verborum numerum numero rerum æquet.*

* Another very remarkable inſtance of propriety in St *Paul*'s writings, is, that though *diffuſe* in the *doctrinal*, they are *conciſe* in the *preceptive* parts. On the former, it was abſolutely neceſſary to enlarge. On the latter, it is always judicious to be ſhort. The celebrated rule of *Horace*,

Quicquid præcipies, eſto brevis,

was never more exactly obſerved, nor more finely exemplified, than by our apoſtolic author. See that noble ſtring of precepts, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 16. 17. *&c.*—See another choice collection of the ſame kind, *Rom.* xii. 9. 10. *&c.* In which the *energy* of the diction is no leſs admirable, than the *conciſeneſs* of the ſentence.—Αποστυγουντες—κολλωμενοι—φιλοστοργοι—ζεοντες—προσκαρτερουντες—διωκοντες—&c. ſome of the moſt *vigorous* words that language can furniſh, and form the moſt *animated* meaning that imagination can conceive.

† That is, "He ſtill was pleaſed to ſtudy the beauties of the "ancient poets; but his higheſt delight was in the ſongs of *Sion*, in "the holy ſcriptures, and on theſe he meditated day and night." See Dr *Newton*'s edit.

‡ Rom. iii. 25. ‖ Pſal. ciii. 3. §. Heb. viii. 12.

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is ſufficient for thee *.—*Sin ſhall not have dominion over you* †.—The great JEHOVAH, in whom is everlaſting ſtrength, *he worketh in us both to will, and to do, of his good pleaſure* ‡.

Should we be viſited with *ſickneſs*, or overtaken by any *calamity*, the conſolation which *Plato* offers, is, That ſuch diſpenſations coincide with the univerſal plan of divine government. *Virgil* will tell us, for our relief, That afflictive viſitations are, more or leſs, the unavoidable lot of all men. Another *moraliſt* whiſpers in the dejected ſufferer's ear, "Impatience adds to the load; "whereas a calm ſubmiſſion renders it more ſupportable."——Does the word of revelation diſpenſe ſuch *ſpiritleſs* and *fugitive* cordials?—No: thoſe ſacred pages inform us, that tribulations are fatherly chaſtiſements; tokens of our MAKER's love, and fruits of his care: that they are intended to work *in us* the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs, and to work out *for us* an eternal weight of glory ‖.

Should we, under the ſummons of *death*, have recourſe to the moſt celebrated *comforters* in the Heathen world; they would increaſe our apprehenſions, rather than mitigate our dread. Death is repreſented, by the great maſter of their ſchools, as "the moſt formidable of all "evils." They were not able *poſitively* to determine, whether the ſoul ſurvived; and never ſo much as *dreamed* of the reſurrection of the body.—Whereas, the book of GOD ſtrips the monſter of his horrors, or turns him into a meſſenger of peace; gives him an angel's face, and a deliverer's hand; aſcertaining to the *ſouls* of the righteous, an immediate *tranſlation* into the regions of bliſs; and enſuring to their *bodies*, a moſt advantageous *revival*, at the reſtoration of all things.

Inеſtimable book! It heals the maladies of life, and ſubdues the fear of death. It ſtrikes a lightſome viſta, through the gloom of the grave; and opens a charming, a glorious proſpect of immortality in the heavens.

Theſe, with many other excellencies peculiar to the ſcriptures, one would imagine more than ſufficient to engage *every ſenſible* heart in their favour, and introduce them, with the *higheſt eſteem*, into every improved converſation.——They had ſuch an effect upon the *fineſt* genius, and *moſt accompliſhed* § perſon, that former or latter ages can boaſt. Inſomuch, that he made, while living, this public declaration; and left it, when he died, upon everlaſting record;—*How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte! yea, ſweeter than honey unto my mouth* *.——*O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day* †.——*Mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I may be occupied in thy precepts; and I will ſpeak of thy teſtimonies even before kings* ‡.——If *David* taſted ſo much ſweetneſs in a *ſmall*, and that the *leaſt valuable*, part of the divine word; how much richer is the feaſt to us? ſince the goſpel is added to the law, and the canon of ſcripture completed! ſince (to borrow the words of a prophet) the LORD GOD *has ſealed up the ſum;* has put the laſt hand to his work; and rendered it *full of wiſdom, and perfect in beauty* ‖.

* 2 Cor. xii. 9. † Rom. vi. 14. ‡ Phil. ii. 13.

‖ 2 Cor. iv. 17. What are *all* the *conſolatory* expedients preſcribed in all the volumes of Heathen morality, compared with this *one* recipe of revelation? They are, in point of chearing efficacy, ſomewhat like the *froth* on the conflux of a thouſand rapid ſtreams, compared with a ſingle draught of *Homer*'s *Nepenthe*; which, he tells us, was

Temper'd with drugs of ſov'reign uſe, t'aſſuage
The boiling boſom of tumultuous rage:
To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled care,
And dry the tearful ſluices of deſpair.
Charm'd with that virtuous draught, th' exalted mind
All ſenſe of woe delivers to the wind. Odyſſ. IV.

§ If we conſider *David*, in the great variety of his fine qualifications;—the ornaments of his perſon, and the far more illuſtrious endowments of his mind:—the ſurpriſing revolutions in his fortune; ſometimes reduced to the loweſt ebb of adverſity; ſometimes riding upon the higheſt tide of proſperity;—his ſingular dexterity in extricating himſelf from difficulties, and peculiar felicity in accommodating himſelf to all circumſtances;—the prizes he won, as a youthful champion; and the victories he gained, as an experienced general;—his maſterly hand upon the harp, and his inimitable talent for poetry;—the admirable regulations of his royal government, and the incomparable uſefulneſs of his public writings;—the depth of his repentance, and the height of his devotion;—the vigour of his faith in the divine promiſes, and the ardour of his love to the divine MAJESTY:—If we conſider theſe, with ſeveral other marks of honour and grace, which ennoble the hiſtory of his life; we ſhall ſee ſuch an *aſſemblage* of ſhining qualities, as perhaps were never united in any *other* merely human character.

This obſervation was expunged. But, upon maturer thoughts, it is offered to the public; in order to convince a *polite* reader, that the love of the ſcriptures, and the exerciſe of devotion are by no means the low peculiarities of a *vulgar* mind.

Ther. Another very diſtinguiſhing peculiarity of the ſacred writings juſt occurs to my mind. The method of communicating advice, or adminiſtering reproof, by *parables*. A method which levels itſelf to the *loweſt* apprehenſion, without giving offence to the *moſt ſupercilious* temper; yet is as much ſuperior to plain unornamented precept, as the enlivened ſcenes of a well-wrought tragedy, are more impreſſive and affecting than a ſimple narration of the plot.

Our LORD was aſked by a ſtudent of the *Jewiſh* law, *Who is my neighbour?* which implied another queſtion, *How is he to be loved?*—The inquirer was *conceited* of himſelf; yet *ignorant* of the truth, and *deficient* in his duty. Had the wiſe INSTRUCTOR of mankind abruptly declared, *You neither know the former, nor fulfil the latter;* probably the queriſt would have reddened with indignation, and departed in a rage.——Therefore, to teach, and not diſguſt; to *convince* the man of his error, and not *exaſperate* his mind; the bleſſed *JESUS* frames a reply, as amiable in the manner, as it was pertinent to the purpoſe.

A certain perſon going down from *Jeruſalem* to *Jericho*, fell among thieves §. Not content to rob him of his treaſure, they ſtrip him of his garments; wound him with great barbarity; and leave him half dead.—Soon after this calamitous accident, a traveller happens to come along that very road. And what renders him more likely to adminiſter relief, he is one of the *ſacred order:* one who taught others the lovely leſſons of humanity and charity; and was, therefore, under the ſtrongeſt obligations to exemplify them in his own practice. He juſt glances an eye upon the deplorable object; ſees him ſtretched on the cold ground, and weltering in his blood: but takes no farther notice; nay, to avoid the trouble of an inquiry, paſſes by on the other ſide.——Scarce was he departed, when a *Levite* approaches. This man *comes nearer, and looks on* the miſerable ſpectacle; takes a leiſurely and attentive ſurvey ¶ of the caſe. And though every gaſh in the bleeding fleſh cried and pleaded for compaſſion; this miniſter of the ſanctuary neither ſpeaks a word to comfort, nor moves a hand to help.——Laſt comes a *Samaritan* †; one of the abhorred nation, whom the

* Pſal. cxix. 103. † ibid. cxix. 97. ‡ ibid. cxix. 46.
‖ Ezek. xxviii. 12. § Luke x. 30. &c.

¶ This ſeems to be the import of ελθων και ιδων. *Luke* x. 32. This diverſifies the idea, and *heightens* the deſcription, of *Jewiſh* inhumanity.

† If this was a parable, we cannot but admire the accuracy of our LORD, both in *laying* the *ſcene*, and *ſelecting* the *circumſtances*. —It is the maxim of a great critic,

Ficta voluptatis cauſa ſint proxima veris.

And how very apparent is the air of *probability* in the ſacred apologue!—The way from *Jeruſalem* to *Jericho*, lying through a deſert, was much infeſted by thieves, and too commodious for their purpoſes of violence.—What could be more likely to happen, than the paſſage of a *prieſt* and *Levite* along that road? ſince *Jericho* was a city appropriated to the *Levitical* order, and contained no leſs than twelve thouſand attendants on the ſervice of the temple.

How judiciouſly is the *principal* figure circumſtanced!——Had the *calamity* befallen a *Samaritan*, it would have made but *feeble* impreſſions of pity; and thoſe, perhaps, immediately effaced by *ſtronger* emotions of hate. But, when it was a

Jew

Jew hated with the moſt implacable malignity. Though the *Levite* had neglected an expiring brother; though the prieſt had with-held his pity from one of the LORD's peculiar people; the very moment this *Samaritan* ſees the unhappy ſufferer, he melts into commiſeration. He forgets the *embittered foe*, and conſiders only the *diſtreſſed fellow-creature*. He ſprings from his horſe, and reſolves to intermit his journey. The oil and wine, intended for his own refreſhment, he freely converts into healing unguents. He binds up the wounds; ſets the diſabled ſtranger upon his own beaſt; and with all the *aſſiduity* of a *ſervant*, with all the *tenderneſs* of a *brother*, conducts him to an inn. There he depoſits money for his preſent uſe; charges the hoſt to omit nothing that might conduce to the recovery or comfort of his gueſt; and promiſes to defray the whole expence of his lodging, his maintenance, and his cure.

What a lively picture this of the moſt *diſintereſted* and *active* benevolence! A benevolence which excludes no perſons, not even ſtrangers or enemies, from its tender regards; which diſdains no condeſcenſion, grudges no coſt, in its labours of love. Could any method of conviction have been *more forcible*, and at the ſame time *more pleaſing*, than the interrogatory propoſed by our LORD, and deduced from the ſtory? *Which now of theſe three, thinkeſt thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?* Or can there be an advice more *ſuitable* to the occaſion, more *important* in its nature, or expreſſed with a more *ſententious* energy, than, *Go thou, and do likewiſe?*—In this caſe, the learner inſtructs, the delinquent condemns, himſelf. *Bigotry* bears away its prejudice; and *Pride* (when the moral ſo ſweetly, ſo imperceptibly inſinuates) even pride itſelf lends a willing ear to admonition.

Aſp. It has been very juſtly remarked, That this *eloquence* of *ſimilitudes* is equally affecting to the wiſe, and intelligible to the ignorant. It *ſhews* *, rather than *relates*, the point to be illuſtrated. It has been admired by the beſt judges in all ages; but never was carried to its *higheſt perfection*, till our LORD ſpoke the parable of the *prodigal* †: Which has a *beauty*, that no paraphraſe can heighten; a *perſpicuity*, that renders all interpretation needleſs; and a *force*, which every reader, not totally inſenſible, muſt feel.

Ther. The condeſcenſion and goodneſs of GOD are every where conſpicuous.——In the productions of nature, he conveys to us the moſt *valuable* fruits, by the intervention of the *loveliеſt* bloſſoms. Though the preſent is in itſelf extremely acceptable, he has given it an *additional endearment*, by the beauties which array it, or the perfumes which ſurround it.——In the pages of revelation likewiſe, he has communicated to us the moſt *glorious truths*, adorned with all the *graces* of *compoſition*: ſuch as may poliſh the man of genius, and improve the man of worth; ſuch as highly delight our imagination, even while they cultivate and refine our morals.——So that they really are, as one of their divine authors very elegantly ſpeaks, *like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver* *.

Aſp. Who then would not gladly receive that gracious exhortation, *Let the word of CHRIST dwell in you richly* †? Who would not willingly obey that benign command, *Thou ſhalt talk of it, when thou ſitteſt in thine houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the way; when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up* ‡.

When I conſider the *language* of the ſcriptures, and ſometimes experience their energy on my ſoul, I am inclined to ſay,—"Other writings, though poliſhed with "the niceſt touches of art, only *tinkle* on the ear, or affect us like the ſhepherd's reed. But theſe, even "amidſt all their noble negligence, *ſtrike*—*alarm*—*tranſport us*—ſomewhat like the voice of thunder, or the "archangel's trumpet."

When I conſider the *contents* of the ſcriptures, and believe myſelf intereſted in the promiſes they make, and the privileges they confer, I am induced to cry out,—"What are all the other books in the world, compared "with theſe invaluable volumes? No more than an "*entertaining* novel, or a few *prudential* rules for domeſtic "œconomy, compared with a *parent*'s will; a *royal* "charter; or an *imperial* grant of titles and manors."

All theſe circumſtances remind me of an *encomium* moſt deſervedly given to the BIBLE; which, though quite *artleſs*, is, I think, abundantly more expreſſive than the moſt elaborate efforts of rhetoric.—It came from the lips of a martyr; who, being condemned to die, for his inviolable adherence to the doctrines of ſcripture; when he arrived at the ſtake, and had compoſed himſelf for execution, took his final leave in theſe affecting words: "Farewell ſun and moon! farewell all the beauties of "creation, and comforts of life! farewell my honoured "friends! farewell my beloved relations! and farewell, "thou *precious, precious book of GOD!*"

Aſpaſio had ſcarce uttered the laſt ſentence, when a ſervant came to let them know, "Supper was upon the "table."—Very opportunely, ſaid *Theron*, has our repaſt waited till our conference is ended. We have ſhewed, what a large field of delightful ſpeculation the ſcriptures open; and what ample materials for the moſt refined diſcourſe ‖ they afford. As nothing can be more ungraceful, than to *neglect* in *our own* conduct, what we *recommend* to the practice of *others*; let us, this very night, begin to ennoble our interviews with theſe improving ſubjects. Let us endeavour to make religious converſation, which is in all reſpects *deſirable*, in ſome degree *faſhionable*.

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* *Diſcentem*, ſays *Seneca* upon the ſubject, *et audientem in rem præſentem adducunt.* Epiſt. lix.

† Luke xv. 11, &c.

* Prov. xxv. 11.——*Theron* follows the received tranſlation. I ſhould prefer the expoſition of *Glaſſius*; who ſuppoſes משכיות to ſignify, *Retiacula argentea, in quibus oculi ſunt minutiſſimi, penetrabiles tamen viſu.* According to this interpretation, the paſſage will preſent us with *apples of gold in* net work, *or* lattice-work *of ſilver*; where the fine fruit receives a new charm, by ſhewing itſelf through the elegant apertures of the ſalver.

† Col. iii. 16. *The word of CHRIST*: ſo the apoſtle calls the whole inſpired writings, and thereby aſſerts the *divinity* of his Maſter.—*Dwell*; not make a ſhort ſtay, or an occaſional viſit; but take up a fixed and ſtated reſidence.—*Richly*; in the largeſt meaſure, and with the greateſt efficacy; ſo as to fill the memory, ſway the will, and actuate all the affections.

‡ Deut. vi. 7.

‖ Should the ſerious reader want any *farther* perſuaſives to this moſt beneficial practice, he may ſee—how particularly our divine MASTER *obſerves* the ſtrain of our converſation, Luke xxiv. 17—how ſtrictly he has commanded ſuch ſocial communications, as may tend to the *uſe* of *edifying*, Eph. iv. 29.—and what an *evidence* will ariſe from this article, either for our acquittal or condemnation, at the day of everlaſting judgment, Matth. xii. 36, 37.

DIALOGUE II.

THE next morning, when breakfaſt was over, *Theron* and *Aſpaſio* took a walk into the garden;—their ſpirits cheared, and their imaginations lively;—gratitude glowing in their hearts, and the whole creation ſmiling around them.

The ſpot adjoining to the houſe, was appropriated to the cultivation of *flowers*. In a variety of handſome compartments, were aſſembled the choiceſt beauties of blooming nature. Here the *hyacinth* hung her ſilken bells, or the *lilies* reared their ſilver pyramids. There ſtood the neat *narciſſus*, looſely * attired in a mantle of ſnowy luſtre; or the ſplendid *ranunculus* wore a full-trimmed ſuit of radiant ſcarlet. *Pinks* were riſing to enamel the borders; *roſes* were opened to dreſs the walls; ſurrounded, on all ſides, with a profuſion of beauteous forms, either latent in the ſtalk, or burſting the buds, or blown into full expanſion.

This was bounded by a ſlight partition; a ſort of verdant parapet. Through which they deſcend by an eaſy flight of ſteps, and are preſented with the elegant ſimplicity of the *kitchen-garden*. In one place, you might ſee the marigold flowering, or the beans in bloſſom. In another, the endive curled her leaves, or the lettuce thickened her tufts: cauliflowers ſheltered their fair complexion under a green umbrella: while the burrage diſhevelled † her locks, and braided them with blooming jewels, of a finer azure than the fineſt ſapphires.—On the *ſunny ſlopes*, the cucumber and melon lay baſking in the collected beams. On the raiſed beds, the artichoke ſeemed to be erecting a ſtandard, while the aſparagus ſhot ‡ into ranks of ſpears. The *level ground* produced all manner of cooling ſallads, and nouriſhing eſculents. Nothing was wanting to furniſh out the wholeſome luxury of an *antediluvian* banquet.

Soon, a high wall intervenes. Through which a wicket opens, and tranſmits them into the regular and equidiſtant rows of an *orchard*.——This plantation is ſo nicely adjuſted, that it looks like an arrangement of rural piazzas, or a collection of diverſified viſtas. The eye is, every where, entertained with the exacteſt uniformity; and darts, with unobſtructed eaſe, from one end of the branching files to the other.—On all the boughs lay a lovely evolution of *bloſſoms*, arrayed in milky white, or tinged with the ſofteſt red. Crouding into one general cluſter, without relinquiſhing any vacant ſpace for leaves, they formed the faireſt, the gayeſt, the grandeſt alcove, that fancy itſelf can imagine.——It is really like the *court* of the *Graces*. None can approach it, without finding his ideas brightened, and feeling his temper exhilarated.

Contiguous to this correct diſpoſition of things, nature had thrown a *wilderneſs*, hoary groteſque, and magnificently confuſed. It ſtretched itſelf with a large circular ſweep, to the north; and ſecured both the olitory and the orchard from incommoding winds.—Copſes of hazel, and flowering ſhrubs, filled the lower ſpaces; while poplars quivered aloft in air, and pines pierced the clouds with their leafy ſpears. Here grew clumps of fir, clad in everlaſting green: there ſtood groves of oak, that had weathered, for ages, the wintry ſtorm.—Amidſt this woody theatre, ran a *winding walk*; lined with elms of inſuperable height; whoſe branches, uniting at the top, reared a ſtately arch, and projected a ſolemn ſhade. It was impoſſible to enter this lofty labyrinth, without being ſtruck with a *pleaſing dread*. As they proceed, every inflection diffuſes a deeper gloom, and awakens a more penſive attention.

Having ſtrolled in this darkſome avenue, without a ſpeck of ſunſhine, without a glimpſe of the heavens; on a ſudden, they ſtep into open day.——Surpriſing! cries *Aſpaſio*. What a change is this! What *delightful enchantment* is here!—One inſtant, whelmed in *Trophonius*'s cave *; where horror frowns, and darkneſs lours, and ſolitude reigns: tranſported, the next, into the romantic ſcenes of *Arcadia*; where all is populous, all is lightſome, and all is gay.—Quick as thought †, the arches of heaven expand their azure. Turrets and ſpires ſhoot into the ſkies. Towns, with their ſpacious edifices, ſpread themſelves to the admiring view. Thoſe lawns, green with freſheſt herbage; thoſe fields, rich with undulating corn; where were they all, a moment ago?—It brings to my mind that remarkable ſituation of the *Jewiſh* lawgiver; when, elevated on the ſummit of *Piſgah*, he ſurveyed the goodly land of promiſe;—ſurveyed *the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter*;—ſurveyed *the mountains dropping with wine and the hills flowing with milk* ‡;—ſurveyed all with thoſe eyes, which, for forty tedious years, had been confined to dry ſands, ragged rocks, and the irkſome waſtes of a deſolate howling wilderneſs.

HERE they ſeated themſelves on the firſt *moſſy* ‖ *hillock*, which offered its couch. The riſing ſun had viſited the ſpot, to dry up the dews, and exhale the damps, that might endanger health; to open the violets, and expand the primroſes, that decked the green. The whole ſhade of the wood was collected *behind* them: and a beautiful, extenſive, diverſified landſcape ſpread itſelf *before* them.

Theron, according to his uſual manner, made many improving remarks on the proſpect, and its furniture. He traced the footſteps of an *all-comprehending* contrivance, and pointed out the ſtrokes of *inimitable* ſkill. He obſerved the *grand exertions* of power, and the *rich exuberance* of goodneſs, moſt ſignally, moſt charmingly conſpicuous through the whole.——Upon one circumſtance he enlarged, with a particular ſatisfaction.

Ther. See! *Aſpaſio*, how all is calculated to adminiſter the higheſt *delight* to mankind.—Thoſe trees and hedges, which ſkirt the extremities of the landſcape; ſtealing away from their real bulk, and leſſening by gentle

* ——————*Hiantem flore decoro*
Narciſſum.

† Referring to the *looſe irregular* manner of its foliation.

‡ Alluding, not only to the *ſhape*, but alſo to the growth of this plant; which is ſo unuſually quick, that it may almoſt be ſaid to *ſtart*, rather than to *riſe* out of the earth.

* The reader may find a *curious* account of this cave, together with a very *humorous*, and (which ſhould always accompany humour, or elſe it will be like a ſting without the honey) an *improving* deſcription of its effects; *Spect.* vol. VIII. No. 598. 599.

† Such a ſudden alteration of the proſpect, is beautifully deſcribed by *Milton*;

——————*As when a ſcout,*
Through dark and deſert ways, with peril gone
All night, at laſt, by break of chearful dawn,
Obtains the brow of ſome high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye diſcovers unaware
The goodly proſpect of ſome foreign land,
Firſt ſeen; or ſome renown'd metropolis,
With gliſtering ſpires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the riſing ſun gilds with his beams. Book III.

‡ This is the language of the book of *Job*, and the prophecy of *Joel*. A language, like the ſcene it deſcribes, not beautiful only, but beautiful and rich even to *luxuriancy*, Job xx. 17. Joel iii. 18.—One would almoſt ſuſpect, the *Lyric* poet had read theſe paſſages, and attempted an imitation of their delicacies.

Vinique fontem, lactis et uberes
Cantare rivos, atque truncis
Lapſa cavis iterare mella. Lib. II. Od. xix.

‖ *Horace* would have called it, *ceſpes fortuitus.*

diminutions; appear like elegant *picturer* in *miniature*. Thoſe which occupy the nearer ſituations, are a ſet of noble *images*; ſwelling upon the eye, in *full proportion*, and in a variety of graceful attitudes. Both of them *ornamenting* the ſeveral apartments of our common abode, with a mixture of delicacy and grandeur.

The *bloſſoms* that array the branches, the *flowers* that embroider the mead, addreſs and entertain *our* eyes with every charm of beauty *. Whereas, to *other* creatures, they are deſtitute of all thoſe attractives, which reſult from a combination of the loveliest colours, and moſt alluring forms.—Yonder *ſtreams*, that glide, with ſmooth ſerenity, along the valleys; glittering to the diſtant view, like ſheets of poliſhed cryſtal; or ſoothing the attentive ear, with the ſoftneſs of aquatic murmurs; are no leſs *exhilarating* to the fancy, than to the ſoil through which they paſs.—The huge enormous *mountain*; the ſteep and dizzy *precipice*, the pendent horrors of the craggy *promontory*; wild and tremendous as they are, furniſh out an agreeable entertainment to the human mind; and *pleaſe*, even while they *terrify*. Whereas, the beaſts take no other notice of thoſe majeſtic deformities, than only to avoid the dangers they threaten.

Aſp. How wonderfully do ſuch conſiderations *exalt* our idea of the CREATOR's goodneſs; his very *diſtinguiſhing* goodneſs to mankind! And ſhould they not proportionably *endear* that eternal Benefactor to our affections?—His ever-bountiful hand has ſcattered bleſſings, and with profuſe liberality, among all the ranks of animated exiſtence. But to *us* he exerciſes a beneficence of a very ſuperior kind. *We* are treated as his peculiar favourites. *We* are admitted to ſcenes of delight, which none but ourſelves are capable of reliſhing.

Ther. Another remark, though very obvious, is equally important. The deſtination of all theſe external things is no leſs *advantageous*, than their formation is *beautiful*. The bloom, which engages the eye with its delicate hues, is cheriſhing the *embryo fruit*; and forming, within its ſilken folds, the rudiments of a *future deſſert*.—Thoſe ſtreams, which ſhine from afar, like fluid ſilver, are much more valuable in their productions, and beneficial in their ſervices, than they are amiable in their appearance. They diſtribute, as they roll along their winding banks, *cleanlineſs* to our houſes, and *fruitfulneſs* to our lands. They nouriſh, and at their own expence, a never-failing ſupply of the *fineſt fiſh*. They viſit our cities, and attend our wharfs, as ſo many *public vehicles*, ready to ſet out at all hours.

Thoſe ſheep, which give their udders to be drained by the buſy friſking lambs, are fattening their fleſh for *our ſupport*; and while they fill their own fleeces, are providing for *our* comfortable *clothing*. Yonder kine, ſome of which are browzing upon the tender herb; others, fatiated with paſturage, ruminate under the ſhady covert; though conſcious of no ſuch deſign, are concocting, for our uſe, one of the *ſofteſt*, *pureſt*, *healthieſt* liquors in the world.—The bees that fly humming about our ſeat, and purſue their work on the fragrant bloſſoms, are collecting balm and ſweetneſs, to compoſe the richeſt of ſyrups; which, though the produce of their toil, is intended for our good.

Nature, and her whole family, are our *obſequious* ſervants, our *ever-active* labourers. They bring the fruits of their united induſtry, and pour them into our lap, or depoſit them in our ſtore-rooms.

Aſp. Who can ever ſufficiently admire this immenſe benignity?—The ſupreme DISPOSER of events has commanded delight and profit to walk hand in hand, through his ample creation; making all things ſo *perfectly pleaſing*, as if beauty was their only end; yet all things ſo *eminently ſerviceable* *, as if uſefulneſs had been their ſole deſign.—And, as a moſt winning invitation to our gratitude, he has rendered man the centre, in which all the *emanations* of his beneficence, diffuſed through this terreſtrial ſyſtem, finally *terminate*.

But, my dear *Theron*, is not this apparent in a much more wonderful manner, throughout the whole œconomy of REDEMPTION?—It were a ſmall thing for this inferior claſs of *unintelligent* creatures, to be continually employing themſelves for our benefit. Even the *SON of the moſt high GOD*, through all his incarnate ſtate, acted the very ſame part.—He took fleſh, and bore the infirmities of human nature, not for himſelf, but *for us men, and our ſalvation*. He ſuffered want, and endured miſery in all its forms; that *we* might poſſeſs the fulneſs of joy, and abound in pleaſures for evermore.—When he poured out his ſoul in agonies, under the curſe of an *avenging* law; was it not with a compaſſionate view to make *us* partakers of eternal bleſſedneſs? When he fulfilled, perfectly fulfilled the whole *commanding* law; was it not for this gracious purpoſe, that his merits might be imputed to us? that *we*, by *his* obedience, might be made righteous? Yes;

——For us he liv'd,
Toil'd for our eaſe, and for our ſafety bled.

Nothing in the whole courſe——

Ther. Pardon me for interrupting you, *Aſpaſio*. I have no objection to the general drift of your diſcourſe. But that particular notion of *imputed righteouſneſs* has always appeared to me in a very ridiculous light. And I muſt ſay, that ſuch a *Puritanical noſtrum* makes a very unbecoming figure, amongſt your other manly and correct ſentiments of religion.

Aſp. You know, *Theron*, I have long ago diſavowed that *ignoble* prejudice, which rejects doctrines, or deſpiſes perſons, becauſe they happen to be branded with contemptible names. 'Tis true, the writers ſtyled *Puritans*, are remarkable for their attachment to this *peculiarity* of the goſpel. It runs through all their theological works; and very eminently diſtinguiſhes them, from the generality of our modern treatiſes.—But muſt it *therefore* be wrong, becauſe maintained by that particular ſet of people? Or, are they the *only* advocates for this important truth?

Ther. Aye: It is as I ſupected. I have lately conjectured, from ſeveral hints in my *Aſpaſio*'s diſcourſe, that he has been warping to the low ungentleman-like peculiarities of thoſe whimſical fanatics.

Aſp. I cannot conceive, why you ſhould call them *whimſical*.——To ſettle faith on its *proper baſis*, the meritorious righteouſneſs of the REDEEMER; and to deduce obedience from its *true origin*, the love of GOD ſhed abroad in the heart;—to *ſearch* the conſcience, and *convince* the judgment;——to *awaken* the lethargic, and *comfort* the afflicted ſoul;—and all from a thorough knowledge, joined to a maſterly application, of the divine word;—theſe, ſure, are not *whimſical* talents, but *real* excellencies. Yet theſe, if we

* Therefore, when the prophet deſcribes the Chriſtian church, adorned with all the *beauties of holineſs*, he borrows his imagery from theſe amiable objects. *Iſrael ſhall bud and bloſſom*, Iſ. xxvii. 6.—Nay, *the* very *wilderneſs*, even the Gentile nations, being converted unto *CHRIST*, *ſhall bloſſom as a roſe*, Iſ. xxxv. 1.—*I will be as the dew unto Iſrael: he ſhall bloſſom as the lily, and caſt forth his roots as Lebanon*, Hoſ. xiv. 5. What an elegant picture! and what a comfortable promiſe! Here is the queen of flowers, and the prince of trees. Nothing *fairer* than the full-blown lily; nothing *firmer* than the deep-rooted cedars. Yet theſe are a repreſentation (and but a faint repreſentation) of the *comelineſs*, which the all-glorious REDEEMER puts upon his people; and of the *ſtability* which they derive from his inviolable faithfulneſs.

N. B. The fourteenth of *Hoſea* is one of thoſe chapters, which, for their *peculiar* importance and excellency, deſerve not only to have a *turn* in our reading, but a *place* in our memory.

* *Omnes mundi partes ita conſtitutæ ſunt, ut neque ad uſum meliores eſſe poterint, neque ad ſpeciem pulchriores.*

CIC. de Nat. Deor. lib. II.

may

may credit history, entered into the preaching; these, if we will examine impartially, are to be found in the writings of the Puritans.—And a *pearl*, you will please to remember, is a pearl still, though it should hang in the *Ethiopian*'s ear.

Ther. Ethiopian indeed! You have truly characterized that *demure* and *gloomy* generation. I hope, you don't intend to introduce their affected solemnity and forbidden reserve, into your own easy and engaging conversation. Though, for aught I can judge, this would be no more ungraceful, than to patch such *antiquated* notions on the *refined* scheme of Christianity.

Asp. My dear friend, you are too ludicrous; and I begin to catch the infection. We had better return to our first topic. Let us contemplate the wonders of creation; and as we *admire* the works, learn to *adore* the MAKER.

Ther. None of your evasions, good *Aspasio*. You must not think to put me off at this rate. I have wanted an opportunity, to rally you upon this head; and to argue or laugh you out of these *religious oddities*.

Asp. If you will not agree to terms of peace, I hope you will allow some cessation of arms. At least, till I can muster my forces, and prepare for the vindication of my principles.

Ther. No: upon the spot, and out of hand, you are required to answer for yourself, and these same queer opinions.——I shall serve you as the *Roman* consul served the *procrastinating* monarch. When he demurred about his reply to the demands of the senate, and said, *he would consider of the matter*; the resolute ambassador drew a circle round him with his cane, and insisted upon a positive answer, before he stepped over those limits.

Asp. This, however, you will give me leave to observe, that the affair is of a *very serious* nature. Upon condition that you will dismiss your flourishes of wit, and strokes of satire, I will acquaint you with the reasons which have made me a thorough convert to this doctrine.—Once, I held it in the utmost contempt, and pitied the simplicity of (as I then styled them) its *deluded* admirers. But I am now become *such* a fool, that I may be truly wise, and substantially happy. I have seen my ruined state, and I bless GOD for this sovereign restorative. It is the source of my strongest consolations, and the very foundation of my eternal hopes.

Ther. Excuse me, *Aspasio*, if the vivacity of my temper, and the seemingly-uncouth tenet, kindled me into a more humorous gaiety, than became the occasion. You speak of the point with so much seriousness, and in such weighty terms, as check my levity, and command my respect. Be pleased to execute what you have promised; and the most *engaged* attention of my mind shall atone for the *petulant* sallies of my tongue.

Asp. To conceive a dislike of any doctrine, only because persons of a particular denomination have been very officious to promote its reception; this is hardly consistent with an impartial inquiry after truth.

Ther. I grant it, *Aspasio*. And I should be ashamed of my opposition, if it was founded on so slight a bottom. But, abstracted from all party-considerations, I can see nothing in this supposed article of our faith, that may recommend it to the unprejudiced inquirer.—— What can be more *awkward* than the term, or more *irrational* than the sentiment?

Asp. The word *imputed*, when used in this connection, may possibly convey a disagreeable sound to the ears of some people: because they look upon it as the peculiar phraseology of a few *superstitious sectarists*; and reject it, merely on the foot of that unreasonable surmise.——But how can *you* be disgusted at the expression, *Theron*, who have so often read it in the most approved and judicious writers; St *Paul*, who might affirm with relation to his epistles, much more truly than the painter concerning his portraits, *I write for eternity* *; scruples not to use this awkward language, several times in the same chapter †. *Milton*, the correctness of whose taste, and the propriety of whose style, no person of genius will ever question, delights to copy, in various parts of his incomparable poem, the apostle's diction.—— Authorized by *such* precedents, it is superior to cavil, and warranted beyond all exception.

As to the sentiment, I take it to be the *very fundamental* article of the gospel: and I believe, whoever is acquainted with ecclesiastical history, will allow, that it bore the *principal sway*, in extricating us from Popish darkness, and introducing the reformation.—What says our LORD, with regard to the love of GOD, and the love of our neighbour? *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*. Much the same would I venture to say concerning the imputation of our sins to *CHRIST*, and the imputation of *CHRIST*'s righteousness to us: On *these two* doctrines hang all the privileges and the whole glory of the gospel.

Ther. In our last conversation, I must own, I saw a strong resemblance between the works and the word of GOD. But I never observed any thing in nature, that bore the least *analogy* to imputed sin, or imputed righteousness.——To me your two doctrines seem very unaccountable and irrational.

Asp. That our sins should be charged upon the only begotten SON of GOD, and that his righteousness should be made over to sinful worms, is strange, exceeding strange. The psalmist calls it, *marvellous loving-kindness* ‡. The apostle styles it *love that passeth knowledge* ‖. And it has sometimes, I must freely confess, been almost ready to stagger my belief.—However, I have found myself relieved in this perplexity, not only by the *testimonies* of *scripture*, but even from the contemplation of nature. All nature is full of strange and mysterious effects; consequently, is a voucher for the mysterious truths of Christianity.

How surprising are the experiments of *electricity*, and the occult qualities of the *loadstone!* How surprising those countless legions of *effluvia*, which transpire from a small odoriferous body! and those infinite myriads of *luminous particles*, which issue from a smaller flaming substance §! There's not a blade of grass, but surpasses the comprehension of all mankind; and not a single atom, but is big with wonders.—Insomuch, that the *intelligent* observer can no where fix his thoughts, without being astonished, transported, and even lost in admiration.

Since the procedure of Providence in this visible system, is a continued series of stupendous and unsearchable operations; need we be alarmed, can we reasonably be offended, if the scheme of redemption is equally stupendous, is far more amazing? Yet though *amazing*, I hope, it will not appear, what you was pleased to insinuate, *irrational*.

Suppose we state the signification of the *terms*,

* Alluding to the painter, who, apologizing for the *slow* procedure and scrupulously-*nice* touches of his pencil, said, *Æternitati pingo, I paint for eternity*. And those strokes had need be correct, which are intended to survive, so long as time itself shall last.

† See *Rom.* iv. in which single chapter, some branch of the word λογίζεσθαι, *to be imputed*, occurs no less than ten or eleven times.

‡ Psal. xvii. 7. ‖ Eph. iii. 19.

§ Dr *Nieuwentyt* has computed, that, from a lighted candle, about the size of six to the pound, there issues, in the second of a minute, an effusion of particles, vastly more than ten hundred thousand million times the number of sands, which the whole globe of the earth contains.—To call this a *very great* multitude, would be saying little. It nonplusses our *thoughts*, and exceeds the utmost stretch of *imagination!*

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and adjuſt the boundaries of our ſubject, before we enter upon a ſurvey of its contents?

Ther. Such a caution would have prevented, at leaſt have ſhortened, many a vehement and tedious controverſy.—You ſee, on yonder heath, the preparations for an approaching race. There ſtand the *poſts* which are to mark out the limits of the courſe. Without this previous reſtrictive care, how irregular would be the excurſions of the contending ſteeds! How *difficult*, rather how *impoſſible*, to declare the conqueror, and award the prize!—A clear definition of terms ſeems equally neceſſary for candid diſputants. Without it, they may wrangle for ages, and never come to a determination.

Aſp. Juſtification is an act of GOD Almighty's grace; whereby he acquits his people from guilt, and accounts them righteous *, for the ſake of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs, which was wrought out for them, and is imputed to them.

Ther. Two of your terms want ſome further explication. What do you underſtand by *CHRIST*'s *righteouſneſs*? And what is the meaning of *imputed*?

Aſp. By *CHRIST*'s *righteouſneſs*, I underſtand the whole of his *active* and *paſſive* obedience; ſpringing from the perfect holineſs of his heart; continued through the whole progreſs of his life; and extending to the very laſt pang of his death.—By the word *imputed*, I would dignify, that this righteouſneſs, though performed by our LORD, is *placed to our account*; is reckoned or adjudged by GOD as *our own*. Inſomuch, that we may *plead* it, and *rely* on it, for the pardon of our ſins; for adoption into his family; and for the enjoyment of life eternal.——Shall I illuſtrate my meaning by a well atteſted fact?

Ther. Nothing gives us ſo eaſy a conception of any difficult point, as this method of explaining, by *parallel* facts, or proper ſimilitudes.

Aſp. I don't ſay the caſe is parallel. I only produce it, to aid our conceptions.—*Oneſimus*, you know, was *Philemon*'s ſlave †. He had perfidiouſly deſerted his maſter's ſervice, and ſtill more perfidiouſly ſtole his goods. The fugitive, in his guilty rambles, providentially meets with St *Paul*. He is charmed and captivated with that gracious goſpel, which proclaims mercy even for the vileſt of ſinners. He becomes a thorough convert to the religion of *JESUS*, and is received into the ſpiritual patronage of the apoſtle. Who, learning his diſhoneſt conduct, and obnoxious ſtate, undertakes to bring about a reconciliation with his offended maſter; diſpatches him, for this purpoſe, with a letter to *Philemon*; and, amongſt other perſuaſives, writes thus in the poor criminal's behalf; *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account. I Paul have written it with mine own hand; I will repay it.*

That which the zealous preacher of Chriſtianity *offered*, the adored AUTHOR of Chriſtianity *executed*.—*We* had revolted from the LORD of all lords, and broke his holy commandments. The SON of GOD, infinitely compaſſionate, vouchſafes to become our Mediator. That nothing might be wanting to render his mediation ſucceſsful, he places himſelf in our ſtead.—The puniſhment, which *we* deſerved, *He* endures. The obedience, which *we* owed, *He* fulfils.—Both which, being imputed to us, and accepted for us, are the foundation of our pardon, are the procuring cauſe of our juſtification.

Ther. Is this the exact ſignification of the original word, which we tranſlate *imputed*?

Aſp. In the book of *Numbers*, we meet with this phraſe; and in ſuch a connection, as clears up its meaning. JEHOVAH enacts a decree concerning the *Levites*, who had no vintages to gather, nor any harveſts to reap. He directs them to preſent the tenth part of their tythes, in the form of a heave-offering; adding, *And this your heave-offering* ſhall be reckoned * unto you, *as though it were the corn of the threſhing-floor, and as the fulneſs of the wine-preſs*; as ſatisfactory to me, and as beneficial to you, as if it was the tenth of your own labours, and the tythe of your own increaſe.—So the expiatory ſufferings which *CHRIST* endured, the complete obedience which he performed, are *reckoned* to true believers. And are altogether *as effectual* for obtaining their ſalvation, as if they were their own perſonal qualifications.

Ther. The imputation mentioned in your paſſage, is the imputation of ſomething done by the *Levites themſelves*, not of ſomething done by *another*. This, I apprehend, is the true import of the word, when it occurs affirmatively in ſcripture.

Aſp. This is *always* the import,—ſhould have been ſaid, in order to make the objection forcible. But you could not ſo ſoon forget the inſtance juſt now alledged. St *Paul*, ſpeaking of the crimes which *Oneſimus* had committed, and of the injuries which *Philemon* had ſuſtained, ſays, "Charge them all on me †. I will be reſponſible "for the one and for the other, as much as if the whole "guilt had been of my own contracting."—Here is ſuppoſed, not the imputation of ſomething done by the apoſtle *himſelf*, but of *another*'s criminal behaviour.

Under the law, *Aaron* is commanded to *put the iniquities* of *Iſrael* upon the ſcape-goat ‡.—The ſame ſentiment is re-inculcated, when the goat is ſaid to *bear the iniquities* of the people ‖. This was plainly an imputation; yet could not poſſibly be the imputation of any thing done by the devoted animal.—The *effects* which took place upon the execution of this ordinance, indicate a tranſlation of guilt. For the congregation was cleanſed, but the goat polluted. The congregation *ſo cleanſed*, that their iniquities were conveyed away, and to be found no more: the goat *ſo polluted*, that it communicated defilement to the perſon who conducted it into the land not inhabited.——All this was GOD's own appointment; and deſigned, like the whole ſyſtem of *Moſaic* ceremonies, to inſtruct his church in the knowledge of the great MEDIATOR; in whoſe perſon and office that was done *really*, which elſewhere could be accompliſhed no otherwiſe than *typically*.

Ther. If this is your meaning, *Aſpaſio*, I am apt to think, it will be a difficult matter to make me a proſelyte. I muſt be content to paſs for one of the ſtiff-necked generation; ſince I can ſee neither *wiſdom* nor *equity*, in aſcribing to a perſon what he *has* not, or imputing to him what he *does* not.

Aſp. It was not *Aſpaſio*, but his friend, who ſet out with a view of making proſelytes. If I can maintain

* Should any reader object to the definition, apprehending, that juſtification implies no more than *the pardon of ſins*; I would deſire him to ſuſpend his judgment, till he has peruſed Dialogue X. where this point is more circumſtantially conſidered.

† See the epiſtle to *Philemon*.

* Numb. xviii. 27. ΛΟΓΙΣΘΗ exactly anſwers to St Paul's ΕΛΟΓΙΣΘΗ, Rom. iv. 9.—The ſame phraſe is uſed, and the ſame doctrine taught, Lev. xvii. 3. 4. *What man ſoever there be of the houſe of Iſrael that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp; and bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer unto the LORD an offering before the tabernacle of the LORD, blood ſhall be imputed to that man; he hath ſhed blood; and that man ſhall be cut off from among his people.*—Here was no murder committed by the offender, yet the crime of murder is charged, or, as the ſcripture ſpeaks, *blood is imputed to him*. Leſt any ſhould miſtake the meaning of this expreſſion, or not underſtand it in its due latitude, the divine LAWGIVER is his own interpreter; *He hath* in the eye of my juſtice *ſhed blood*: he ſhall paſs for a murderer, and be puniſhed as a murderer; he ſhall *be cut off from among his people*.——Thus alſo ſaith the eternal JUDGE concerning the believers in *CHRIST*; "The "righteouſneſs of my SON *is imputed* to them; *they are* in the eye "of my juſtice *righteous*; they ſhall be dealt with, as righteous "perſons; and made partakers of the kingdom of heaven."

† Εμοι ελλογει. ‡ Lev. xv. 21. ‖ Lev. xvii. 22.

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my ground, and vindicate my own belief, it will be no inconsiderable acquisition.—However, I shall not despair of seeing the partner of my heart become a sharer of my faith. When we are convinced of our *numberless sins*; when we feel the *depravity* of our *nature*, and begin to discern the *inconceivable sanctity* of our JUDGE; THEN, perhaps, this exploded article may be found worthy of acceptance;—its constitution admired, as the wisdom of GOD; and its privilege coveted, as the consolation of our souls.

Ther. I shall wave, at present, an examination of each particular; and only make some *remote* observations, which seem, nevertheless, pretty nearly to affect your scheme.—Some persons, I dare be positive, have not so much as heard of your terms; many persons have no manner of acquaintance with your doctrine. Will you strike off all these from the list of Christians? Will you condemn all these as desperate infidels?

Asp. Not heard of them!—in a Protestant nation!—where the gospel is publicly preached, and the Bible in every one's hand!—This, if true, is much to be *lamented*.

In answer to your question;—it is not my custom, much less is it my prerogative, to *condemn* others. Has GOD committed all judgment unto me, that I should presume to anticipate the decisive sentence, or launch the thunderbolts of eternal vengeance?—Neither do I affirm the condition of such persons to be desperate. There may be *those*, who have no *explicit* knowledge of the doctrine, who are even *prejudiced* against the expressions; yet live under the belief of the truth, and in the exercise of the duty.—"They are never diverted, by the "splendor of any thing that is great, or by the conceit "of any thing that is good in them, from looking upon "themselves as *sinful* dust and ashes." Their whole dependence is upon that *JUST ONE*, who expired on the cross, and whom the heavens have received.——They seek the *sanctifying* SPIRIT, in consequence of their SAVIOUR's death, and give all diligence to *add to their faith, virtue* *.

Ther. If people may be safe, and their eternal interests secure, without any knowledge of these particularities; why should you offer to puzzle their heads, about a few unnecessary *scholastic* terms?

Asp. *Scriptural* terms, you should have said, *Theron*.—However, we are not very solicitous, as to the credit, or the use, of any particular set of phrases. Only let men be humbled, a *repenting criminals*, at the REDEEMER's feet, let them rely, as *devoted pensioners*, on his precious merits; and they are undoubtedly in the way to a blissful immortality. Yet will their way be less clear, and their steps more embarrassed, by not distinctly understanding the benign genius of the gospel. A proper information in this important point, would shed light upon their paths, and encourage them in their journey; would further their progress in vital holiness, and increase their joy in the LORD.

Ther. The followers of your opinion, I have observed, are perpetually dwelling upon this *one favourite* topic; to the exclusion of that grand and truly-essential part of Christianity, sanctification.

Asp. If you have ever taken notice of such a conduct, you are unquestionably right, in with-holding your approbation. It is a manifest *incongruity*, and deserves your *censure*. But, assure yourself, it proceeds from a misapprehension in the persons, and has no connection with the nature of the doctrine.

I am far, very far from reducing the *various* parts of Christianity (which, when connected, make up so well-proportioned a system) to this *single*, however distinguished, branch. Sanctification is equally necessary, both to our present peace, and to our final felicity. Indeed they are as reciprocally necessary for the purposes of intellectual and eternal happiness, as the *heart* and the *lungs* are to the subsistence of the animal œconomy. The former must transmit, the latter must refine, the vital fluid; or else disease will take place, and death will ensue.—My intention is, that those *fundamental truths* of the gospel, like these master-organs in the body, may have each its proper office assigned; each concur to support the better health, and to promote the spiritual growth of the Christian.

Ther. Other of your zealous folks I have known, who are all for the *sanctifying* influence of the SPIRIT; and reckon this affiance on the SAVIOUR's merits among the beggarly elements of religion. They scarce ever mention what CHRIST has done *for us*, but insist wholly upon what he does *in us*.—When the religious people are so divided among themselves *, how can a stranger act? which opinion shall he chuse?

Asp. Which, *Theron!* Let him discard neither, but associate both.——If the all-gracious REDEEMER has poured out his blood on the cross, that my guilt may be expiated; and presents his intercession in heaven that I may be endued with the SPIRIT: If he will be the *meritorious cause* of my justification, and the *operative principle* of my sanctification, why should I scruple to receive him, in either, in both capacities? Who would lop off the right hand, in order to impart the higher dignity, or the greater importance, to the left? I would be no *partialist* in Christianity; neither diminish her dowery, nor mutilate her privileges.

Ther. You seem, if not to mutilate, yet to *split* the merits of CHRIST, and parcel out the efficacy of his mediatorial undertaking; ascribing so much to his active, and so much to his passive righteousness; pardon to *this*, and life to *that*.

Asp. Some, perhaps, may be pleased with this way of stating the matter. But it is a method which I neither attempt to defend, nor wish to imitate.—To *distinguish* between the active and passive righteousness, I think is not amiss; because this sets the fulness of our LORD's merit in the clearest light, and gives the completest honour to GOD's holy law.——But to *divide* them into detached portions, independent on each other, seems to be fanciful, rather than judicious. For, had *either* part of the mediatorial obedience been wanting, I apprehend, neither pardon, nor acceptance, nor any spiritual blessing, could have been vouchsafed to fallen man.

The two *parts* are inseparable; making, in their connection, a necessary and noble *unity* for the accomplishment of our salvation: Just as the light and the heat of yonder sun blend their operation, to produce this delightful day, and this fruitful weather. However, therefore, I may happen to express myself, I never consider them as acting in the *exclusive* sense; but would always have them understood, as the grand and glorious aggregate: looking upon our SAVIOUR's universal obedience, which commenced at his incarnation, was carried on through his life, and terminated in his death:—looking upon all this, in its collective form, as the object of my faith, and the foundation of my hopes †.

* 2 Pet. i. 5.

* *Theron*'s inquiry concerning these *two* particulars is sometimes made an objection against *all* religion.—But have the gainsmen who adopt this objection, never seen the *naturalists* divided in their judgment, with relation to the design and use of several appearances in the material, the vegetable, the animal creation? while one decries as a *nuisance*, what another admires as a *beauty*.—Yet no one, I believe, ever took it into his head, from such a diversity of opinions, to *doubt* whether the frame of nature is a just, a regular, and a finished system; or to *deny*, that power, goodness, and wisdom, support, pervade, and direct the whole.

† In this opinion, *Aspasio* has *Milton*'s archangel for his precedent. *Michael*, speaking of *this* LORD and *our* LORD, says;

The law of God exact he shall fulfil,
Both by obedience and by love; though love

Ther. I think, you lay too much ſtreſs upon this controverted, and perhaps *merely-ſpeculative* point.

Aſp. Merely ſpeculative! Say not thus, my dear friend. —"How I may be juſtified before GOD, my Maker, my Governor, and my Judge?" is an enquiry of all others, the *moſt intereſting* and *important*. It is the main hinge, on which every inſtance of practical religion turns *. True comfort, willing obedience, holy communion with the divine MAJESTY, *all* depend upon this capital point.

Far from being a merely-ſpeculative point, it aſcribes the moſt *undivided* glory to the ever-bleſſed GOD, and his free grace.—It adminiſters the moſt *ſerene* and *ſubſtantial* ſatisfactions to frail, but believing men.—It cheriſhes, with the moſt kindly influence, that *pure* and *undefiled* religion, which has its ſeat in the heart; has its birth from love; and is a real antepaſt, both of the buſineſs and the bliſs of ſaints in light.

Can we, then, lay too much ſtreſs upon a doctrine ſo greatly momentous, upon a privilege ſo extenſively beneficial?

Ther. When all this is *proved*, then for my reply, *Aſpaſio*.

Aſp. Nay, then thou ſhalt have more than a reply; I promiſe you my cordial aſſent.

Aſp. And if all this be incapable of proof, I aſſure you, *Theron*, I will not ſolicit *your* aſſent. Nay more, I will revoke and renounce *my own*.——

Ther. At preſent, I believe, we muſt go in, and prepare for our viſitants. Some other interview will give us an opportunity to canvaſs this queſtion more minutely.

Aſp. Though I have never much inclination, even when there is the moſt leiſure, for controverſy; yet, if you inſiſt upon it, I ſhall not abſolutely refuſe to engage in a debate with my *Theron*: becauſe he will come to the amicable rencounter, without bringing *angry paſſions* for his ſecond.—My reaſons will be impartially weighed, not artfully eluded, much leſs anſwered with invective. —If ſome inadvertent expreſſion ſhould drop from my lips, he will not rigorouſly proſecute the ſlip; nor aggravate an unguarded ſentence unto the crime of hereſy. —Candour will form his judgment, and good-nature dictate his expreſſions.

Ther. I thank you, my dear *Aſpaſio*, for your genteel admonition. What *I am* in the language of complaiſance, means what I *ſhould be*.——Well: I will endeavour to take your hint, and check this my impetuoſity of ſpirit. I have admired, O! that I could imitate, the beautiful example of St *Paul*. When *Feſtus*, forgetting the dignity of the governor, and the politeneſs of the gentleman, uttered that indecent reflection, *Paul, thou art beſide thyſelf: much learning doth make thee mad*: did the great preacher of Chriſtianity kindle into reſentment? —The charge was unjuſt and abuſive. But the apoſtle, with the moſt perfect command of himſelf, returned the *ſofteſt*, yet the *moſt ſpirited* anſwer imaginable. *I am not mad, moſt noble* Feſtus; *but ſpeak the words of truth and ſoberneſs* *.—Inexpreſſibly graceful was this calm and obliging reply. Though ſhort, infinitely more convincing than a whole torrent of bitter or recriminating words. It diſarmed the judge of his riſing diſpleaſure; it conciliated the favour of his royal aſſeſſor; and brought honour to the Chriſtian cauſe.

This amiable *ſelf-regimen*, and moderation of temper, I ſhall be ſure to ſee exemplified in my friend's converſation; however I may fail of it myſelf, or be proof againſt all his arguments.

Aſp. Ah! *Theron*, we want no monitor, to remind us of our *ſuppoſed* excellencies. And if you begin with your compliments, it is time to put an end to our diſcourſe.

Only let me juſt obſerve, that *divine truths* cannot be properly diſcerned, but by the enlightening influences of the *divine SPIRIT*. We muſt addreſs ourſelves to this inquiry, not only with unprejudiced minds, but likewiſe with praying hearts. We muſt bring to this diſpute, not barely the quiver of logic, but that *unction from the HOLY ONE, which may teach us all things* †.— Let us then adopt the poet's aſpiration;

——*Thou celeſtial Light,*
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes; all miſt from thence
Purge and diſperſe! MILTON, b. III. l. 51.

Alone fulfil the law; thy puniſhment
He ſhall endure, *by coming in the fleſh*
To a reproachful life and curſed death;
Proclaiming life *to all who ſhall believe*
In his redemption. B. XII. 402.

According to the tenor of theſe very valuable lines, our LORD's fulfilling the law, and enduring the puniſhment, are the *concurring* cauſes, or the one *compound* cauſe, of life and redemption to ſinners.

* *Diffundit ſe*, ſays the judicious *Witſius*, *juſtificationis doctrina per totum theologiæ corpus; et prout fundamenta hic vel bene, vel male, jacta ſunt, eo univerſum ædificium vel ſolidius auguſtiuſque aſcendit, vel male ſtatuminatum fœdam minitatur ruinam.* De Oecon. See above, p. 114.

* See Acts xxvi. where we have *an apology*, the moſt delicate and maſterly, perhaps, that ever was made; eminent for *fine* addreſs, *clear* reaſoning, and *important* truth. Which, notwithſtanding all theſe very ſuperior recommendations, is deemed *madneſs*; and that by a nobleman from *Rome*; the ſeat of ſcience, and fountain head of polite literature.—A proof this, no leſs demonſtrative than deplorable, of the apoſtle's aſſertion; *The natural man*, however ingenious or accompliſhed, *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of GOD; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him*, 1 Cor. ii. 14.

† 1 John ii. 20. 27.

DIALOGUE III.

Ther. WE are now, *Aſpaſio*, about two miles diſtant from my houſe. The horſe-road lies though a narrow duſty lane. The foot-path leads along a ſpacious pleaſant *meadow*. Suppoſe we deliver our horſes to the ſervant, and walk the remainder of the way?

Aſp. You could not make a propoſal more agreeable to my inclination; eſpecially, as the air is become cool, and the walk is ſo inviting.

What a magnificent and charming ſcene! *hills* on either ſide, gently riſing, and widely ſpreading; their *ſummits* crowned with ſcattered villages, and cluſtering trees: their *ſlopes* divided into a beauteous chequer-work; conſiſting partly of tillage, with its waving crops; partly of paſturage, with its grazing herds.—— Before us, the trefoil, the clover, and a variety of graſſy plants, differently bladed, and differently branched, weave themſelves into a *carpet* of living green. Can any of the manufactures formed in the looms, or extended in the palaces of *Perſia*, vie with the covering of this ample area? vie with it, in grandeur of ſize, or delicacy of decoration?

What a profuſion of the gayeſt flowers, fringing the banks, and embroidering the plain!

——*Nature here*
Wantons, as in her prime, and plays at will
Her virgin-fancies, pouring forth more ſweet,
Wild above rule or art, enormous bliſs *!

Nothing can be brighter than the luſtre of thoſe ſilver *daiſies*; nothing deeper than the tinge of thoſe

* MILT. b. V.

golden *crowfoots*. Yet both ſeem to acquire additional beauty, by ſucceeding to the deformity of winter, and flouriſhing amidſt ſo much ſurrounding verdure.

Ther. Nature is truly in *her prime*.——The vegetable tribes are putting on their richeſt attire. Thoſe cheſnuts, on our right hand, begin to rear their flowering pyramids; thoſe willows, on our left, are tipt with taſſels of grey; and yonder poplars, which overlook the river, and ſeem to command the meadows, are pointed with rolls of ſilver.

The *hawthorn*, in every hedge, is partly turgid with ſilken gems, partly diffuſed into a milk-white bloom. Not a ſtraggling furze, nor a ſolitary thicket, but wears a rural noſegay. All is a delightful diſplay of preſent fertility, and a joyous pledge of future plenty.—Now we experience what the royal poet, in very delicate imagery, deſcribes: *The winter is paſt; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the ſinging of birds is come; and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs; and the vine, with the tender grapes, give a good ſmell* *.

Aſp. Your quotation and the ſcene remind me of a remark, which ſhould have taken place in our laſt night's diſcourſe. When we were enumerating the excellencies of the ſacred writings, methinks, we might have added:—Are you fond of *paſtoral*, in all its flowery graces, and blooming honours? Never have we ſeen ſuch exquiſite touches of rural painting, or ſuch ſweet images of endearing affection, as in the *Song of ſongs, which is Solomon's*. All the brilliant and amiable appearances in nature are employed, to delineate the tenderneſs of *his* heart, who is *love* itſelf:—to pourtray the beauty of *his* perſon, who is the *chieſeſt among ten thouſand*;——and deſcribe the happineſs of *thoſe* ſouls, whoſe *fellowſhip is with the* FATHER, *and with his Son* JESUS CHRIST †.

See! *Theron*, what the chearing warmth and the genial ſhowers of ſpring have done! *Such a change*, ſo pleaſing and ſo ennobling, the goſpel of CHRIST introduces into the ſoul.——Not a day, ſcarce an hour paſſes, but this ſeaſon of univerſal fecundity produces ſomething *new*. And is there any ſtate or any circumſtance of life, on which the faith of CHRIST does not exert a ſimilar efficacy, and bring forth fruit unto GOD?

This is ſuppoſed to be the ſpiritual meaning of that fine deſcriptive picture which you have borrowed from the *Canticles*. It diſplays the *benign agency* of grace and its doctrines; eſpecially of our LORD's ſatisfaction for ſin, and of his righteouſneſs imputed to ſinners. Theſe operate, with much the ſame favourable and happy energy, both on our morals and our comforts, as the *ſweet influences* of the vernal ſun operate on the ſprouting herbs, and opening flowers.

Ther. If ſuch were the effects of your doctrine, it would ſtand the fairer chance for general acceptation.—But there are ſeveral weighty ſcruples to be removed, before perſons of a *liberal* and *enlarged* way of thinking can acquieſce in your opinion. Who, for inſtance, can perſuade himſelf, that what you call *the ſatisfaction of CHRIST*, is conſiſtent with the dictates of reaſon, or with the perfections of the DEITY?

Aſp. Let gentlemen be candid in their inquiries, and *truly* liberal in their way of thinking; then, I flatter myſelf, theſe ſcruples may be removed without much difficulty.

GOD, the almighty Creator, and ſupreme Governor of the world, having made man, gave him a law; with a *penalty* annexed, in caſe of diſobedience.——This ſacred law our forefather *Adam* preſumptuouſly broke; and we, his poſterity, were *involved* in his guilt. Or, ſhould that point be controverted, *we* have undeniably made, by many perſonal tranſgreſſions, *his* apoſtaſy *our own*.——Inſomuch, that all have ſinned; have forfeited their happineſs, and rendered themſelves obnoxious to puniſhment.

Man being thus ruined, none could recover him, except his injured MAKER. But ſhall he be recovered, ſhall he be reſtored, without ſuffering the puniſhment *due* to his crime, and *threatened* by his CREATOR?——What then will become of the *juſtice* of the divine LAWGIVER? And how ſhall the *honour* of his holy law be maintained? At this rate, who would reverence its authority, or fear to violate its precepts?

Sinners might be emboldened to multiply their tranſgreſſions; and tempted to think that the GOD of immaculate holineſs, the GOD of unchangeable veracity, is *altogether ſuch an one as themſelves* *.——Does it not appear needful, that *ſome* expedient be deviſed, in order to prevent theſe diſhonourable and horrid conſequences?

Ther. Proceed to inform us what the expedient is.

Aſp. To aſcertain the dignity of the ſupreme adminiſtration, yet reſcue mankind from utter deſtruction, this admirable purpoſe was formed, and in the fulneſs of time executed. The ſecond perſon of the ever-bleſſed TRINITY unites the human nature to the divine; *ſubmits* himſelf to the obligations of his people; and becomes *reſponſible* for all their guilt. In this capacity, he performs a perfect obedience, and undergoes the ſentence of death; makes a full expiation of their ſins, and eſtabliſhes their title to life.——By which means, the law is ſatisfied; juſtice is magnified; and the richeſt grace exerciſed. Man enjoys a *great ſalvation*, not to the diſcredit of *any*, but to the unſpeakable glory of *all*, the divine attributes.

This is what we mean by CHRIST's ſatisfaction. And this, I ſhould imagine, wants no recommendation to our *unprejudiced reaſon*; as, I am ſure, it is moſt delightfully accommodated to our *diſtreſſed condition*.—It is alſo confirmed by many expreſs paſſages of ſcripture, and illuſtrated by a variety of very ſignificant images.

Ther. Pray, let me be favoured with ſome of your ſcriptural images.—After which, we may inquire, whether your doctrine will ſtand the teſt of reaſon.

Aſp. What is your notion of a *ranſom*? When *Priam* redeemed the dead body of *Hector* from the victorious *Achilles*, how was it done?

Ther. By paying a *price* †.——Thus *Fabius* recovered the captives which were taken by *Hannibal*. He tranſmitted the ſum required, and they were diſcharged from their confinement.

Aſp. Such is the redemption procured for ſinners by our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Of ſuch a nature, (though incomparably more grand and auguſt in all its circumſtances), and expreſſed by the very ſame word ‡. *The Son of man came not to be miniſtered unto, but to miniſter; and to give his life a ranſom for many.*

CHRIST alſo *paid* a price,—a *real* price,—a moſt *ſatisfactory* price. In conſideration of which, our freedom from every penal evil is granted. *Ye are redeem-*

* Cant. ii. 11. 12. 13. † 1 John i. 3.

* This was actually the caſe, as we are informed by the SEARCHER of hearts, when, on a particular occaſion, puniſhment was only *retarded*. How much more would ſuch impious opinions have prevailed, if, on this grand act of diſobedience, puniſhment had been entirely *forborne*? Pſal. l. 21.

† ——————————ἕρκος ὀδόντων ἔφυγε, ——————————

an *infinitely* rich price. *Hyperbolical* this, as applied by *Homer*; *ſtrictly true*, when referred to CHRIST.

‡ Λύτρον ἀπολύτρωσις, are uſed in this *preciſe* ſignification, by the moſt approved authors of *Greece*.——Ἀπολύσασθαι τοὺς ἄνδρας ἀνδρῶν, καὶ τοὺς αἰχμαλώτους ἀντιλαβεῖν, ſays *Plutarch*. Ὡς τοῦ αὐτοῦ τοῦτο ἦλθε δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν, ſays our bleſſed SAVIOUR, *Matth.* xx. 28.——Ἀπολύσασθαι τοὺς αἰχμαλώτους ἐπὶ, is the language of *Demoſthenes*. Ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, are the words of St *Paul*, Eph. i. 7.—To *eſtabliſh* this important point, and to *familiarize* the comfortable idea to our minds, the ſacred writers abound in this phraſeology. See *Luke* i. 68, ii. 38. xxiv. 21.—*Rom.* iii. 24.—*Tit.* ii. 14.—*Heb.* ix. 12.

ed,

ed †, says the apostle, *not with corruptible things, silver and gold, but with the precious blood of* CHRIST.——Let me add one text more, which, in the same style of *commutative* justice, asserts the same truth. CHRIST *has redeemed us* †, hath bought us off, *from the curse of the law*.——Yes, my friend,

The ransom was paid down. The fund of heav'n,
Heav'n's inexhaustible exhausted fund,
Amazing and amaz'd pour'd forth the price,
All price beyond. Though curious to compute,
Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum ‡.

Ther. Hold a little, good *Aspasio*. Consider the consequence of what you maintain. If there was a ransom in the case, to *whom* was it paid?——The *devil* had led sinners captive. They are said to be the slaves of Satan. And shall the blessed JESUS pay his life to that accursed fiend? Shocking to imagine!——Yet, shocking as it is, it must follow from your own, and your poet's assertion.

Asp. You misapprehend the case, *Theron*. The ransom was paid to GOD. *Thou hast redeemed us to* GOD ||, is the confession of the saints in light.——Satisfaction was made to the divine *law*, and to the divine *justice*. The one of which was offended; the other violated; and both concurred to denounce the transgressor's doom. Of which doom *Satan* was only the destined executioner; whose malignity, and implacable rage, GOD is pleased to make the instrument of inflicting his vengeance; as he formerly used the idolatrous kings of *Assyria* and *Babylon*, to chastise the disobedient *Israelites*.

When we were without strength §, utterly ruined, yet absolutely helpless; when none, in heaven or earth, could afford us any succour; *then* our LORD JESUS CHRIST most graciously and most seasonably interposed. He *said*, as it is very emphatically represented by *Elihu*, *Deliver them from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom* †.——He *did*, what is very beautifully described by our *English classic*;

——So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judg'd, and die;
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life ¶.

Ther. But pray, do not you allow, that CHRIST is truly and properly GOD?

Asp. We not only allow it, but we insist upon it, and make our boast of it. This is the very foundation of *his* merit, and the support of *our* hope.

Ther. This may aggrandize the merit of CHRIST, but it will increase the difficulty of your task. For, according to this opinion, CHRIST must make satisfaction *to himself*. And is not this a practice quite unprecedented? a notion perfectly absurd?

Asp. It is *quite unprecedented*, you say. On this point, I shall not vehemently contend. Only let me mention one instance, *Zaleucus*, you know, the prince of the *Locrians*, made a decree, That whoever was convicted of adultery, should be punished with the loss of both his eyes. Soon after this establishment, the legislator's *own son* was apprehended in the very fact, and brought to a public trial. How could the father acquit himself, in so tender and delicate a conjuncture? Should he *execute* the law, in all its rigour, this would be worse than death to the unhappy youth. Should he *pardon* so notorious a delinquent, this would defeat the design of his salutary institution. To avoid both these inconveniencies, he ordered one of his own eyes to be pulled out, and one of his son's. By which means, the rights of justice were preserved inviolate; yet the tenderness of a parent was remarkably indulged. And may we not venture to say, that, in this case, *Zaleucus* both received and made the satisfaction? *received* it as a magistrate, even while he *made* it as a father.

Ther. I cannot see, how this suffering of the father was, in any degree, *satisfactory* to the law; since the father and the son could not be considered as *one* and the *same* person. It may pass for an extraordinary instance of parental indulgence; it may strike the benevolent and compassionate hearer: but if tried at the bar of equity and reason, it will hardly be admitted as any legal satisfaction; it will probably be condemned, as a breach of nature's first and fundamental law, self-preservation.

Asp. What you observe, *Theron*, I must confess, has weight. It will oblige me to give up my illustration. Nevertheless, what you urge against the *propriety* of the comparison, tends to establish the *certainty* of the doctrine. For CHRIST and his people are actually considered as one and the same person. They are *one* mystical *body*; he the head, they the members; so intimately united to him, that they are *bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh* *. By virtue of which union, their sins were punished in him, and *by his stripes they are healed* †, they obtain impunity and life.

Though there may be nothing in the procedure of men, which bears any resemblance to this miracle of heavenly goodness; it receives a sufficient confirmation from the language of scripture. He who wrote as an amanuensis to the unerring SPIRIT, has declared, that *GOD was in* CHRIST, *reconciling the world*,——unto whom? unto some third party? No; but reconciling it, by the death and obedience of CHRIST,——*unto himself* ‡. And I can very readily grant, that this divine exertion of benignity and wisdom should be without a *precedent*, and without *a parallel* ||.

Difficulties, I own, may attend the explication of this article, or be interwoven with its consequences. At the same time I must affirm, that our apprehensions of heavenly things are so *obscure*, and our ideas of the divine benevolence so *scanty*, that we may very possibly mistake; and fancy that to be absurd, which is only great, wonderful, and incomprehensible §. Nor shall I be thought presumptuous in adding, that it will be impossible for all the sagacity in the world, to prove this doctrine *an absurdity*, though it should ever remain *an inexplicable* mystery. How many phænomena in the constitution of external nature, are confessedly mysterious and inexplicable! They challenge, they command our assent; yet *baffle* all our researches, and *defy* our utmost penetration. If then we find this

* 1 *Pet.* i. 18. We have an *equivalent* expression, used in the *same* signification, by one of the correctest writers in the world;

Et fratrem Pollux alterna morte redemit. VIRG.

† *Gal.* iii. 13. Ἐξηγορασεν. We are said to be *bought*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. not in a metaphorical sense, but really and properly. For here the price is *mentioned*; and by St *Peter* the price is *specified*, 1 Pet. i. 18. 19.

‡ Night-Thoughts, No. IV. || Rev. v. 9.

§ Rom. v. 6. † Job xxxiii. 24. ¶ MILT. b. III. 294.

* Eph. v. 30. Col. i. 20. † Is. liii. 5.

‡ 2 Cor. v. 19.

|| *Fancy*, in the person of *Horace*, said of *Jupiter* and his fabulous exploits,

Cui nihil viget simile aut secundum.

Much more will *Reason*, in the character of a *believer*, say the same of JEHOVAH and his marvellous *grace*.

§ Its *unparalleled*, nay, its *incomprehensible* nature, is no objection to its truth and reality. This is rather a circumstance, which perfectly agrees with the testimony of the inspired writers; and affords, in my opinion, an unanswerable argument for the divine origin of Christianity.

It agrees with the testimony of the inspired writers; who call it, not only GOD's *wisdom*, by way of super-eminent distinction, but *his wisdom in a mystery*, even *his hidden wisdom*: which could not possibly have been conceived by any finite mind, however enlarged or sagacious.——*Affords an unanswerable argument for the divine origin of Christianity.* Since it was infinitely too deep for the contrivance of men, and absolutely undiscoverable by the penetration of angels; *how* could it be known, but by manifestation from above? *Whence* could it take its rise, but from an especial revelation?

truth

truth fully and incontestably revealed in the Bible, we must renounce the philosopher, before we can *consistently* ask the sceptic.

Ther. Let us see then, whether it be so fully and incontestably revealed in the Bible. You have given me, as yet, but *one* of your scriptural images.

Asp. I have another at your service. CHRIST is called an *High Priest*. What do you take to be the nature of the priestly office?

Ther. The business of the priest was, I apprehend, to offer sacrifices, and to make intercession for the people.

Asp. Very true: and CHRIST could not with any propriety receive this appellation, if he had not been detective in performing *either* of the sacerdotal functions. Now, that he offered no such victim as slain beasts, is universally acknowledged. We might presume therefore, even though we had not the authority of an apostle to assure us, that *he offered HIMSELF, through the eternal SPIRIT, to GOD* *.

The cross, shall I say †? rather his divine nature was the *altar*. His soul and body, each immaculately pure, were the *holocaust*. These he resigned; the one, to deadly wounds; the other, to inexpressible anguish; and both, to be instead of all whole burnt-offerings — On this invaluable oblation, his intercession at the right hand of his FATHER is founded; from this it derives that prevailing efficacy, which is the security of his *standing*, and the recovery of his fallen disciples.

Give me leave to ask farther, What is your idea of a *sacrifice*? When *Iphegenia* was slain at the altar, what was the import of that memorable action?

Ther. It was intended, if we may credit *Virgil*'s account ‡, to *appease* the indignation of the superior powers, and to obtain a *propitious* gale for the wind-bound fleet, and confederate forces of *Greece*. But, I hope, you would not make that solemn butchery of the royal virgin, a pattern for the supreme goodness; nor the practice of gross idolaters, a model for the religion of the holy JESUS.

Asp. By no means, *Theron*. Only I would observe, that the custom of offering sacrifices obtained among the most cultivated nations of the Heathen world; that these sacrifices were frequently of the *vicarious* § kind;

* Heb. ix. 14.

† The *cross* is, by some authors, styled the *altar*. But, I think, improperly. This notion seems to have sprung from, or given rise to, the *Popish* practice of idolizing the *crucifix*. At least, it countenances such a kind of foppish or sacrilegious devotion, more than a Protestant writer could wish. It was the property of the altar, to *sanctify the gift*. This therefore, when referred to our LORD's sacrifice, is a far more exalted office, than we dare ascribe to the *instrument of* his suffering. This must be the honour and prerogative of his DIVINE NATURE, which did indeed sanctify the great obligation; gave it a dignity, a merit, an efficacy, unspeakable and everlasting.

‡ *Sanguine placasti ventos, et virgine cæsa.*

§ *Seneca* says, alluding to the custom of sacrifices, and the prevailing opinion concerning them; *Fuerim tantum nunquam amplius dolituræ domus piamentum.*—What we are to understand by *piamentum*, our author himself explains, in the preceding clause; *Quicquid matri dolendum fuerit, in me transierit; quicquid aviæ, in me.* To which his judicious commentator *Lipsius*, from an extensive knowledge of antiquity, adds; *xabagua sive piacularis victima.* SEN. ad *Helv.*

The same writer, in the same consolatory epistle, has another sentence, still more to our purpose; *Nobilitatur omnium carminibus, quæ se pro conjuge* vicariam dedit.—*Juvenal*, speaking of this very fact, expresses himself in very remarkable language; such as shews us, with the utmost *clearness* and *precision*, what the ancients meant, when they affirmed of a suffering or dying person, that *he gave himself for* another:

——*Spectat* subeuntem fata *mariti*
Alcestim, et similis si permutatio *detur.* Sat. VI.

There is a passage in *Livy*, which most of all deserves our notice; as it seems to imply a popular belief of the dignity, the more than human dignity, of the sacrifice which was necessary to appease the wrath of heaven. It relates to *Decius*, devoting himself for the public good; *Confestim ab utroque pede, aliquanto augustior humano visu, fœruti cælo missus, piaculum omnis deorum iræ.* Lib. VIII. cap. ix.

in which the victim was substituted instead of the offerer; and the former being cut off, the latter was discharged from punishment: consequently, that the *classic* authors would (in case there was any need of such auxiliaries) join with the sacred writers, to declare the *expediency*, and explain the *nature* of sacrifices. This also you will permit me to add, that, if the Heathens talk sensibly on any part of religious worship, it is on the subject of sacrifices. Their sentiments concerning expiatory oblations, seem to be the *faint* and *distant* echo of revelation. And I have usually considered them, not as the institutions of mere reason, but as the remains of some broken tradition.

However, the truest and most authentic signification of a sacrifice, is to be learned from the *Jewish* ritual, explained by the gospel-comment. Do you remember the *Mosaic* account of that ordinance?

Ther. You are much better acquainted, *Aspasio*, with those *sacred antiquities*; and can give the most satisfactory information with regard to this particular. Only let me remind you, that *alms* are styled offerings; and *praises*, both in the prophetical and evangelical writings, come under the denomination of sacrifices.

Asp. Though praises and alms are styled sacrifices, they are not of the *propitiatory*, but *eucharistic* kind. They are never said to *expiate* transgressions, only are represented as *acceptable* to GOD through JESUS CHRIST; that divinely-precious victim, whose merits both cancel our guilt, and commend our services! According to—

Ther. Stay a moment, *Aspasio*.——Let me recollect myself.—This may be the meaning of sacrifices, as ordained by *Moses*, and solemnized among the *Jews*.—— "Sacrifices were a symbolical address to GOD; intended "to express before him the devotion, affections, dispo- "sitions, and desires of the heart by significative and em- "blematical actions."——Or thus; "The priest made "atonement for sin, by sacrificing a beast, only as that "was a sign and testimony of the sacrificer's pure and "upright heart."

Asp. Sacrifices, I acknowledge, were a symbolical address to GOD.—But would you confine their efficacy, *only* to the death of the animal, and the purity of the offerer? No, *Theron*: they always had a reference to the great sacrifice,—ordained in the eternal counsels of JEHOVAH;—prepared, when the co-eternal SON was made flesh;—offered, when the blessed JESUS surrendered himself, to be led as a lamb to the slaughter. —They were so far from being *independent* on this divine oblation, that they acted in *perpetual* subserviency to it, and derived *all* their virtue from it. They were the shadow, but the body was CHRIST.

"They expressed," you say, "the devotion, affec- "tions, dispositions, and desires of the heart." But I rather think, they expressed the guilt and the faith of the offerer.—*His guilt*; for this seems to be intimated, by the very *names* of the propitiatory sacrifices: the sin and the sacrifice, the offending action and the expiatory rite, being signified by one and the same word *. It is somewhat more than intimated, by the *occasion* of the offering, and the *state* of the offerer. Since it was only on account of guilt contracted, that piacular oblations were made; and only from a guilty person that they were required.—*His faith*; or firm belief, that *ceremonial* guilt, which shut him out from the communion of the visible church, and subjected him to the infliction of temporal judgments, was removed by *these*; but that *moral* guilt,

* חטאת denotes a *sin*, and *sin-offering*, Lev. iv. 3. 24. אשם signifies the *trespass*, and the *trespass-offering*, Lev. v. 15. 19.

which defiles the ſoul, and excludes from heaven, ſhould be purged by *ſome better ſacrifice than theſe* *. In the exerciſe of this faith, *Abel* offered up a more acceptable ſacrifice than *Cain*; and without this faith, exerciſed in ſome degree, it was impoſſible to pleaſe GOD.

If ſacrifices were intended to beſpeak *integrity of heart*, methinks, the ſtate of *innocency* had been the propereſt period for their inſtitution and oblation. But we never hear of this awful ceremony till man is fallen, and ſin committed.——If intended to denote *purity of heart*, why ſhould they be particularly enjoined on that ſolemn day, when confeſſion was made of *all the ſins* † of the whole congregation? An oddly-concerted device this! in which the tongue muſt contradict what the ceremony would recognize. Or, how could it be proper, after the *violation* of ſome law, or the *neglect* of ſome ordinance, immediately to go and offer a ſacrifice? What would be the language of ſuch a practice? "I have done wickedly, but my heart is pure and upright." Is this conſiſtent with the ſpirit of humility, of modeſty, or of common ingenuity? Is this the way of *giving glory* to GOD, or of *taking ſhame* to ourſelves? Whereas, let the ſacrifice be a typical expiation, and this is the ſignificancy of the action. "LORD, I confeſs myſelf guilty. "Puniſhment and death are *my due*. Let them fall, I "beſeech thee, on *my victim* ‡; that thy juſtice being "glorified, and thy law ſatisfied, thy mercy may be ho"nourably diſplayed in my forgiveneſs."

Beſides, *Theron*, what *likeneſs*, what *agreement*, is there, between the profeſſion of integrity, and an animal mortally wounded, wallowing in its own blood, and ſtruggling in the agonies of death? Whereas, between theſe dying pangs, and the puniſhment due to ſin, or the ſorrows ſuſtained by the crucifying SAVIOUR, there is an *apparent*, a *ſtriking*, and, in various reſpects, an *edifying* reſemblance.

Ther. They declared, perhaps, the ſacrificer's readineſs and reſolution to ſlay the brute in himſelf, and to lay down his life in adherence to GOD.

Aſp. I don't remember any aſſertion of this kind in the Bible, or any hint to countenance ſuch an interpretation. It ſeems, in ſome caſes, to be incompatible with the very nature of things, and contrary to the expreſs declarations of ſcripture. *Doves*, you know, *lambs*, and *ſheep* were offered in ſacrifice. But ſhall we ſlay the lamb, the dove, the ſheep, in ourſelves? So far from it, that CHRIST's diſciples are either deſcribed by theſe creatures, or commanded to imitate their properties. *Be ye harmleſs as doves* ‖. *Peter, feed my lambs* †. *My ſheep hear my voice* ¶.

Suppoſe, however, that this might be a ſubordinate deſign, or a valuable improvement of the ſacrificial acts; yet their *primary* intention, and *ultimate* end, were widely different: were much more ſignificant of the divine compaſſions, and much better adapted to the comfort of mankind. They were an *awful indication*, that death was the wages of ſin: at the ſame time, a *chearing declaration*, that GOD was pleaſed to accept the death of the animal, inſtead of the ſinner's; a *figurative repreſentation* ++ alſo of that illuſtrious PERSON, who was *to bear the ſin of many, and pour out his ſoul for tranſgreſſors.*

Ther. Since ſacrifices were of a religious nature, they ſhould not only be inſtructive and beneficial in their tendency; but have their *due effects*, with regard to GOD, to ſin, and to the perſon who brought them.

Aſp. They had their effects *with regard to* GOD; that his juſtice might be magnified, and his anger appeaſed: —*to ſin*; that its demerit might be diſplayed, yet its guilt be done away:—*to the perſon who brought them*; that he might obtain pardon, be exempted from puniſhment, and exerciſe his faith on the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Ther. There are ſo many ſorts of ſacrifice appointed in the *Jewiſh* rubric, that I am at a loſs for a *diſtinct* idea; unleſs ſome one be ſingled out, and ſeparately conſidered.

Aſp. Among all the ſacrifices inſtituted by *Moſes*, none more circumſtantially typified the bleſſed JESUS, or more appoſitely expreſſed the benefits of his oblation, than the *paſchal lamb*, and the *ſin-offering* on the day of atonement.

An expoſitor, who cannot be miſtaken, has given us this interpretation of the paſchal lamb; CHRIST *our paſſover is ſacrificed for us* *: declaring hereby,—that CHRIST is a *real* ſacrifice;—that he was *prefigured*, in this capacity, by the paſchal lamb;—that the *circumſtances*, which diſtinguiſhed it, met in him; and the *advantages*, which reſulted from it, were procured by him; *theſe*, in their trueſt import; *theſe*, in their largeſt extent.—The words of the apoſtle ſpeak this ſenſe, to the plaineſt, ſimpleſt reader. Whereas, to extort any other ſignification from them, what ſubtilty of wit, and what refinement, or rather violence of criticiſm, muſt be uſed!

The paſchal lamb was *without blemiſh*. Such was the LAMB of GOD; free from all taint of original ſin, and from every ſpot of actual tranſgreſſion.——A lamb of *the firſt year*, in all the ſprightlineſs and floridity of youth. CHRIST alſo laid down his life, not when worn with age, or debilitated with ſickneſs; but in the very prime of his days; amidſt all the bloom of health, and all the vigour of manhood.—The lamb was to be ſlain in ſuch a manner, as might occaſion the moſt *copious effuſion* of its blood. And was not this very exactly fulfilled in our ſuffering SAVIOUR? His blood flowed out, in vaſt abundance, by the amazing *ſweat* in the garden; by the rending laſhes of the *ſcourge*; by the lacerating points of the *thorns*; by the dreadful *nails*, which cleft his hands and his feet; by the deadly *ſpear*, which ripped open his ſide, and cut its way to his heart. —Though his blood was to be ſo liberally ſpilt, *a bone* of the LAMB *was not to be broken*. And you cannot but recollect, you cannot but admire, the wonderful interpoſition of Providence, to accompliſh this *emblematical preadtion*. When the ſoldiers had received a command to break the legs of the three crucified perſons; when they had ac-

And ſhadows, of that deſtin'd ſeed to bruiſe
The ſerpent, by what means he ſhall achieve
Mankind's deliverance. B. XII. ver. 231.

* They *ſanctified to the purifying of the fleſh*, Heb. ix. 13. *but could not make him that did the ſervice perfect, as pertaining to the conſcience*, Heb. ix. 9.

† Lev. xvi. 21.

‡ What ſays that prodigy of oriental learning, *Bochart*? *Hoc eodem ritu tram Dii peccator deprecabatur, eamque immitti petebat in illius victimæ caput, quam ſuo loco ponebat.* Hierozoic. tom. I. lib. ii. cap. 54.

‖ Matth. x. 16. † John xxi. 15. ¶ John x. 27.

++ What ſays *Milton* upon this ſubject of ſacrifices, and with reference to their *principal* deſign? He calls them

——*Religious rites*
Of ſacrifice; informing men by types

* 1 Cor. v. 7. Would any one venture to ſay, *Paul our paſſover is ſacrificed for us*? Yet this, I think, *may be*, or rather *is* in effect ſaid, by the account which ſome perſons give of CHRIST's ſatisfaction.—The very thought of ſuch a blaſphemous abſurdity, is too *painful* and *offenſive* for the ſerious Chriſtian to dwell upon. I would therefore divert his attention to a more pleaſing object. Let him obſerve the exquiſite ſkill, which, here and every where, conducts the zeal of our inſpired writer.—The odes of *Pindar* are celebrated for their *fine tranſitions*; which, though bold and ſurpriſing, are perfectly natural. We have in this place, a very maſterly ſtroke of the ſame beautiful kind. The apoſtle, ſpeaking of the *inceſtuous* criminal, paſſes, by a moſt artful digreſſion, to his darling topic, a *crucified* SAVIOUR. Who would have expected it, on ſuch an occaſion? Yet, when *thus* admitted, who does not ſee and admire, both the propriety of the ſubject, and the delicacy of its introduction?

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tually broke the legs of each malefactor, which hung on the right side of our LORD and on the left; their minds were over-ruled (by a divine influence, no doubt) to spare the bleſſed JESUS, and to leave all his bones *unhurt, untouched.*

The lamb was to be killed *before the whole aſſembly*; in the preſence, either of the whole congregation of *Iſrael*, or elſe of that particular ſociety, which concurred in eating the fleſh. And did not the whole multitude of the *Jews* conſpire againſt our REDEEMER, to put him to death? Did they not all cry out, as with one voice, *Crucify him! Crucify him!* Was he not executed, at one of their grand feſtivals, and in the ſight of the *whole aſſembled* nation?—The blood was not to be pour-ed heedleſsly upon the ground, but received carefully into a baſon; and *ſprinkled*, with the utmoſt punctuality, *upon the door-poſts.* In like manner, the blood of the heavenly LAMB is not to be trampled under foot, by a contemptuous diſregard. It is the treaſure of the church, and the medicine of life; to be *received* there-fore by an humble faith, and devoutly *applied* to our conſciences.——The ſprinkling of that blood *ſecured* every *Iſraelitiſh* family from the deſtroying angel's ſword. So the merits of the ſlaughtered SAVIOUR * ſcreen every believing ſinner from the ſtroke of offended juſ-tice, and from the pains of eternal death. What muſt have become of the *Iſraelite*, who, truſting to the up-rightneſs of his heart, ſhould neglect to make uſe of this *divinely appointed* ſafeguard? He muſt inevitably have been puniſhed with the death of his firſt-born. Equally certain, but infinitely more dreadful, will be *his* condemnation, who, before the omniſcient JUDGE, ſhall preſume to plead his own integrity, or confide in his own repentance, and reject the atonement of the dying JESUS.

Ther. Now, if you pleaſe, for the *ſin-offering* †, which ſeems to have been the moſt eminent ſacrifice of them all.

Aſp. It was the moſt *comprehenſive*; becauſe it ſha-dowed forth not only the death of CHRIST, but his reſurrection from the dead, and his aſcenſion into hea-ven.——As the various actions of ſome illuſtrious per-ſonage, which cannot be exhibited by the painter in a ſingle draught, are diſplayed in *ſeveral compartments*; yet all conſtitute one and the ſame grand *hiſtorical picture*: ſo, theſe glorious events, incapable of being repreſented by any *ſingle* animal, were typified by *two kids of the goats*; which nevertheleſs were reputed but as *one* ‡ offering.

These goats were brought to the door of the taber-nacle, and there preſented before the LORD. CHRIST alſo preſented himſelf before GOD, when *he went up to Jeruſalem, that all things written by the prophets concerning him might be accompliſhed* *.——The goat, on which *the* LORD's *lot fell*, was devoted to death. CHRIST alſo being delivered by the *determinate counſel and fore-knowledge of* GOD †, was crucified and ſlain.——The body *was burnt without the camp.* Which pointed at the very place, and pictured out the very nature of our LORD's ſufferings. For *he ſuffered without the gate* ‡; was there expoſed to the rage of men, and the wrath of GOD; under the moſt exquiſite pains of body, and the moſt unſupportable agonies of ſoul. All ſignificantly typified by the flame of a devouring *fire*. Than which nothing is more fierce, more penetrating, or more ſe-verely tormenting.

As the animal which was *ſlaughtered*, ſhewed forth the REDEEMER *dying for our ſins*; that which *eſcaped*, preſigured the ſame SAVIOUR, *riſing again for our juſ-tification.*——The high prieſt put his hands upon the head of the ſcape-goat, and with great ſolemnity, *confeſ-ſed* the ſins of the whole congregation. The import of this ceremony is expreſsly declared in the ſacred canon; *The goat ſhall bear upon him their iniquity* ‖. It is charm-ingly explained by the prophet, *The* LORD *laid on* HIM *the iniquity of us all* §; and moſt delightfully confirmed by the apoſtle, *He himſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree* ¶.

This done, the goat was diſmiſſed into *a land not inha-bited*; a place ſeparated from all reſort of men; where he was never likely to be found any more: to teach us, that our offences, having been expiated by the bleeding JESUS, are entirely done away; ſhall never riſe up in judgment againſt us; but, according to the prophecy of *Jeremiah, when the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, there ſhall be none; and the ſins of Judah, they ſhall not be found* †.——It is farther injoined, that *Aaron ſhall confeſs all the iniquities of the children of Iſrael, and all their tranſgreſſions, in all their ſins. Iniquities, tranſgreſſions, ſins*, are particu-larized; and, to this cluſter of expreſſions, the word *all* is added; to inform us, that the *leaſt* ſins need the atone-ment of CHRIST's death; to aſſure us, that the *greateſt* ſins are not beyond the compaſs of its efficacy; and that *all* ſins, be they ever ſo heinous, or ever ſo nume-rous, are forgiven to the true believer.

The high prieſt carried the blood of the victim into the ſecond tabernacle, even *within the veil.* So *CHRIST entered with his own blood*, not into the holy places made with hands, but *into heaven itſelf* ††.——The blood was ſprinkled *before* the mercy-ſeat; ſprinkled *upon* the mercy-ſeat; and *left* in the holy of holies, that it might always remain before the LORD. And does not CHRIST *always appear* in the preſence of GOD for us? does he not *ever live* to make interceſſion for us? to plead his all-ſufficient propitiation in our behalf; that the benefits procured thereby, may be communicated, ratified, and perpetuated to his people?

Ther. Theſe benefits, *Aſpaſio*, are aſcribed, in ſcrip-ture, to repentance and reformation of life, qualifica-

* Both St *Peter* and St *Paul* ſpeak of *the blood of ſprinkling*, 1 Pet. i. 2. Heb. xii. 24; intimating, by this remarkable form of ſpeech, that the death of *CHRIST* will be of *no advantage* to the ſinner, unleſs it be *applied* to his heart; as the blood of the paſchal lamb was no protection to an *Iſraelite*, till it had tinged the poſts of his door.—*Iſaiah*, uſing the ſame phraſe, and alluding to to the ſame cuſtom, ſays of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, *He ſhall ſpringle many nations*, lii. 15. Not only initiate them into his church by baptiſm; but alſo, by the application of his blood, ſhall *cleanſe* them from their *guilt*, and *deliver* them from the *wrath* to come.

† For the circumſtances relating to the *ſin-offering* the reader will conſult *Lev.* xvi—For thoſe which concern the *paſchal lamb*, he will have recourſe to *Exod.* xii.

‡ How runs the divine command? *He* (the high prieſt) *ſhall take of the congregation two kids of the goats for a ſin-offering*, Lev. xvi. 5. Are not theſe two kids ſtyled in the *ſingular* number and *collective* ſenſe, *an offering?*—That we might not miſtake, GOD is pleaſed to add, *and one ram for a burnt-offering.* Here he names *one*, to prevent a miſapprehenſion of his meaning, when he had before ſaid *two*.—To render his meaning ſtill more apparent, and that we may regard this goat as joined in the *ſame* offering with the other; the LORD, contrary to his own rule in all other caſes, orders the high prieſt to *lay his hands* upon the head of the *ſcape-goat*, not upon the head of the goat devoted to death. He *divides* the neceſſary circumſtances of a ſacrifice between them *both*; to intimate, in the cleareſt manner, that neither the one nor the other *ſeparate*, but both *taken together*, were the one ſacrificial oblation, appointed for this diſtinguiſhed ſolemnity.

If this be true, I think, the paſſage is a pretty conſiderable proof, that *atonement* was made by ſuffering *vicarious* puniſhment; not-withſtanding what has been urged againſt it, from the tenth verſe of the chapter.—Should we require human authority for the ſupport of this interpretation, one of the greateſt human au-thorities may be ſeen in the celebrated *Witſius*: *Utrique hircus pertinebat ad unum ſacrificium pro peccato, hoſtiæ unius loco. Utrique erat pecus piacularis, vicaria Iſraeli peccatori, ejuſque peccatum ferens.* De Oecon. lib. IV. cap. vi.

* Luke xviii. 31. † Acts ii. 23. ‡ Heb. xiii. 12.

‖ It is obſervable, that whereas the ſcape-goat is ſaid to *bear* NW3 the ſins of *Iſrael*, Lev. xvi. 22. the very ſame phraſe is applied to *CHRIST*, Iſ. liii. 12.

§ Iſ. liii. 6. ¶ 1 Pet. ii. 24 † Jer. l. 20. †† Heb. ix. 14.

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tions of *our own*; not to any such cause as a vicarious sacrifice; where the merit must necessarily subsist *in another*. What says the apostle *Peter*, when he had just received his instructions from the HOLY GHOST? *Repent and be converted*, not look unto an atonement, or depend upon a propitiation, *that your sins may be blotted out* *.

Asp. 'Tis true, the benefits of the new covenant are promised to penitents, as their *happy portion*; but never assigned to their repentance, as the *procuring cause*. Never to their repentance, but to the blood of the great HIGH PRIEST, called therefore *the blood of the everlasting covenant* †; being the condition stipulated in it, required by it, and in consequence of which, all its unspeakable privileges are bestowed.

Besides, the qualifications you suppose, are the gift of the LORD. We are not able to exercise, till *CHRIST*, who is exalted for this very purpose, *gives* repentance ‡. ——A conversion to GOD, and a newness of life, are not the effect of human abilities, but the work of the *divine* SPIRIT, and the fruit of the REDEEMER's death.—Indeed, this death is the purchase of *every* heavenly blessing. This opens the heaven of heavens, and all its inexhaustible stores. By this we have the enjoyment of grace, and by this the hope of glory.

Ther. You begin to be in raptures, *Aspasio!*

Asp. Excuse me, *Theron*. It is not easy to repress the sallies of delight and devotion, when we muse upon such amazing loving-kindness, and are touched with a sense of such immensely-rich benefits.——A great HIGH PRIEST! who is *higher than the heavens* ‖; yet *humbled* himself to death, even the death of the cross! who is *consecrated for evermore* §; and pleads *all* his merit, improves *all* his influence, for *our* consummate felicity!

What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these;
Such contemplations mount us, and should mount
The mind still higher; nor ever glance on man
Unraptur'd, uninflam'd ¶.

But I check myself; and will either reply to your objections, or listen to your sentiments; listen as attentively, as you yourself attend to the music of that *shrill-tongued thrush*.

Ther. Its sweetly-modulated lays, eminent even in the symphony of spring, have indeed attracted my ears. But my mind is disengaged, and free for your conversation.

Asp. I can repeat a song, sweeter far than this, or all the melody of the woodland choirs: A song, which has harmony enough, to make the brow of *melancholy* wear a smile, or to sooth away the *sorrows* of death itself. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of GOD's elect? It is GOD that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is CHRIST that died; yea rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of GOD; who also maketh intercession for us* ††.——According to my friend's principles, the strain of this triumphant exclamation was ill-judged, and should have run in the following manner: "Who "shall lay any thing to our charge? We have endea- "voured to preserve a rectitude of disposition, and to "persist in a laudable course of action. Where-ever we "failed, we have been sorry for the fault, and have im- "plored pardon from the divine MAJESTY. What "then shall dismay us? or who shall condemn us."—— *Your* topics of consolation would be complete, without having recourse to the *death* of *CHRIST*, as an atonement for sin; or to the *resurrection* of *CHRIST*, as an evidence that the atonement is accepted; or to the *intercession* of *CHRIST*, as the cause of our interest in that transcendent blessing.

* Acts iii. 19. † Heb. xiii. 20. ‡ Acts v. 31.

‖ Heb. vii. 26. § Heb. vii. 28.

¶ Night-Thoughts, No IV. †† Rom. viii. 33. 34.

Ther. Since you so frequently mention, and so earnestly insist upon *atonement*, I should be glad to know the precise signification of the word. I am told, the original phrase has nothing to do with the idea of making satisfaction.

Asp. We may learn the precise signification of atonement, by considering the *means*; the *effect*; and the *manner*, whereby the means accomplish the effect.—— The effect of atonement, is *pardon*.—The means of obtaining it, are the *death* of CHRIST.——The way or manner, whereby the death of CHRIST becomes efficacious for this blessed purpose, is the sovereign *appointment* of his FATHER; the infinite *dignity* of his person; and especially the *vicarious* nature of his sufferings, or their being undergone in the stead of sinners.

Ther. It has been supposed, and is affirmed too, that our SAVIOUR's obedience and death were conducive to our redemption, *only* in virtue of his FATHER's will and appointment.

Asp. I am glad it is some other and not my *Theron*, who espouses this opinion: which is highly injurious to the *dignity* of our REDEEMER's person, and to the *merit* of his obedience. Neither is it very honourable to the wisdom of the FATHER, unless we suppose him *therefore* to have appointed the death of CHRIST, because he knew it was *fully sufficient* for the glorious purpose.

And why should we use that weak inadequate expression, *conducive* to our redemption? Would any one say, of *Solomon*'s elegant and sumptuous temple, that it was conducive to the accomplishment of what *Moses* foretold *?—*David*'s provision of stones, of timber, and of gold, was, if you please, conducive to it. But *Solomon*'s act was *perfective* of it; was the very execution of the thing itself. Such are the obedience and death of CHRIST, with respect to our redemption.

Ther. But we forget the original word, and neglect to inquire into its genuine import.

Asp. The word, which we translate *atonement*, implies, in its primary acceptation, the notion of *covering*. Thus the ark was covered †, *was overlaid with pitch, within and without*: that all its chinks might be secured against the insinuating attempts of the water; and all its timber defended from the injuries of the liquid element.—— When an object, in this or any other manner, is covered over for safety; the covering *receives* every shock, and *sustains* all damages, which would otherwise fall upon the thing covered. The image, therefore, is very pertinently used, to express the true *evangelical* nature of atonement; and the word is used, with equal propriety, to describe the *mercy-seat* ‡; which was a costly covering for the ark, made of pure gold, and exactly commensurate to that sacred repository. In this were lodged the tables of the law; whose precepts we have violated, and to whose curse we were subject. Consequently the mercy-seat, both by its situation, its extent, and its office, prefigured the REDEEMER: who interposes between the law and the offender; fulfils the commands, and sustains the curse of the former; merits pardon, and procures salvation for the latter.

As some fine flower; having entertained our eye with one beautiful colour, suddenly breaks, or gradually softens into another; and gives us a renewed pleasure: such, methinks, is the nature of this delightful word.——It is expressive of the *hoar-frost* ‖;

* Exod. xv. 17.

† כפרת Thou shalt *besmear, cover*, or *overlay*, Gen. vi. 14. This is the first place, in which our word occurs. It is supposed to give us the genuine and native sense of the phrase.—Perhaps the *English* expression *cover*, may be derived from the participle כפר *copher*.

‡ כפרת Exod. xxv. 17.

‖ כפור *Psal.* cxlvii. 16. The idea deduced from *hoar-frost*,

which, in a ſerene, but ſharp wintry morning, covers the houſes, covers the trees, covers the whole face of nature. So, the blood of JESUS, according to the ſalmiſt's repreſentation, covers all our guilt, and hides every offence. Inſomuch that, when this blood is applied by the divine SPIRIT, the LORD *ſees no iniquity in Jacob* †. He acts, as if he ſaw none; neither punithes the guilty, nor abhors the polluted ſinner.

The ſame expreſſion is uſed with reference to a *covenant*, and ſignifies the *abolition* of the contract ‡; which was done by cancelling the deed, or expunging the articles of ſtipulation.—By the covenant of works, all mankind became obnoxious to condemnation; were bound over to death. By the grace of CHRIST, our obligation to puniſhment is diſannulled, and the *hand-writing of condemnation is blotted out*.—Should you aſk, *How* this is effected? By paying a ranſom, and offering a ſacrifice. Should you farther inquire, Of *what* this ranſom and this ſacrifice conſiſted? Of nothing leſs than the precious blood ‖, the ineſtimable life §, the divinely magnificent perſon of CHRIST ¶.

Ther. Theſe then are the capital ideas included in the original word, a covering by way of *defence*, and a covering by way of *concealment*.

Aſp. They are, *Theron*.—As the brain, in the animal body, is the ſource of ſenſation; ſends out various detachments of nerves, to animate and actuate all the parts of the vital ſyſtem: ſo, theſe two capital ideas branch themſelves into a variety of ſubordinate, yet ſimilar ſignifications; which run through the whole œconomy of the goſpel, to enliven and quicken the ſpirit of a believer. Let me inſtance in a few particulars. This richly-ſignificant word denotes—the exerciſe of divine mercy ⊥,—the pardon of ſin +,—a cleanſing from guilt ++,—purging from tranſgreſſion =,—reconciliation for iniquity ≃,—the pacifying of wrath **.——Do not theſe paſſages (which are expreſſed by ſome branch of the verb, that conveys to us the idea of *atoning*) plainly intimate,—that the atonement of CHRIST is the meritorious cauſe of all theſe deſirable effects; is the foundation of *every* act of divine goodneſs; and the origin of *every* bleſſing vouchſafed to ſinners?

Ther. After all, *this* is the conſideration, which principally offends and perplexes me:—GOD is a ſpirit; an abſolutely-perfect and infinitely-pure being; remote, inconceivably-remote, from whatever is groſs or corporeal. How then can he take pleaſure in the effuſion of blood, or the burning of fleſh? How can any ſuch *low carnal* inducements make him merciful to ſinners; or appeaſe, what you call, his wrath?

Aſp. Rather, what the *ſcriptures* call his wrath.——You miſtake our doctrine, my dear *Theron*. We never maintain, that any ſacrifice whatever, not even the propitiation of CHRIST's death, was intended to *make* GOD merciful; only to *make way* for his eternal purpoſes of mercy, without any prejudice either to the demands of his law, or the rights of his juſtice.—Our ſentiments on this head, are exactly conſonant to his own *declaration*, and his own *procedure*, in the caſe of Job's friends *. Though diſpleaſed with their conduct, he was merciful to their perſons. Nevertheleſs, he would not exerciſe that mercy, till they had firſt offered a ſacrifice, and acted faith in a dying SAVIOUR.

Neither is it ever ſuppoſed, that the infinitely wiſe and pure GOD can take pleaſure in the effuſion of blood, or the burning of fleſh, *ſimply* conſidered; only as they had a reference to that *noble* and *ineſtimable* ſacrifice, which brings the higheſt honour to his name; which thoſe ſlaughtered animals exhibited in a figure; and to which every true *Iſraelite* had a believing regard.

I ſay, had *a believing regard*. For it is affirmed by the author to the *Hebrews*, that the goſpel was preached to the *Iſraelites* in the wilderneſs †.——*What* does he mean by the goſpel? The very eſſence of this benevolent ſcheme, according to the apoſtle's own definition, is, that CHRIST *died for our ſins* ‡.—*How* was this goſpel preached to our fathers in the wilderneſs? By ſignificant emblems; eſpecially by ſlaughtered animals, and bleeding victims; by which CHRIST was *almoſt continually*, though not *ſo evidently* as in theſe latter times, *ſet forth crucified* ‖ *for ſinners*.

In this ſenſe alone, thoſe carnal uſages were *worthy* the wiſdom of GOD to appoint, and the majeſty of GOD to accept.——This gave them a peculiar *dignity* and *importance*; and ſet them far above all the ſimilar obſervances uſed in the Heathen worſhip.—They were alſo, when thus explained, thus improved, extremely profitable to believers; as they directed their contemplation to the *future* ſufferings of a SAVIOUR, and ratified to their faith the benefits of his *ever-operating* ſacrifice; which, we are aſſured by an infallible voice, was effectual *for the redemption of the tranſgreſſions under the firſt covenant* §.

Ther. So you apprehend, that, in thoſe uſages practiſed by the ancient Jews, the goſpel was *emblematically* preached, and CHRIST in a *figure* exhibited.

Aſp. Moſt certainly, *Theron*. And for this cauſe, under the law, *almoſt all things were purged with blood* ¶. The multiplicity, the variety, the conſtancy of their ſacrifices, were all deſigned to impreſs upon their minds, and familiarize to their thoughts, this great evangelical truth.—Was any one overtaken by a *fault*? He muſt

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not ſo exact and ſtriking, in our northern clime, as in the more ſouthern regions. *There*, the exhalations and dews being more copious, the hoar-froſt muſt fall thicker, lie deeper, and more fully correſpond with the notion of covering.

* Pſal. xxxii. 1. † Numb. xxiii. 21.

‡ Iſ. xxviii. 18. כפר abolebitur. *Proprie ſonat*, oblinetur, obliterabitur, *eſt enim* כפר *Hebræis proprie quid* obducere *atque inde eam* obducta *et* oblita *diſparent*) delere, abolere. (Thus I apprehend, the words ſhould be pointed. According to the preſent punctuation, at leaſt in my edition, I can make out neither ſyntax nor ſenſe). *Alluditer hoc loco ad fœdera ſcripto comprehenſa, quæ abolentur et irrita fiunt, ſi ſcriptura* inducatur, cancelletur, antiquetur, obliteretur. VITRING. *in loc.*

‖ *Not by the blood of goats and calves, but by* his own *blood*. Heb. ix. 12.

§ *The Son of man came to give* his life *a ranſom for many*. Mark x. 45.

¶ *Who through the eternal SPIRIT offered* himſelf *without ſpot to* GOD. Heb. ix. 14.

† Deut. xxxii. 43. + Deut. xxi. 8. 2 Chron. xxx. 18.
++ Numb. xxxv. 33. = Pſal. lxv. 3. ≃ Dan. ix. 24.
** Ezek. xvi. 63.

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* *See* Job xlii. 7. 8. † Heb. iv. 2. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 3. ‖ Gal. iii. 1.

§ *Heb.* ix. 15. When I reflect on theſe words, I wonder how any one can aſſert, That *all the Jews died under the curſe of the law*. Died under the curſe of the law! Even though the apoſtle has warranted it for a truth that *all theſe* (meaning *Abraham, Sarah, Iſaac, Jacob*, &c.) *died in faith*, Heb. xi. 13. Even though he has elſewhere laid it down as a maxim, *So then they which are of faith*, in whatever period of time they live, or under whatever diſpenſation of religion they worſhip, *are bleſſed with faithful Abraham*. Gal. iii. 9.—Even though the pſalmiſt in one place, affirms, *Bleſſed are they whoſe unrighteouſneſſes are forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered*; and in another place, declares concerning himſelf and his pious contemporaries; *Look how wide the eaſt is from the weſt! ſo far hath he ſet our ſins from us*, Pſal. xxxii. 1. Pſal. ciii. 12.

From theſe and many other texts, I think, it is evident, that the faithful *Jews* no more died under the curſe of the law, than the faithful *Chriſtians*. The death of CHRIST procured the *pardon* and *acceptance* of believers, even before he came in the fleſh. From the beginning, he had covenanted with the FATHER, to be their MEDIATOR; and GOD, to whom all things are preſent, ſaw the certain accompliſhment of his undertaking. He was therefore, by virtue of the divine decree, and in point of ſaving efficacy, *a LAMB ſlain from the foundation of the world*. Though he laid down his life in the reign of *Tiberius*, he was a real REDEEMER in *all ages*.

¶ Heb. ix. 22.

present a victim, and the priest must slay it, by way of *trespass-offering*; to signify, that the guilt which was contracted, could be done away only by the atoning death of CHRIST.—Had any one received a signal *blessing*? A beast was slain by way of *peace-offering*; as a public expression of gratitude for the mercy, and also as an emphatical declaration, that all good vouchsafed to fallen man, is owing to the REDEEMER's ransom.—Was any one to be invested with the priestly office, or admitted to minister in the sanctuary? A ram or a bullock must bleed by way of atonement, and for the purpose of consecration *; in order to testify, that no man can officiate with acceptance in the worship of GOD; that no service, though of a religious kind, can be pleasing in his sight; *till* the former is interested in the merits, *unless* the latter is recommended by the death, of the great HIGH PRIEST.

And not only by their solemn sacrificial acts, but even by their *ordinary* meals, this grand lesson was inculcated. They were forbidden to eat the blood, in order to awaken and preserve in their consciences, a *reverential* and *fiducial* regard to the precious blood of CHRIST. The HOLY GHOST, assigning a reason for this sacred prohibition, says expressly, *Because the blood maketh an atonement for your* † *soul*; the blood of beasts typically, the blood of CHRIST effectually.—O! that *Christians* would, in this particular, learn of *Jews*; learn, at least from *Jewish* ordinances, to have their attention incessantly fixed on that divine HIGH PRIEST; who, *by one offering, hath perfected for ever*,—not barely conduced or contributed to the work; but hath fully accomplished it, and obtained complete remission for—*them that are sanctified* ‡.

Ther. Some offerings were made without any effusion of blood. What could those mean? Or how could *they* typify the sacrifice of CHRIST?

Asp. Perhaps the apostle might foresee such an objection, when he used that guarded expression, *Almost* all things were purged with blood.—If, in these cases, there was no effusion of blood, yet there was a destruction of the substance. The *meat-offerings* were consumed by fire; which is much the same to inanimate things, as shedding of the blood is to living creatures.—The same effect is ascribed to these oblations, as to those of the sanguinary kind. It is expressly declared of the poor man's *trespass-offering*, which consisted of fine flour, and was burnt upon the altar, *It shall make an atonement for him* ||.—So that here also was, what we may truly call a *visible prediction of* CHRIST. The offerings which flamed, as well as the victims which bled, shewed forth our dying LORD, whose "one oblation of himself once offered," comprised all the qualities, and realized the whole efficacy represented by *every* other sacrifice.

Ther. Another odd circumstance has oft given me disgust, and been apt to prejudice me against the institutions of the Old Testament. Many of them appear mean, contemptible, and perfectly *puerile*. "Can these," I have said within myself, "be ordained by a GOD of "infinite wisdom, and transcendent glory? Can we rea- "sonably imagine, that a mandate should be issued "from the court of heaven, on purpose to forbid the "*boiling*, and injoin the *roasting* §, of some particular "piece of meat?—Will the great RULER of the skies "concern himself about the precise manner of killing "one bird, and releasing another ¶?—Will he, who "claims the worship of the heart, have such an especial "regard to a drop or two of despicable blood, put upon "the tip of the *right ear*, or the *thumb* of the *right hand* †? "—Surely, such childish ceremonies are too minute and "trivial for the notice, much more for the solemn ap- "pointment, of the supreme MAJESTY!"

* Lev. viii. 22. Numb. viii. 12. † Lev. xvii. 11.
‡ Heb. x. 14. || Lev. v. 11. 12. 13. § Exod. xii. 9.
¶ Lev. xiv. 4. 5. 6. 7. † Exod. xxix. 20.

Asp. You will please to remember, that, when those ceremonies were ordained, it was the *infancy* *, at least the *minority*, of the church. If we advert to this circumstance, we shall have reason to admire, both the all-comprehending wisdom, and the no less condescending goodness, of JEHOVAH.——His *all-comprehending wisdom*, in conforming, so accurately and so minutely the type to the event; though the former was established long, long before the latter existed. Many ages before the *Desire of nations* appeared, his picture was drawn, was presented to public view; and is now found to correspond, in every feature, with the illustrious original. What hand could be equal to such a task, but only the hand of an omniscient LIMNER?—His *condescending goodness*, in adapting the tenor of his revelation to the state of his people; *speaking unto them, even as unto babes*; not by naked precepts, or abstracted truths; but by earthly similitudes ‡, and (if I may so express myself) by embodied instructions; such as were level to their low capacities, and calculated to affect their dull apprehensions.

The institutions, to which you hint, were undoubtedly mean and trifling, if considered *in themselves*.—Accordingly their wise and majestic AUTHOR cautions his people against such erroneous and unworthy notions. "*I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded* "*them, in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt,* "*concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices* ||. It was not my "design, that they should acquiesce in the shadow, and "neglect the substance. I never intended, that they "should rest in the porch, but pass through these ordi- "nances, to much sublimer things. CHRIST and "spiritual blessings were principally in my view: to "which all the *Mosaical* usages were relative, subser- "vient, and one continual manducation."—Considered in this light; as bearing a reference to the ever-blessed MEDIATOR; as emblems of his person, and pledges of his grace; they acquire a real magnificence, and convey the most salutary lessons.

The blood put upon the tip of the ear, and thumb of the hand, denotes our *personal* application of the death of CHRIST: without which all its virtue, though boundless and inconceivable, will profit us nothing. Those particular parts of the body, may signify the *perceptive* and *executive* faculties; in both which we offend, and for both which we need the great propitiation.——Of the two birds you mention, one was to be *killed*, the other was to *fly away*, after it had been *dipped* in the blood of its fellow. Thus the LORD JESUS was crucified for our sins; and we being *washed* in his blood, being interested in the atonement of our holy victim and elder brother, are acquitted from guilt, and *escape* condemnation.——Concerning the *paschal lamb* it was particulary injoined, That the flesh *should not be eaten raw, nor sodden* with

* St *Paul* calls the church of those times νηπιος, an *infant*, or *babe*, Gal. iv. 1. 3. And the ceremonial institutions have been styled with as much truth as ingenuity, *Evangelium elementare et præliminare*.
† 1 Cor. iii. 1.

‡ This seems to be our LORD's meaning, when he says to Nicodemus, *If I have told you earthly things*. He had been treating of that internal spiritual renovation, which is the root and spring of all holiness. He had been speaking of that divine SPIRIT, whose gracious and almighty agency produces this desirable change. The nature of the former was represented, under the similitude of a *birth*; by which we enter upon a new state, form new ideas, and habituate ourselves to new practices, pleasures, pursuits. The operations of the latter were described, by the common and well-known properties of *the wind*.—This he mentions as a plain and familiar method of teaching: this he opposes to *telling him of heavenly things*: or delivering refined and exalted truths, not accommodated to the capacity, not brought within the compass of an infantile understanding, by any assimilation to sensible objects. *John* iii. 12.
|| Jer. vii. 22.

water, but roaſted with fire; and of every offering from the herd, or from the flock, the fat and the inwards were, by an expreſs command of GOD, delivered up to the devouring flame. All this was an emblem of that tremendous indignation, which *is poured out like fire* *; which *ſeized* our immaculate SACRIFICE, that it might *ſpare* polluted ſinners; and which muſt have conſumed utterly any mediator, who was leſs than infinite, or other than divine.

Had you beheld our renowned *Newton* blowing up, with great aſſiduity and attention, his little *watery veſicles* into the air; you would, perhaps, have deſpiſed the venerable philoſopher, and have thought him little better than a *hoary idiot*. But when you was told, that, in every one of theſe volatile ſopy bubbles, he diſcovered the beauteous *colours* of the *rainbow*: and, from this ſeemingly-childiſh experiment, he explained the nature of that wonderful arch; you would then entertain a different notion, both of the man and of his employ.—So, when you diſcern the bleſſed *JESUS looking forth at theſe windows, and ſhewing himſelf through theſe lattices* † of the *Jewiſh* œconomy; you will, I hope, conceive a higher opinion of them, and derive richer advantage from them.

Ther. There are ſeveral *perſons*, as well as ritual obſervances, of a very ſingular character, mentioned in the *Moſaic* law. The *leper*, for inſtance, the *Nazarite*, with others of the ſame antiquated and groteſque ſtamp: which ſeem, to me at laſt, ſo many *unmeaning* narratives, that convey no manner of edification to readers in the preſent age.—I have frequently had an inclination, and now I have a proper opportunity, to aſk your opinion upon theſe points.

Aſp. I thank you, *Theron*, for giving me the hint. What you propoſe, is by no means foreign to the topic of our diſcourſe.—Thoſe perſons were truly remarkable; neither are the peculiarities of their caſe recorded in vain. They picture out, in *diſmal* and *delightful* colours, the ſinner and the SAVIOUR.—To know ourſelves, and to know *CHRIST*, is true wiſdom; is indeed the conſummation of all knowledge. Here we have a lecture of hieroglyphical inſtruction, on both thoſe important ſubjects.

The *leper* ‡ was an emblem of a *ſinner*.—His diſeaſe extremely-afflictive to himſelf, and intolerably-loathſome to others. Sin likewiſe is the *ſoreſt* of all miſeries, to the wretch who commits it; and moſt *deteſtably*-odious to the GOD who forbids it.—The leper was ſecluded from the *benefits* of *ſociety*, and all communication with his fellow-citizens. The ſinner alſo, while impenitent and unpardoned, is an *alien* from the common-wealth of *Iſrael* ‖; without any enjoyment of the comforts, or any intereſt in the privileges of the goſpel. If he dies in this condition, he muſt be for ever *ſhut out* from the kingdom of heaven; for ever *cut off* from the preſence of the LORD.

The contagion was ſometimes ſo *peſtilent*, that it not only tainted the clothes of the diſeaſed, but ſpread itſelf over the walls of his houſe, and infected the timber of the beams. It was ſometimes ſo *inveterate*, that it could be eradicated no other way, but by burning the garment, and demoliſhing the building. Does not this give us a clear, but melancholy view, of *original* corruption? which has transfuſed its poiſon through all the faculties of the ſoul, and all the members of the body; nor will ever be *entirely* expelled, till death releaſes the former, and conſigns the latter to the duſt.

What could cure this terrible diſtemper, even in its *mildeſt* ſtate? Not all the balm of *Gilead*; not all the drugs on a thouſand hills; nothing but the *conſecrated* oil and *ſacrificial* blood, duly applied by the high prieſt. And what can heal the diſorders of our fallen ſouls? ſo far heal them, as to purge away their guilt, and ſubdue the prevalence of their iniquities? No acts of mortification, no vigilance, nor any efforts of our own; nothing but the *atoning* death, and *ſanctifying SPIRIT* of the bleſſed JESUS. The malignity and virulence of this plague of the heart, are abſolutely incorrigible by any other expedient. But bleſſed be divine grace, this remedy, provided by our great *HIGH PRIEST*, and adminiſtered by our great *PHYSICIAN*, is *ſovereign* and *never fails*.

The caſe of the *Nazarites* * was the very reverſe of the ſtate of the *lepers*. *Her Nazarites*, Jeremiah ſays, *were purer than ſnow, they were whiter than milk: they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their poliſhing was of ſapphires* †. A faint repreſentation of the only begotten *SON*, who is *the faireſt among ten thouſand*: the brightneſs of his *FATHER's* glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon; both GOD and man in one ſacred, wonderful, adorable *SAVIOUR*.—*They*, during the time of their ſeparation, abſtained from wine; withdrew from ſecular buſineſs; avoided every kind of pollution; and dedicated themſelves, in an eſpecial manner, to the ſervice of GOD. A type of that *glorious NAZARITE*, who was ſeparated, for a ſeaſon, from the fruitions of heaven; who was holy, harmleſs, and undefiled, both in his nature and all his converſation; who ſanctified himſelf, and devoted his life and labours, his ſoul and body, to the glory of his FATHER, and the redemption of his people.—The *Nazarites*, even when they had diſcharged their vow, and were ceremonially clean, yet were obliged to offer a *ſin-offering*, a *burnt-offering*, and a *peace-offering*. So the great *REDEEMER*, though he had *perfectly obeyed* all the preceptive parts of the divine law, yet was required to offer up a ſacrifice,—even the *incomparably-precious* ſacrifice of himſelf,—in order to conſummate the work of our ſalvation.

Ther. Have you a ſufficient warrant for this ſtrain of interpretation? Is it *ſound*, is it *rational*, or conformable to any *authentic* ſtandard of ſcriptural expoſition? Methinks, it looks more like the child of fancy, than the offſpring of judgment; more like the ſally of a ſportive imagination, than the reſult of a ſober diſquiſition.

You cannot be ignorant, *Aſpaſio*, how the ruling paſſion tinctures the whole conduct. Hence it is, I apprehend, that your *religious inamoratoes* find heavenly beauties, where ſcripture intended no more than natural truths. Hence it is, that they turn plain facts into profound figures, and allegorize *common ſenſe* into *pious abſurdity*.—Have you never ſeen the *myſtic* interpretations of ſome ancient, and, I may add, ſome modern divines? The honeſty of their deſign is tranſparent, and the piety of their lives is unqueſtionable; otherwiſe we ſhould be tempted to ſuſpect, that they meant to burleſque the ſcriptures, and diſgrace their author.

Who can ever perſuade himſelf, that the ſupremely-wiſe GOD, would ſend us to ſearch for a *body* of *divinity*, in a *bundle* of *rods*? or ſet us to ſpin all the myſteries of Chriſtianity, from a few fleeces of wool, *ring-ſtreaked, ſpeckled*, and *ſpotted* ‡? Thus to expound the ſcriptures, is, not to open them clearly, and apply them judiciouſly, but rather to whip them into froth ‖.

Aſp. We have the authority of our LORD him-

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* Nah. i. 6.

† *Cantic.* ii. 9. The word, in the firſt edition, is *flouriſhing through*. It was taken from the *Hebrew*, without conſulting the *Engliſh* Bible, and is a literal tranſlation of פרח. Which ſignifies more than barely *ſhewing himſelf*; ſhewing himſelf with luſtre and beauty: like a delicate flower, in its blooming ſtate, and gloſſy colours: yet flouriſhing *through lattices*; manifeſting himſelf, not completely, but in part; concealing ſome, while he reveals much, of his mediatorial glory.

‡ *See* Lev. chap. xiii. xiv. ‖ Eph. ii. 12.

* *See* Numb. chap. vi. † Lam. iv. 7.

‡ Gen. xxxi.

‖ *Luther* uſed to call ſuch far-fetched and unnatural allegories, *ſpumam ſcripturæ*.

ſelf; who has informed us,—That the *brazen ſerpent* lifted up in the wilderneſs *, was figurative of his own ſuſpenſion and death on the croſs:—That the *temple*, built on mount *Sion*, was typical of his immaculate body, in which dwelt all the fulneſs of the GODHEAD †:—That the prophet *Jonah*, lodged in the belly of the whale and diſcharged from that ſtrange confinement, on the third day ‡, was an emblem of his own deſcending into the grave, and riſing again before his fleſh ſaw corruption.

We have alſo the teſtimony and the practice of the chiefeſt of the apoſtles, for our warrant. He aſſures us, that the *rock* ſmitten by *Moſes*, had a reference to *CHRIST* ‖; who was wounded for our ſins, and is the foundation of our hopes: That the *waters*, iſſuing at the ſtroke, were ſignificative of thoſe ſpiritual bleſſings, which flow from a crucified SAVIOUR: That, as the former *followed* the ſons of *Jacob*, through all the circumvolutions of their tedious journey; the latter accompany the diſciples of *JESUS*, in every ſtage of their earthly pilgrimage.——Let the great teacher of the *Gentiles* be our expoſitor, and we ſhall ſee the *veil* of the *temple* dignified with a ſignificancy, richer far than its coſtly materials, and curious workmanſhip. Its ſilk and embroidery exhibit, to the eye of faith, the pure and ſpotleſs fleſh of CHRIST §. As, by rending the material veil, the holy of holies became *viſible* and *acceſſible*; ſo, by piercing the body, and ſpilling the blood of CHRIST, the GOD of heaven was *manifeſted*, and the way to heaven *opened*.

Every reader muſt admire thoſe *divided waves*; which, inſtead of overwhelming the *Iſraelites* with a reſiſtleſs deluge, ſtood like a wall of defence on their right hand, and on their left, as they marched through the depths of the ſea.—Every reader muſt admire that *ſuſpended cloud*, which ſpread itſelf like a ſpacious canopy over the hoſts of *Iſrael*; and ſcreened them from the annoying ſunbeams, as they paſſed through the ſultry deſert.—Our admiration muſt be heightened, when we find *that* which was a cloud by day, becoming a *pillar* of *fire* by night; and illuminating their camp with the moſt amazing, as well as the moſt chearing ſplendor—But St *Paul* diſcerned a greater glory, and a deeper deſign, in theſe unparallelled events. The people, he ſays, *were baptized unto Moſes, in the cloud and in the ſea* ¶. Theſe ſymbolically repreſented the baptiſm *of water* and *of fire*; or the application of CHRIST's blood to our ſouls, and the efficacy of his SPIRIT on our hearts. In the former of which, conſiſts our juſtification; from the latter of which, proceeds our ſanctification.

I fear, you will think my diſcourſe ſomewhat like the journey juſt now mentioned; but I muſt not wholly omit the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*; which is the moſt unexceptionable vindication, as well as the faultleſs model, of allegorical expoſition.——It is delightful to obſerve, what propriety of addreſs the inſpired writer uſes. He ſpeaks to the *Jews* in *their own* way; alludes to their own uſages, ordinances, and ceremonies; proves them to be types of, and guides to a more clear, a more benign, and in all reſpects a more excellent ‡ œconomy. More particularly he diſplays the *tranſcendent ſuperiority* of *CHRIST* and his gifts, even to thoſe perſons and privileges, which they held in the *higheſt* eſteem. Theſe, like the morning-ſtar, were introductory to, yet totally eclipſed by, the riſing ſun.

They had exalted apprehenſions of the *angelic* excellencies. The apoſtle therefore celebrates the *REDEEMER*, as the *LORD* whom angels obey, as the *GOD* whom angels adore.——They always reckoned *Moſes* to be the *firſt favourite* of heaven, and chief among the children of men. He lets them know, that *Moſes*, with all his extraordinary endowments, was but a *ſervant* in the houſe of JESUS. It was his greateſt honour, to miniſter unto this Prince of Peace.——As the prieſthood and ſacrifices were ſome of their diſtinguiſhing privileges; he ſhews the pre-eminence of *CHRIST*'s office to all the *Aaronic* orders. He demonſtrates the extenſive and everlaſting efficacy of *his one* atonement, in preference to every form, and the *whole ſeries* of *Levitical* oblations.

Ther. Thus interpreted, I muſt acknowledge, the book of *Levitical* ceremonies is *ſignificant* and *edifying*. Whereas, abſtracted from this evangelical improvement, nothing can be more empty and jejune. I once thought, that, to peruſe thoſe obſolete canons, was like ſitting down to an entertainment of dry bones. But, if ſuch be their import, they may yield marrow and fatneſs to the attentive mind.

Due care, however, ſhould be taken, not to ſuppoſe a type, where there is no *apparent* foundation of analogy in the thing itſelf; or no *hint* of this nature given us by the unerring SPIRIT; leſt, inſtead of being guided by truth, we are bewildered by fancy.——And, when either or both theſe handles preſent themſelves, I think, we ſhould beware of ſtraining the ſubject beyond the bounds of a *juſt* and *reaſonable* compariſon: leſt, inſtead of following the clue, we ſtretch it till it breaks.——If the firſt caution is not obſerved, the ſenſe of ſcripture will lie ſo deep, or be removed to ſuch a diſtance, that none but perſons of the moſt *acute* diſcernment can find it, or none but perſons of the moſt *excurſive* imagination can reach it. If the ſecond is not regarded, the meaning of thoſe divine volumes will become ſo *vague* and *volatile*, that there will hardly remain any poſſibility of aſcertaining or fixing it.

Aſp. As to the expedience and neceſſity of theſe cautionary limitations, I have the pleaſure of agreeing entirely with my friend.——Let our fancy ſubmit to the reins of judgment, otherwiſe her excurſions will be *wild* and *lawleſs*. Let our zeal borrow the eyes of diſcretion, otherwiſe her efforts will be *blind* and *extravagant*. And let all, thus tempered, thus regulated, be under the influence of enlightening grace. *Then*, to ſpiritualize the ancient ſcriptures, will be to convert the ſtones of the ſanctuary into the jewels of a crown; and to fetch, not water only, but milk and honey, from the flinty rock.

Then, how pleaſing muſt it be, as well as inſtructive, to diſcover the bleſſed *JESUS*, in all the inſtitutions of the *Moſaic* law!—To ſee his *incarnation* prefigured by the feaſt of *tabernacles* *, when the *Iſraelites* were to relinquiſh their houſes, and lodge in booths. Even as the SON of GOD left the boſom of his FATHER, and the ſeats of bliſs, to inhabit a cottage of clay, and ſojourn in a vale of tears.——To ſee our ſpotleſs and divine VICTIM, typically ſlain at the joyful ſolemnity of the *paſſover*, and the anniverſary faſt of *expiation*.——To ſee his *death*, that ineſtimable ranſom for our ſouls, preſented to our faith, in every morning and evening *ſacrifice* †: his *interceſſion*, that prevailing recommendation of our prayers, moſt ſweetly

* John iii. 14. † John ii. 19. 21. Col. ii. 9.

‡ Matth. xii. 39. 40. ‖ 1 Cor. x. 4. § Heb. x. 20.

¶ 1 Cor. x. 2.

‡ He ſtyles the legal oblations, and indeed the whole ſervice of the *Jewiſh* ſanctuary, *the example and ſhadow of heavenly things*; or of *CHRIST JESUS* and *evangelical* worſhip, and *ſpiritual* bleſſings, *Heb.* viii. 5.—Υποδειγμα, *the pattern*: ſomewhat like the ſtrokes, pencilled out upon a piece of fine linen; which preſent you with the figure of ſprigs, of leaves, and of flowers; but have not yet received their ſplendid colours, their curious ſhades, and beautiful enrichments, from the labours of the needle.—Σκια, *a ſhadowy repreſentation*; which gives you ſome dim and imperfect idea of the body; but not the fine features, not the diſtinguiſhing air, none of thoſe living graces, which adorn the real perſon.—Yet both the pattern and the ſhadow lead our minds to ſomething nobler than themſelves. The pattern, to that which *completes* it; the ſhadow to that which *occaſions* it.

* Lev. xxiii. 34. 40. 42. † Exod. xxix. 38. 39.

ſweetly expreſſed by the rich incenſe, which attended the ſacred rite.—To ſee the various methods of *purification*; ſome pointing at the *fountain* * for ſin and for uncleanneſs, opened in our REDEEMER's bleeding heart; others referring to thoſe ſanctifying operations of the SPIRIT, which act *as a refiner's fire* †, *or as fuller's ſoap*.—To ſee, in the *city of refuge* ‡, that perfect ſecurity, which CHRIST's meritorious ſufferings in our ſtead, afford to every penitent and believing ſinner.

Was it ſo very affecting and ſo very encouraging to *Æneas*, when he beheld the ſtory of the *Trojan* heroes, pictured upon the walls of the *Carthaginian* temple ‖? How much greater encouragement and joy muſt ariſe in the Chriſtian's breaſt, when he perceives the amiable lineaments of his everlaſting FRIEND, *pourtrayed* in all the peculiarities of the *Jewiſh* worſhip, and in the moſt diſtinguiſhing events of the *Jewiſh* hiſtory! This muſt highly ennoble the Bible, and inexpreſſibly endear it to our affections. This ſpreads *luſtre*, *life*, and *glory*, through every page of that bleſſed book.—And though I would forbear indulging what might be called a pious wantonneſs of imagination; yet I ſhould much rather chuſe, in expounding the ſcriptures, to ramble with *Auguſtine*, than err with *Grotius*: ſee, or think I ſee my SAVIOUR, even where it may not, perhaps, be eaſy to make out the traces of his dignity, to the ſatisfaction of a rigorous inquirer; rather than ſhut my eyes upon the diſplay of his perfections, when they beam forth with the moſt inviting beauty.

Ther. How ſoon is this walk finiſhed! How imperceptibly has the time ſtole away!—Theſe *garden-gates* I always uſed to approach with a particular complacency. They ſeemed to afford me a *welcome retreat* from the impertinence and vanity of the world. Now, methinks, I enter them with reluctance, becauſe they are likely to put a period to this agreeable converſation.—However, as my *Aſpaſio* enters with me, I am reconciled, I am ſatisfied. It will be in his power to reſtore the pleaſure, which muſt now be interrupted. And this is what I ſhall 'ere long requeſt; becauſe I have not ſpoke my whole mind upon the preſent ſubject.

Aſp. Whenever you think proper, *Theron*. This is, to me, a *favourite* ſubject; and not to me only, but to incomparably better judges.—The man, who had been caught up into the third heavens, and ſeen the viſions of GOD, determined to know *nothing* but JESUS CHRIST and him *crucified* *.—At the grandeſt aſſembly, that ever was convened on earth, this furniſhed the *principal*, if not the *only* topic of converſation.—And in that world, where the voice of joy and thankſgiving is perpetually heard, this conſtitutes the *burden* of the ſong, *Thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to GOD by thy blood* †.

* Exod. xxix. 4. Pſal. li. 7. Iſ. iv. 4. † Numb. xxxi. 23. ‡ Numb. xxxv. 11. 12. ‖ VIRG. Æn. I.

* 1 Cor. ii. 2. † Rev. v. 9.

DIALOGUE IV.

Ther. I MUST now deſire my *Aſpaſio* to inform me, *what* that grand aſſembly was, (which he mentioned in the cloſe of our laſt diſcourſe), and *where* convened?

Aſp. Can't you gueſs, *Theron*?—Was it in the plains of *Theſſaly*, when *Xerxes* drew together the forces of more than half the known world, and appeared at the head of all the potentates of the eaſt?—Was it in the *Roman* forum, when the ſenators were aſſembled in their robes, and the barbarians took them for a ſynod of gods?—No; it was on the mount of *Tranſfiguration*; where the SON of the true GOD, the LORD of eternal glory, ſhone forth in ſome of his *celeſtial* and *native* ſplendor; with garments white as the ſnow *, and a countenance bright as the ſun: where he converſed with two of his moſt diſtinguiſhed ſaints, juſt come down from the regions of bliſs and immortality: with *Moſes* the great deliverer of the law, and with *Elijah* the reſolute reſtorer of its honours: where he was attended by three of his *principal* ambaſſadors, who were to be the reformers of mankind, and the lights of the world.

This, I think, is the moſt venerable and auguſt aſſembly, that the annals of hiſtory have recorded.——And what was the *topic* of *converſation*, among theſe illuſtrious perſonages?—Not the affairs of ſtate, nor the revolutions of empire; not the curious refinements of literature, nor the wonderful diſcoveries of philoſophy; but the *ignominious* and *bloody* exit †, which the divine JESUS was ſoon to make at *Jeruſalem*.—This circumſtance, methinks, ſhould recommend the ſubject to our frequent diſcourſe; even though it was leſs eminent, for intrinſic dignity, and comfortable import.

Talking in this manner, they arrive at the *park*; which, the moment you enter, fills the view with its bold, enlarged, and magnificent ſweep.—It was diverſified with level and riſing ground. Here ſcooped into mimic amphitheatres; with the *deer* pendent on the little ſummit, or ſhooting down the eaſy precipice: there raiſed into gentle hillocks; ſome of which were *canopied* with a large, ſpreading, ſolitary oak; others were *tufted* with a cluſter of tapering and verdant elms. Two or three *caſcades*, gleaming from afar, as they poured along the ſlanting rock, or the graſſy ſlope, gave a pleaſing variation to the proſpect; while they ſtartled the timorous unexperienced fawns, with their foaming current, and watery roar.——*Grandeur* and *ſimplicity* ſeemed to be the genius of the place. Every thing breathed an air of noble negligence, and artleſs majeſty.

In the centre of all, roſe a curious *romantic mount*.——Its form was exactly round; ſomewhat like a ſugar-loaf, lopt off a little below the point.—Not coeval with nature, but the work of human induſtry. Thrown up, 'tis ſuppoſed, in thoſe perilous times, when *Britain* was alarmed by foreign invaſions, or bled with inteſtine wounds.——It was covered, all around, with alder-ſhrubs: whoſe ranks, gradually ariſing, and ſpreading ſhade above ſhade, compoſed a kind of *woody theatre*; through which were ſtruck two or three *ſpiral walks*; leading, by a gentle aſcent, and under embowering verdure, to the ſummit.—At proper intervals, and on every ſide of the hill, were formed little *arborets*; with apertures, cut through the boughs, to admit a proſpect of the country.——In one or other of theſe leafy boxes, you command, at every hour of the day,

* *Mark* ix. 3. The evangeliſt's deſcription is, like the ſcene, *remarkably bright*; and the *gradation* of his images is *almoſt* as worthy of obſervation, as the memorable fact.—The garments were *white*,—*exceeding* white,—white *as the ſnow*,—whiter than any *fuller* on earth could make them;—ſurpaſſing all the works of *art*, equalling the firſt and fineſt productions of *nature*.—Nay, ſo great was the luſtre, that it *gliſtered* (ἀστίλβοντα) like the lightning, and even dazzled the ſight.

† Does not this very delicately, yet very ſtrongly intimate, that the ſuffering and death of *CHRIST* were the principal end of the *Moſaic* inſtitutions, and the principal ſubject of the *prophetic* teachings? For is it not natural to ſuppoſe, that *Moſes* and *Elijah* intended, when miniſtering on earth, that very thing, which their converſation dwelt upon, when they deſcended from heaven?

either the enlivening ſun, or the refreſhing ſhade.—All along the circling avenues, and all around the beauteous reſts, ſprung daffodils, primroſes, and violets; which, mingling with hyacinths and cowſlips, compoſed many a charming piece of *natural moſaic*.

How agreeable, as they climb and wind themſelves round the hill, to reflect on the *happy change* which has now taken place!—Where ſteely helmets gleamed, or brazen ſhields claſhed, the *goldfinches* twitter their loves, and diſplay their painted plumes. The dens of rapine, or the horrid haunts of bloodſhed, are become the retreats of calm contemplation, and friendly converſe.—In yonder lower ſpaces, where the armed troops were wont to patrol; from whence they made excurſions, to ravage the villages, or terrify the ſwains; the *fallow-deer* trip lightly, or the *full-headed ſtags* ſtand at bay.

From a ſmall eminence, but at a conſiderable diſtance, guſhed a couple of ſprings; which, rambling through a grove, loſt one another in the ſhady labyrinth. Emerging, at length, from the gloom, they approached nearer and nearer, and fell into embraces at the foot of this hill. They rolled, in amicable conjunction, along the pebbly channel, which encircles its baſis; and added their *ſober melody* to the *ſprightly warbling* of the birds.—Flowing off in one common ſtream, they formed the fine pieces of water, which beautified the park. From thence, they ſtole into the meadow, and widened into a *river*. There, enamoured as it were with each other, they glide by wealthy towns, and ſweep through flowery vales; regardleſs of the *blooming toys* which deck the one, and of the *noiſy crouds* which throng the other.

So, ſaid *Aſpaſio*, my *Theron* and his *Selina*, pleaſing and pleaſed with each other, paſs through the buſy and the amuſing ſcenes of life; neither *captivated* by the one, nor *anxious* for the other. With ſuch harmonious agreement, and indiſſoluble union, may they purſue the courſe, marked out by Providence; their happineſs *increaſing*, and their uſefulneſs *enlarging*, as they draw nearer the ocean of all good! Then, parted by a gentle ſtroke of fate, like the waters of ſome ample ſtream *ſevered* by the piers of an intervening bridge, may they ſpeedily *reunite*!—reunite in conſummate bliſs, and never be ſeparated more!

Ther. I thank you, *Aſpaſio*, for your affectionate compliment. Nor can I with you, by way of return, a greater recompence, than the continual exerciſe of ſuch a *benevolent* temper. For to exerciſe benevolence, is to enjoy the moſt refined and exalted pleaſure; ſuch as makes the neareſt approaches to the felicity of the eternal mind; who, as the ſcripture moſt beautifully ſpeaks, *has pleaſure in the proſperity of his ſervants*.

But while we are ſeated on this mount, our ſituation reminds us of (what you juſt now mentioned) the grand conference relating to the death of CHRIST:—A buſineſs, for which you have indeed accounted; but in a manner that may be thought not the *moſt honourable* to the divine attributes.

Aſp. I have repreſented it as a *ranſom* for our ſouls, and a *ſacrifice* for our ſins. If you diſapprove my account, be pleaſed to favour me with your own.——For what purpoſe, according to *your* opinion, did that ever-bleſſed PERSON die?

Ther. To confirm the *truth* of his doctrine, and leave us a *pattern* of the moſt perfect reſignation.

Aſp. And is this all? Shall we thus impoveriſh the riches of grace?—Was this notion *defenſible*, it could never be *deſirable*. But it has as little to ſupport it as it has to recommend it.——For, upon ſuch a ſuppoſition, where is the *difference* between the death of CHRIST, and the death of the martyrs? *They* confirmed the truth of the goſpel. In *their* ſufferings was obedience and reſignation; the ſame in quality, though not in degree. Upon ſuch a ſuppoſition, what *benefit* could the ancient patriarchs receive from the REDEEMER? ſince none could be improved by the example of his patience, or the pattern of his obedience, till they were actually exhibited.—Or how could CHRIST be ſtyled *the LAMB ſlain from the foundation of the world**? the advantages of whoſe death, commenced from the very beginning, as they will be prolonged even to the end of time.

Not to depend on conſequential arguments, let us hear the *expreſs* declaration of our divine MASTER himſelf: *This is my blood, which is ſhed*—for what? To give credibility to my goſpel, or yield an example of entire reſignation? Rather—*for the remiſſion of ſins*†. Will any one attempt to make the remiſſion of ſins, and the propoſal of a pattern, or the ratification of a doctrine, *ſynonymous* terms?—They who can torture and tranſmute the genuine ſenſe of words, at this extraordinary rate, may *metamorphoſe* any expreſſion into any meaning.

If then you would conſider our LORD's death in its *due amplitude*, we muſt conſider it, both as a pattern of piety, and as a ranſom for ſinners. We muſt neither ſeparate nor confound theſe very diſtinct, yet very conſiſtent effects.

Ther. Is it not inconſiſtent with the acknowledged principles of juſtice, that the *innocent* ſhould be puniſhed, inſtead of the offender?

Aſp. If the innocent perſon has an *abſolute* power over his own life; *willingly* ſubſtitutes himſelf in the place of the guilty; and, by his vicarious ſufferings, fully anſwers all the purpoſes of a *righteous* government;—in this caſe, which was the caſe with our LORD, I ſee not the leaſt repugnancy to the rules of juſtice.

The Bible, that authentic tranſcript of the counſels of heaven, avows; and, by avowing, vindicates the practice. *The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*‡. When all we like ſheep had gone aſtray, and were expoſed to the ſtroke of vengeance, as thoſe wandering creatures to the ravenous beaſt; the good

* Rev. xiii. 8. † Matth. xxvi. 28.

‡ *Iſ.* liii. 6. הפגיע בו *made to meet*, or *fall upon*, in an hoſtile, vindictive manner; with a deſign to take vengeance, or inflict death; as an armed man falls upon his enemy, or a fierce lion on the helpleſsla mb. This is by far the moſt uſual ſignification of the phraſe.

I could not obſerve, without ſurpriſe and ſorrow, the late attempt of a learned writer, to interpret away the force and ſpirit of this text. He ſays, "The word we tranſlate *hath laid*, is the "ſame that we render *meet*, Exod. xxiii. 4. *If thou* meet *thine* "*enemy's ox or aſs going aſtray, thou ſhalt ſurely bring them back to* "*him again*. And the meaning is, By him the LORD hath "*cauſed to meet*, and *ſtop the iniquities* of us all, wherein we have wandered from him."

To this I might object, that though the *verb* is the ſame, the *conſtruction* is by no means parallel. The prefix ב occurs in one caſe, is omitted in the other.—I might farther inquire, whether the language be conformable to the laws of grammar, and ſuch as ſufficiently expreſſes what I ſuppoſe is intended, "The LORD "cauſed our iniquities to be met, and to be ſtopped,"—But theſe particulars I wave, and ſhall only examine, whether the *ſenſe* is ſuitable to ſcripture. According to this gentleman's idea, the prophet's doctrine is as follows: "Our ſins were running away, "like a ſtray ſheep, or like a wandering ox. But they were met "by *CHRIST*, who graciouſly turned them back, and reſtored "them to their rightful owner."—To avoid this glaring impropriety, our author has added a kind of ſalvo; "to turn *us* back to himſelf, who is "the SHEPHERD of ſouls." But this is to depart from the prophet's ſubject, who is ſpeaking not of *us*, but of *our iniquities*. This is to depart from the tenor of *his own* explication. If he adheres to the clue, which he borrows from the book of *Exodus*, what I have repreſented, is the unavoidable conſequence.

See! to what wretched ſhifts, diſhonourable to the word of GOD, and even to the art of criticiſm, *they* muſt have recourſe, who refuſe to acknowledge the *real ſubſtitution* of CHRIST in our ſtead, and the *proper atonement* made by his death!—How much more like a true critic, and like a true Chriſtian, has *Vitringa* explained the paſſage! *Cum nos inſtar ovium diſperſarum eſſemus in erroribus, et pœna criminum noſtrorum, inſtar lupi aut beſtiæ voracis, nos perſequeretur ad exitium: intervenit ſervus JEHOVÆ juſtus, qui illam pœnam in ſe ſuſcepit: in quem irruit ad necem uſque: quique adeo medius inter pœnam et nos, eandem pœnam tulit, et nos ab exitio vindicavit.*

SHEPHERD

SHEPHERD interpoſed, and the juſt GOD made that vengeance to fall upon him, which muſt otherwiſe have been executed upon us. *He ſuffered*, ſays another inſpired writer, *the juſt for the unjuſt* *, *that*, by expiating our guilt, *he might bring us to GOD*, now to his gracious favour, hereafter to his bliſsful preſence.

You will permit me to add a paſſage, from our common favourite *Milton*: becauſe it is no leſs beautiful in itſelf, than it is pertinent to the occaſion; muſt pleaſe the critic, and may expound the apoſtle.—*MESSIAH*, pleading in behalf of fallen man, thus addreſſes his Almighty FATHER:

——Man, dead in ſins and loſt,
Atonement for himſelf, or offering meet
(Indebted and undone!) hath none to bring.
Behold me then! me for him! life for life
I offer. On me let thine anger fall.
Account me man: I for his ſake will leave
Thy boſom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off; and for him laſtly die
Well-pleas'd; on me let death wreak all his rage †.

Ther. The fine imagination of a poet, will hardly paſs for a deciſive argument. When we are ſearching after truth, we muſt attend to the dictates of *reaſon*, not follow the vagaries of *fancy*. And Reaſon, *Aſpaſio*, remonſtrates againſt your notion of a vicarious ſacrifice: Reaſon! that primary guide, and final teſt, both in diſcovering and determining the ſenſe of ſcripture.

Aſp. Suppoſe you then, my dear *Theron*, that none are in poſſeſſion of reaſon, but the pupils of *Socinus*, and the zealots for *Deiſm*? or that none make uſe of reaſon, in their religious inquiries, but men of this mould?

Wrong not the Chriſtian, think not reaſon yours;
'Tis reaſon *our great MASTER holds ſo dear;*
'Tis reaſon's *injur'd rights his wrath reſents;*
'Tis reaſon's *voice obey'd his glories crown.*
Through reaſon's *wounds alone thy* faith *can die* ‡.

Poets, you ſee, are far from diſclaiming Reaſon.—Equally far is Chriſtianity from diſcarding the *ſober*, the *ſanctified* uſe of this noble faculty. When reaſon is under the influence and direction of the divine SPIRIT, we have the ſame high opinion of her excellence, as yourſelf. And, when thus regulated, we have, I am perſuaded, the ſanction of her authority, for all our ſentiments.

Reaſon, as ſhe operated in the ſages of the Heathen world, inſtead of rejecting, approved and adopted this very ſcheme; approved it, even under the diſadvantage of a mutilated and defective, or rather of a perverted and dead form. The current language of the claſſic authors, and almoſt every hiſtorian of *Greece* and *Rome*, are vouchers for the truth of this obſervation ‖.——As the *Gentiles* were unanimous in the cuſtom of offering ſacrifices, and equally unanimous in ſuppoſing their vicarious nature, ſo alſo are the *Jewiſh* writers.

Ther. What man of ſenſe pays any regard to the *Jewiſh* writers? Legendary they are, and extravagant to the laſt degree. Dotards I might call them, rather than writers.

Aſp. They are, I believe, extravagant enough in their comments upon ſcripture. But they relate, with ſufficient exactneſs and fidelity, the *prevailing belief* of their nation. In this caſe, their teſtimony is as unexceptionable, as, in the other, their notions are chimerical.—Now, had it been a miſtaken belief, ſurely our bleſſed LORD, that *infallible* Judge, and *impartial* Reprover, would have teſtified his diſapprobation of it. Surely his diſciples, who were actuated by the *unerring* and *undaunted* ſpirit of their MASTER, would have entered their proteſt againſt it. Surely St *Paul*, in his epiſtle to that very people, and in his treatiſe on that very ſubject, would have ſet himſelf to rectify ſuch an error; and have weeded out the tares, before he ſowed the good ſeed. But there is not the leaſt hint of this kind, in all the diſcourſes of our SAVIOUR, or in all the writings of his apoſtles.

They ſpeak to a people, who were accuſtomed to look upon their ſacrifices as piacular oblations *, and a typical expiation of guilt. They ſpeak of our *REDEEMER's* crucifixion, and the benefits of his death, in the ſacrificial terms, that were of *current* uſe, and *eſtabliſhed* ſignification. If therefore the popular opinion was improper, their manner of expreſſion and addreſs muſt be calculated rather to authenticate error, than to propagate truth.—So that, I think, even the *ſilence* of the inſpired penman on this occaſion, is but little inferior to a *loud* atteſtation. Did they only ſay nothing *againſt* the doctrine of ſatisfaction by ſacrifice; it would in effect, and circumſtances conſidered, be ſaying abundance *for* it.——But they are very copious and explicit upon the point.

Ther. Where are they ſo copious? If you have ſuch a heap of their allegations, it will be eaſy to pick out a few, and give us a ſpecimen.

Aſp. It is as eaſy, *Theron*, as it is delightful.—*MESSIAH ſhall be cut off*, ſays the prophet *Daniel*, *but not for himſelf* †.——For whom then, and for what? *Iſaiah* informs us concerning both: *For the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken* ‡.—Becauſe this is an article of the laſt importance, it is repeated, it is confirmed, it is explained, with the moſt remarkable particularity: *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions; he was bruiſed for our iniquities; the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes we are healed* ‖.——Our *LORD* himſelf aſſerts the ſame truth in the very ſame ſtyle; *I am the good ſhepherd, and lay down my life for the ſheep* §. St *Paul*, in a *multitude* of paſſages, ſets his ſeal to this momentous doctrine.——St *Peter* maintains it, in very *forcible* words; *Who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree* ¶.

The ſacred writers not only aſſert this capital article, but uſe every diverſity of ſpeech, in order to give it the *fulleſt* evidence, and the *ſtrongeſt* eſtabliſhment.—*He made* reconciliation *for the ſins of the people* ⸸.——JESUS CHRIST *the righteous is the* propitiation *for our ſins* ⸸⸸.——*He loved us, and* waſhed *us from our ſins in his own blood* ⸸⸸⸸.——*He was* made ſin *for us, though he knew no ſin* ⸸⸸⸸⸸.

Ther. No body makes any objection to theſe texts. But the ſenſe, the *true ſenſe* of ſuch phraſes, is the thing in queſtion.

Aſp. What you call *the queſtion*, to me appears ſo plain, as not to want a deciſion, or admit of a doubt.

However, ſince you ſeem to demand a *critical ſcrutiny*, it will not be thought pedantic, if I make an obſervation or two upon the original languages; or rather, as you are not acquainted with the *Hebrew*, on that language, of which you yourſelf are a judge and a maſter.

If one died for all, then were all dead. The preposition ὑπὲρ, in this connection, muſt neceſſarily ſignify more than "on our account, or for our advantage." Becauſe, if it be taken in this unſettled rambling ſenſe, the apoſtle's argument is vague and inconcluſive.——In caſe our LORD had ſuffered, only "to free us from

* 1 Pet. iii. 18. † MILTON, book III. 233.
‡ Night-Thoughts, No. IV.
‖ *See the note* ‖, *in* Dialogue III. *page* 133.

* This, I think, is inconteſtibly proved by *Outram*, in his treatiſe *de ſacrificiis*.

† Dan. ix. 26. ‡ Iſ. liii. 8. ‖ Iſ. liii. 5.
§ John x. 15.

¶ 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. Very forcible words indeed.——Ος—αὐτος—ἁμαρτιας ἡμων—ἐν τῳ σωματι αὐτου—*He bare—himſelf bare—our ſins—in his own body*: intended, one would imagine, to make the article of our LORD's vicarious ſufferings *clear* beyond all miſapprehenſion, and *ſure* beyond all doubt.

⸸ Heb. ii. 17. ⸸⸸ 1 John ii. 2. ⸸⸸⸸ Rev. i. 5. ⸸⸸⸸⸸ 2 Cor. v. 21.

"ſome

"ſome evil, and procure us ſome benefit;" this would by no means imply, that *all were dead*, under the ſentence of condemnation, obnoxious and doomed to death *. The utmoſt you can infer from ſuch premiſes, is, that all ſtood in need of a deliverance from ſome evil, or wanted the procurement of ſome good. Whereas, ſuppoſe the ſacred writer to intend, that our LORD's death was truly vicarious, and undergone in our ſtead; that he ſuffered what was our due and our doom; then the reaſoning is juſt, and the inference undeniable.

He gave himſelf αντιλυτρον υπερ παντων †, *a ranſom for all.* If this does not imply the notion of *vicarious*, I very much queſtion, whether language itſelf can expreſs it.—Λυτρον, is a *ranſom*; which conveys a vicarious ſenſe, in its moſt common and authoriſed acceptation.—Αντι, which is equivalent to *inſtead* ‡ ſtill more fully aſcertains and ſtrengthens the idea.—Υπερ, which is tranſlated *for*, and denotes a ſubſtitution of one in the place of another ‖; this added to all, renders the expreſſion as determinate and emphatical for the purpoſe, as words can poſſibly be.

Shall I argue from a more obvious topic, which has no ſuch dependence on the preciſe ſignificancy of the original?—*Surely*, ſays the prophet; he ſpeaks with vehemence, as of an affair which is *very weighty*; he ſpeaks with confidence, as of a fact which is *very certain*: *he hath borne our griefs, and carried our ſorrows* §. What can this mean, but he hath taken upon himſelf *that* affliction, and *thoſe* miſeries, which properly belonged to us?—Let us read on, and this meaning will preſent itſelf in the cleareſt view. *We did eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of* GOD, *and afflicted*: we took him for a real malefactor, and thought that he was puniſhed for *his own* miſconduct. In oppoſition to which injurious and falſe ſurmiſe, it is added; *But he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities.*——May I not here borrow the prophet's language, and ſay with an air of certainty? *Surely* this is the plaineſt proof in the world, that our ſins were the meritorious cauſe of CHRIST's ſufferings. And if our ſins were the meritorious cauſe of his ſufferings, our guilt muſt be charged upon him, and puniſhed in him.

St *Paul* affirms, that CHRIST *has delivered us from the curſe of the law* *. How? By taking our place, and enduring what we deſerved; or, as the apoſtle himſelf ſpeaks, to the ſame effect, but in a much more emphatical manner, *by being made a curſe for us.* Does not this evidently denote both a commutation of perſons, and a tranſlation of puniſhment? *He* ſuffered, who was innocent; not *we*, who are guilty.——He alſo ſuffered that very ſentence, which the law denounced on us. For it is written, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things* †: to this we were obnoxious. It is written again, *Curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree* ‡; to this CHRIST ſubmitted. And if *CHRIST* endured *the very* curſe, which we deſerved; if, by this means, he delivered us from *all* malediction; either this muſt be ſuffering in *our ſtead* ‖, or elſe nothing can be called by that name.

Shall I deſcend lower ſtill, and refer our point to the determination of *illiterate* men?—Aſk any of your ſerious tenants, what ideas ariſe in *their* minds, upon the peruſal of the aforementioned texts?—I dare venture to foretel, that, artleſs and unimproved as their underſtandings are, they will not *heſitate* for an anſwer. They will neither complain of obſcurity, nor aſk the aſſiſtance of learning; but will *immediately* diſcern in all theſe paſſages, a gracious *REDEEMER* ſuffering in their ſtead; and, by his bitter, but expiatory paſſion, procuring the pardon of their ſins.——Nay farther, as they are not accuſtomed to the fineſſes of criticiſm, I apprehend they will be at a loſs to conceive, how it is *poſſible* to underſtand ſuch paſſages in *any other* ſenſe.

Say not, this is an improper appeal; or theſe are incompetent judges. The ſcriptures were written for *their* edification; not to exerciſe the ingenuity of ſubtile diſputants, but to inſtruct the *meaneſt* of mankind in the way of ſalvation. Therefore, on fundamental articles, we may aſſuredly conclude, the expreſſion will be eaſy, and the doctrine perſpicuous: ſo that *he who runs may read, and the wayfaring men, though fools* §, *ſhall not err therein.*——And, though I am far from undervaluing the aids of literature, yet, upon thoſe momentous ſubjects, which are inſeparably connected with our eternal felicity, I cannot but regard the *common ſenſe* of plain, honeſt, humble Chriſtians, as the very *beſt* of *critics*.

Ther. It has been ſaid by a *learned* critic, That vicarious puniſhment or ſuffering, gives us too low ideas of the SON of GOD, as it ſinks them to the pain and ſuffering of a malefactor, the very meaneſt idea we can have of them.

* 2 Cor. v. 14. † 1 Tim. ii. 6.

‡ Αντι, Matth. ii. 22. By this word the *Septuagint* tranſlate the *Hebrew* תחת. And that תחת denotes the *ſubſtitution* of one inſtead of another, no ſtudent of the ſacred language will venture to deny. See *Gen.* xxii. 13. 2 *Sam.* xviii. 33. 2 *Kings* x. 24.

‖ Δεομεθα υπερ Χριστου, *We beſeech you in CHRIST's ſtead*, 2 Cor. v. 20.—Ινα υπερ σου διακονη μοι, *that in thy ſtead he might have miniſtered unto me*, Philem. *ver.* 13. As I was conſidering the force of this argument, a certain four-looking gloomy mortal came in my way; and deſired, I would introduce him to *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, as an evidence for fixing the ſignification of the prepoſition υπερ, when relative to the death of *CHRIST*.—I muſt confeſs I did not like either his character or his aſpect; and cannot certainly tell, whether any perſon has made uſe of him, on this occaſion. But St *John* ſtood by, and ſaid, "Introduce him. He propheſies in this "inſtance."—Perhaps the reader is at a loſs to gueſs *whom* I mean. To keep him no longer in ſuſpenſe, I mean *Caiaphas* the high prieſt.—He bears the following teſtimony; IT IS EXPEDIENT FOR US, THAT ONE MAN DIE FOR THE PEOPLE; AND THAT THE WHOLE NATION PERISH NOT.—Now, as *to periſh* ſignifies, not only to die, but to die miſerably; if one man dies for the people, that the people may not die miſerably, he ſaves them from death, by dying himſelf; and what is this, but to die in *their ſtead*? See *John* xi. 50.

To this teſtimony from the mouth of an *enemy*, let me add an atteſtation under the hand of our *friends*, and then leave the impartial reader to determine, concerning the validity of all. Thus writes *Clemens Romanus*; Το αιμα αυτου εδωκεν υπερ ημων Ιησους Χριστος ο Κυριος ημων, και την σαρκα υπερ της σαρκος ημων, και των ψυχην υπερ των ψυχων ημων. Epiſt. 1. ad Corinth.—Exactly to the ſame purpoſe, *Juſtin the Martyr* expreſſes himſelf; Αυτος του ιδιου υιου απεδοκε λυτρον υπερ ημων, του αξιου υπερ ανομων, του αναιτιου υπερ των κακων, του δικαιου υπερ των αδικων, του αφθαρτου υπερ των θνητων. Epiſt. ad Diogn. § Iſ. liii. 4.

* Gal. iii. 13. † Deut. xxvii. 26. ‡ Gal. iii. 13.

‖ "This (ſays Dr *South*, in his ſmart manner) is ſpoke ſo plain "and loud by the univerſal voice of the whole book of GOD, that "ſcripture muſt be *crucified* as well as *CHRIST*, to give any other "tolerable ſenſe of the expreſſions."—And not ſcripture only, but the common import of language. What ſays *Mezentius*, when his ſon, interpoſing in his behalf, is ſlain by *Æneas*?

——*Pro me hoſtili paterer ſuccedere dextræ*
Quem genui? tuane hæc, genitor, per vulnera ſervet?
Morte tua vivens?

Here, the father is *ſaved* by his ſon's *wounds*; *lives* by his ſon's *death*. How, and in what manner? By a ſubſtitution of one inſtead of the other; by the ſon's *ſuffering*, what muſt otherwiſe have *fallen* upon the father.—Should the *Socinian* interpreters try the ſame experiment on theſe lines of *Virgil*, which they make upon paſſages of a parallel ſignification in ſcripture; is there a critic in the whole world, that *could approve*, that *could endure*, ſuch flagrant violations of grammar, ſenſe, and taſte?—Yet I believe, there is no ſincere Chriſtian, but would readily and gratefully ſay;

——*Pro me ultrici ſuccedere dextræ*
Dignaſti. Tua, CHRISTE DEUS, per vulnera ſervet: Morte tua vivens.

§ *Iſ.* xxxv. 8. The word *fools*, ſeems to denote perſons of *ſlow* underſtanding, and *dull* apprehenſion; as *Luke* xxiv. 25. Or elſe it ſignifies thoſe, who, for want of a cultivated education and the improvements of literature, are *accounted* fools by the ſons of ſcience; as 1 *Cor.* i. 27.

Aſp.

Asp. The idea is plainly ſuggeſted by the word of prophecy, and ſupported by the atteſtation of ſacred hiſtory. *Thus* it was foretold, and in *this* it is recorded, that *he was numbered with tranſgreſſors* *.—To this purpoſe ſpeaks St. *Paul*, though ſomewhat more cautiouſly than your Socinian. He was made, not indeed *ſinful* fleſh, but in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh; and, though perfectly innocent, was left to endure the vengeance due to the vileſt miſcreants.

Yes, my dear *Theron*; that glorious PERSON, whom the higheſt angel adores, "ſuffered, as if he had been the criminal, the pain and puniſhment, which we, or equivalent to that which we, the real criminals, ſhould have ſuffered."—If to conſider this, gives us a *low* idea; to ſuffer this, was a *deep* abaſement; how exceedingly high, and how immenſely *grand*, is the goodneſs and the grace manifeſted therein! The lower you draw the arrow on the ſtring, the loftier flight it makes in the ſky. And the greater our LORD's humiliation for us, the more wonderful and adorable his love to us.

Ther. As there cannot be a vicarious guilt, or as no one can be guilty in the ſtead of another; ſo there cannot be a vicarious puniſhment, or no one can be puniſhed inſtead of another: becauſe puniſhment, in its very nature, connotes guilt in the perſon who bears it.

Aſp. If you mean by guilt, the *conſciouſneſs* of having committed a ſin, and the internal *defilement* conſequent upon it, we never ſuppoſe *ſuch* a vicarious guilt. It is not ſo much as intimated, that CHRIST was ſtung with the remorſe, or ſtained with the pollution of the adulterous *David*, the perfidious *Peter*, and the perſecuting *Saul*; but that he was *treated* by the righteous GOD, *as if* he had perpetrated theſe, and all the crimes of all believers, either in the paſt or ſucceeding ages.

If by guilt you mean, the *charge* of a criminal action, and the *obligation* to ſuffer penalty, your aſſertion is nothing more than begging the queſtion. It nakedly affirms the very thing in debate. And bare affirmations, unſupported by evidence, are ſeldom admitted as deciſive proofs.—We, on the other hand, are inclined to believe, that all our criminal actions were charged upon CHRIST, and that he ſuffered the puniſhment which they deſerved. The former of theſe is not ſo properly called vicarious guilt, as *real guilt*, contracted by one, imputed to another. The latter we readily allow to be *vicarious puniſhment*, ſuſtained in their ſtead, whoſe guilt was imputed.——For both theſe points we have the authority of truth itſelf, ſpeaking in the ſcriptures. *The* LORD *laid on him the iniquities of us all*; here is the imputation. CHRIST *has redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us*; here is the vicarious puniſhment. And you know, to *what caſuiſts* we ſubmit the interpretation of theſe texts;—common ſenſe, and an honeſt heart.

Ther. Is not this *ſhocking* to ſuppoſe? *horrid* to affirm? If guilt was really imputed to CHRIST, then puniſhment was his due.—Juſtice might inſiſt upon it,—and he could not eſcape it.

Aſp. To ſuppoſe this, is ſo far from ſhocking my apprehenſion, that it appears, even on *your own* principles, right and neceſſary.——*Right*, becauſe puniſhment, as you yourſelf have declared, always connotes guilt; I would add, either contracted, or at leaſt imputed. And indeed the ſufferings of CHRIST could not be of a *penal* nature, unleſs he endured them as under a charge of guilt.——It is *neceſſary* to ſuppoſe this, otherwiſe how will you vindicate the juſtice of GOD? He bid his ſword awake, and ſmite the † the bleſſed JESUS. But ſhall the JUDGE of all the earth *do wrong*? Shall he ſmite, where there is nothing but innocence? no guilt, either perſonal or imputed? That be far from him! The thought be far from us!

Whereas, upon this ſuppoſition, it becomes a *juſt* and *righteous* thing, that GOD ſhould inflict, and that CHRIST ſhould ſuſtain, the moſt rigorous puniſhment. And I do not know, but this might be the cauſe of our LORD's ſilence, when he was accuſed at *Pilate*'s bar, and at *Herod*'s judgment-ſeat. It is probable, he conſidered himſelf as ſtanding before a higher tribunal; and reſponſible to eternal juſtice, for the criminal actions of all his people. In this ſituation, and in this capacity, clear himſelf of *perſonal* demerit he could; clear himſelf of *imputed* guilt he could not. *Therefore* he was dumb; he opened not his mouth. For though, as the SON of the moſt high GOD, glory and immortality were his undoubted right; yet, as the SURETY for ſinful men, tribulation and death were his condign portion.

And why ſhould this be thought ſhocking? It is not the leaſt derogation to the tranſcendent excellency of CHRIST. It caſts not the leaſt ſtain on the unſpotted ſanctity, either of his nature, or his life.—To bear ſin, as a *voluntary* ſurety, is infinitely different from committing it, as an *actual* tranſgreſſor. To ſay, that CHRIST was puniſhed for any irregularity of *his own*, would be falſe, impious, and horrid. To ſay, that he was charged with *our* guilt, and endured the puniſhment due,—in the plain and full ſenſe of the word *due*,—to our ſins, is ſo far from being injurious to his dignity, that it pays the *proper* honour to his *mediatorial* undertaking. It pays him the honour of—the higheſt obedience to his FATHER's will,—the deepeſt humiliation of his own illuſtrious perſon,—and the moſt boundleſs benevolence to mankind.

Ther. GOD is love, *Aſpaſio*, all love. Whereas you would——

Aſp. not often interrupt a friend's diſcourſe. But I cannot forbear interpoſing a query, on this occaſion.—Is there, then, no *juſt diſpleaſure* in the DEITY? What meaneth that ſolemn denunciation of the ſupreme LAWGIVER? *The anger of the* LORD *ſhall ſmoke againſt that man* *.——What meaneth that awful declaration of the apoſtle? *The wrath of* GOD *is revealed from heaven, upon all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men* †.——Or in what ſenſe are we to explain that alarming interrogatory of the prophet? *Who can ſtand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceneſs of his anger* ‡?—Whence could thoſe avenging viſitations proceed, which deſtroyed *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* with a tempeſt of fire ‖? which ſwept away ſo many thouſands of the polluted *Iſraelites* with a raging peſtilence §? and conſigned over ſo many millions ¶ of rebellious *angels* to chains of darkneſs?

Surely, *Theron*, if there be any determinate ſignification in language; if any leſſon to be learned from the moſt tremendous judgments; it is, that the LORD, though free from all the diſcompoſure of paſſion, is nevertheleſs *angry with the wicked* ‡; and will make impenitent offenders feel the effects of his wiſe and holy indignation.

* If. liii. 12. Luke xxii. 37.

† Zech. xiii. 7.

* Deut. xxix. 20. † Rom. i. 18. ‡ Nah. i. 6.

‖ Gen. xix. 24. § Numb. xxv. 9.

¶ *Millions.*—The *number* of the fallen angels is no where ſpecified; and the veil ſits deep upon the ſpiritual world; ſo that we can ſee no farther than revelation has diſcovered. Yet, I think, there is ſufficient room to ground a *conjecture* upon the reply which one of thoſe execrable apoſtates made to our LORD. *My name is legion*, (a word ſignifying a great multitude, five or ſix thouſand); *for we are many*. If ſo many were employed in tempting and tormenting a *ſingle* perſon, what armies, what myriads of thoſe inviſible enemies, muſt exiſt through univerſal nature!—It is an alarming thought; ſhould make us fly to our divine PROTECTOR, and almighty DELIVERER. See *Mark* v. 9. and 2 *Pet.* ii. 4.

† Pſal. vii. 11. Deut. ix. 8.

Ther. Does not your doctrine repreſent the all-merciful GOD as a *rigorous* being? who, when once diſpleaſed, will hardly be pacified? Whereas, the LORD himſelf declares by his prophet, *Fury is not in me.*——Men of ſatirical wit would be apt to inſinuate, that you had miſtaken JEHOVAH for *Moloch*, and was erecting a Chriſtian church, in the valley of the ſon of *Hinnom*.

Aſp. We take our repreſentations of GOD, not from the vain conjectures of men, but from the records of infallible truth. There he is deſcribed as a *righteous GOD*; a *jealous* * *GOD*; and, to incorrigible ſinners, *a conſuming fire* †; though wonderfully condeſcending, yet tranſcendently majeſtic; inſomuch that none of the fallen race are permitted to approach his throne, but only through the intervention of a great MEDIATOR ‡; and without ſhedding of blood, even the blood of a PERSON higher than the heavens, there is *no remiſſion* ‖ of any offences.

When the LORD ſays, *Fury is not in me* §, the words have a peculiar reference to his church; which, in a preceding verſe, he had ſtyled, *a vineyard of red wine*. The connection ſeems to denote, that his fierce anger was turned away from his people, on account of the ſatisfaction made by their SAVIOUR.—Though his own people are the objects, not of his indignation, but of his love, let no ungodly wretches audaciouſly preſume. It is not ſo with them. They are *the briers and thorns* ¶ mentioned in the next clauſe; cumberers of the ground, unprofitable and noxious. Them he warns; them he challenges; *Who will ſet them in battle againſt me!* Let them come on; they ſhall find it a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living GOD.—Nay; he will not ſtay for their approach: *I will mareh againſt them*, is his threateniug; *I will paſs through them; I will burn them together.*—This will certainly be the caſe, if not in the preſent, yet in a future world. When once the maſter of the houſe is riſen up, and has ſhut to the door, mercy is gone for ever. Then nothing muſt be expected, nothing will then be experienced, but *vengeance and fiery indignation, to devour the adverſaries of the goſpel.* GOD will then *execute judgments in anger, and in fury, and in furious rebukes* †; with ſuch awful ſeverity and immenſe glory, as will cauſe heaven to adore, and hell to tremble.

Yet in all this there is not the leaſt tincture of *that outrageous* temper, which in man we properly call fury. *In man* fury implies an immoderate degree of reſentment, which will hearken to no reaſoning, and accede to no terms. The goſpel-account proves, even to a demonſtration, that this has no place in the divine nature. So far from it, that GOD, though highly provoked, has *provided* an atonement,—has made *overtures* of reconciliation to his diſobedient creatures,—has even *beſought* ++ a guilty world, to accept forgiveneſs. This is the purport of that gracious invitation, which follows in the prophet: *Let him*, let the wicked man, forſake his way; and *take hold of my ſtrength*: let him fly to my crucified SON, who is the power of GOD for the ſalvation of ſinners; cleaving to his merits by faith, as ſome poor delinquent to the horns of the altar *. Thus *he ſhall make peace*: all his iniquities ſhall be forgiven, and all my diſpleaſure ſhall be pacified.—So that the inſinuations of our ſatirical gentlemen are as egregiouſly miſtaken, as they are ſhockingly worded.

You are a man of ſenſe, *Theron*; and eſteem that character, far above the idle reputation of a wit. As ſuch, let me aſk you ſeriouſly, Is it not for the honour of the divine MAJESTY, to exerciſe juſtice, as well as mercy? Always to pardon and never to puniſh, would be *tameneſs*, rather than *benignity*; a renunciation of holineſs, rather than a diſplay of goodneſs.—Or can it be right in us, ſo extravagantly to magnify the *amiable*, as to depreciate, nay even annihilate, the *awful* attributes of the DEITY?—This, ſays a poet, is the theology, not of Chriſtians, but of infidels;

Who ſet at odds heav'ns jarring attributes,
And with one excellence another wound;
Maim heaven's perfection, break its equal beams,
Bid mercy triumph over—GOD himſelf,
Undeified by their opprobrious praiſe:
A GOD all mercy is a GOD unjuſt †.

Ther. But we have lately been told, that the pardoning grace of the LAWGIVER is not obſtructed by any demands of law and juſtice. For he can ſet them aſide.

Aſp. What! Set aſide a law, which is holy, righteous, and good!—Set aſide a juſtice, which is eternal, inflexible, and infinite!—St *Paul* gives a very different ſolution of this difficulty. He tells us,—not that GOD *ſet aſide* his law and his juſtice;—but that *he ſet forth* the bleſſed *JESUS for a propitiation, through faith in his blood*; with this expreſs deſign; *that he might declare his righteouſneſs* ‡; might demonſtrate, not only his clemency, but his juſtice; even that *vindictive* juſtice, whoſe eſſential character and principal office is, to puniſh ſin.

This ſeems to be the import of the word *righteouſneſs*, in the preſent connection, and, I think, more than ſeems, if we conſult the following verſe: *To declare, I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs; that he might be juſt* ‖, evidence himſelf to be ſtrictly and inviolably righteous, in the adminiſtration of his government; even while he is the all-forgiving, gracious *JUSTIFIER of* the ſinner *that believeth in JESUS.*—According to this plan, *mercy and truth meet together; righteouſneſs and peace kiſs each other* §; all the attributes harmonize; every attribute is glorified; and not one ſuperſeded, no, nor ſo much as clouded.

Ther. If ſome are verging to one extreme, are not you inclining to the other? Our ears tingle and our blood runs chill, at the very thoughts of ſo ſevere a vengeance, executed on an object ſo *worthy* and *illuſtrious.*——Beſides, how can we ſuppoſe, that the beneficent CREATOR and PRESERVER of men ſhould *take pleaſure* in the ſufferings of the moſt unblameable perſon that ever exiſted? eſpecially, ſince

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* Exod. xx. 5. † Heb. xii. 29. ‡ John xiv. 6.

‖ Heb. ix. 22. Heb. vii. 26. § Iſ. xxvii. 4.

¶ There is a fine contraſt between the *vineyard* and the *thorns*; at the ſame time a regular continuation of the metaphor. As nothing is more common, than to ſee the latter ſhooting up amidſt the former; ſo nothing is more common, than to have hypocrites intermingle themſelves with believers.

† Ezek. v. 15.

++ 2 *Cor.* v. 20. It was an inſtance of ſingular compaſſion in the bleſſed GOD, that, though offended with *Job's* friends, he admitted of a ſacrifice, and directed them to an intercеſſor; both typical of CHRIST JESUS. But what *unparalleled* condeſcenſion, and *divinely* tender mercies, are diſplayed in this verſe! *As though GOD did beſeech you by us; we pray you in CHRIST's ſtead be ye reconciled to GOD.*—Did the judge ever beſeech a condemned criminal, to accept of pardon? Does the creditor beſeech a ruined debtor, to receive an acquittance in full? Yet our *almighty* LORD, and our *eternal* JUDGE, not only vouchſafes to offer theſe bleſſings, but invites us,—entreats us,—with the moſt *tender* and *re*importunity ſolicits us,—not to reject them!

* This is the preciſe idea included in the original פגע; and the idea is as charming, as the image is expreſſive. *Iſ.* xxvii. 5. 1 *Kings* i. 50.

† Night-Thoughts, No. IV.

‡ Rom. iii. 25.

‖ *Rom.* iii. 26. The attribute of juſtice *muſt* be preſerved inviolate. And inviolate it is preſerved, if there was a real infliction of puniſhment on our SAVIOUR. Nothing leſs can thoroughly *clear up* this great evangelical *paradox*,—JUST, YET JUSTIFIER OF THE UNGODLY!

§ Pſal. lxxxv. 10.

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he himſelf has made this tender declaration, *I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice* *.

Aſp. *A tender declaration* indeed it is; ſignifying, that GOD is better pleaſed with the duties of humanity and charity, than with the moſt coſtly and pompous train of ſacrifices; nay, that he will even diſpenſe with the obſervance of *his own* ceremonial inſtitutions, when they interfere with our exerciſe of beneficence *one to another*; thus reſigning (ſo admirable is his goodneſs!) the ſervices due to himſelf, for the benefit and comfort of his creatures.——But all this has no ſort of relation to the ſacrifice of CHRIST; which was the moſt noble, and the moſt acceptable oblation, ever made to the KING of heaven.

We are aſſured by a prophet, that *it pleaſed the LORD to bruiſe* his holy child JESUS. GOD not only gave up his SON to ſufferings, but gave him up with a divine complacency †.——In like manner, the bleſſed JESUS addreſſed himſelf to the dreadful taſk, not only without reluctance, but with the utmoſt alacrity ‡. *I delight to do thy will*, was the language of his ſoul.——Should you aſk, How could the SON take pleaſure in undergoing, or the FATHER in inflicting, ſuch amazing ſorrows? No otherwiſe, than upon account of thoſe grand and everlaſting advantages which were to reſult from them.

"A ſevere vengeance," you ſay, "ſuch as makes our "ears to tingle."——This is the very thing intended, to *awaken* and *alarm* preſumptuous offenders; that they "may hear, and fear, and do no more wickedly." It is ſuch a method of diſpenſing grace, as is calculated to ſtrike the deepeſt terror, even while it cheriſhes the brighteſt hope;—ſtrike the *deepeſt terror* on every perſevering ſinner,—while it cheriſhes the *brighteſt hope* in every penitent tranſgreſſor.

Ther. If one of my ſervants had affronted or injured me; I ſhould, upon his ſubmiſſive acknowledgment, forgive his fault, and not inſiſt upon ſatisfaction for the wrong. Will you make the FATHER of compaſſions *more inexorable* in his nature, *more rigid* in his demands, than a human MASTER?

Aſp. When you have a ſervant, that owes his being to your power; that has received innumerable benefits from your bounty; yet has offered you innumerable affronts, all attended with the moſt aggravating circumſtances, and all in *defiance* of the *moſt righteous* threatenings;—when you are poſſeſſed of infinite majeſty, and unblemiſhed ſanctity; when truth inviolable, and juſtice inflexible, are eſſential to your character;—then, *Theron*, the parallel will hold good; and *your* conduct ſhall be a pattern for the procedure of JEHOVAH.

Till then, you and I muſt be willing to forgive, becauſe GOD has made it our bounden duty; and becauſe we have *incomparably more* to be forgiven by the JUDGE of the world, than we can poſſibly remit to our fellow-creatures. In the mean time, you will allow the great GOD, who is *glorious in holineſs*, to communicate his heavenly favours in a manner becoming himſelf; on ſuch *auguſt* and *honourable* terms, as ſhall maintain the rights of his univerſal government, and manifeſt the glory of his adorable attributes.

Ther. *Might* not GOD have cancelled our tranſgreſſions, and received fallen men into his favour, without any propitiation?—To deny this, would be to limit the HOLY ONE of *Iſrael*; and impoſe conditions on that uncontrollable Sovereign, *who giveth no account of any of his matters.*

Aſp. We need not embarraſs ourſelves, by entering upon inquiries, which may ſeem to lie beyond the limits of human underſtanding. Enough for us to know, that this propitiation was *abſolutely neceſſary* with regard to the firſt covenant. For as GOD had ſolemnly declared, *In the day thou eateſt thereof, dying thou ſhalt die*; his truth and juſtice ſtood engaged to execute the threatening. And no ſecond *Adam* could reſtore the firſt, but by taking this curſe upon himſelf.

Die man, or juſtice muſt; unleſs for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid ſatisfaction, death for death *.

Therefore the divine *JESUS*, who lay in the boſom of the FATHER, and knew the counſels of heaven, ſays, *The Son of man muſt be lifted up* † on the croſs.—— There was a neceſſity for his crucifixion: Becauſe this was *ſtipulated* in the covenant of peace, made between the FATHER and the SON:—Becauſe it was expreſsly *foretold* by the ancient prophets, (and the ſcripture cannot be broken), that the MESSIAH *ſhould be cut off out of the land of the living*:—Becauſe a variety of types, and a multitude of ſacrifices, *prefigured* his death: *one* of the types pointed out the very manner of his ſuffering; and *all* the ſacrifices, detached from their dependency on this great oblation, would have been beggarly elements,—mere unavailing empty ceremonies.

I apprehend, it is no limitation of the great GOD, to ſuppoſe him incapable of acting otherwiſe, than in *perfect* and *perpetual* conſiſtency with himſelf.——Neither is it any infringement on his abſolute ſovereignty, that he cannot but order all affairs *for the honour* of his juſtice, his fidelity, and each of his exalted perfections.—This is the very thing which the ſacred writers expreſs in their plain but ſtrong language, *GOD who cannot lie* ‡; *He cannot deny himſelf* ‖.

Ther. GOD is often ſaid to *forgive* our ſins; particularly, in that ſublime paſſage, where he proclaims his name to *Moſes*; *The* LORD, *the* LORD GOD, *merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, abundant in goodneſs and truth; keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin.* Now, pardon is a *free* thing. Freeneſs is implied in the very nature of forgiveneſs. Take

* Matth. ix. 13.

† *Divine complacency.*—This is the idea included in the original word חפץ, Iſ. liii. 10. Which is but poorly and faintly repreſented by the εὐδόκησε of the *Septuagint*. It correſponds with the vigorous phraſe, uſed by the voice from heaven, ἐνδόκησα, Matth. iii. 17. Or it may be very exactly tranſlated by St *Paul*'s beautiful expreſſion, εὐαρεστεῖται, Heb. xiii. 16.—In conformity to this ſentiment, the great JEHOVAH is ſaid to ſmell a ſweet ſavour, or a *ſavour of reſt* ריח נחוח in thoſe ſacrifices, which prefigured the crucified JESUS, Gen. viii. 21.

‡ *Utmoſt alacrity.*—There is no *inconſiſtency* between this aſſertion, and our LORD's ſupplication; FATHER, *if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me; nevertheleſs, not my will, but thine be done.* Such a deprecatory requeſt, put up with ſo much earneſtneſs, yet with ſo much ſubmiſſion, only ſhews the *extreme ſeverity* of our REDEEMER's anguiſh, and the *prodigious weight* of his woes. And this indeed it ſhews beyond the power of deſcription.—His ardent love to mankind, and his fervent zeal for his *FATHER*'s glory, prompted him to *deſire* theſe ſufferings. His invincible reſolution and unequalled magnanimity, emboldened him not to decline, but to *meet* them. Yet they were ſo great, ſo terrible, that his nature, being human, could not but *recoil* a little, and be *ſtartled* at their approach; and, had it not been divine alſo, muſt inevitably have *ſunk* under the load.

* Milton, Book III. 210.

† *John* iii. 14. Δεῖ τον, &c. The ſame expreſſion is uſed, *Luke* xxiv. 26.—Perfectly conformable to this leading truth, is the current language both of the law and of the goſpel. Under the *law*, GOD himſelf ſays, *I have ſworn, that the iniquity of the houſe of Eli ſhall not be purged* כופר וכמנחה *with ſlaughtered-offering, or with meat-offering for ever*; that is, no kind of oblation ſhall be accepted; the guilt ſhall never be expiated, 1 *Sam.* iii. 14. Under the *goſpel*, the apoſtle declares, *If we ſin wilfully*, by a final apoſtaſy from *CHRIST*, *there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſins*; they are, to ſuch perſons, and in ſuch circumſtances, abſolutely irremiſſible, *Heb.* x. 26.—Which phraſes are evidently connected with, and founded on, this grand doctrine, That the appointed, the *only* way of obtaining pardon from the righteous GOD, is by the intervention of an expiatory ſacrifice.

‡ Tit. i. 2. ‖ 2 Tim. ii. 13.

away

away the former, and you deſtroy the latter.——If an *equivalent* be given, pardon is no longer pardon, but a *purchaſe*. Forgiveneſs ceaſes to be an act of grace, and becomes the payment of a debt.

Aſp. The text you quote is truly ſublime, and equally comfortable. But you forget to mention one article of very great moment, which cloſes and completes the glorious character; which ſeems added on purpoſe, to prevent any *wrong apprehenſions* of the DEITY, and to guard againſt all *abuſe* of the doctrine: *He will in no wiſe clear the guilty* *.——GOD will not, on *any conſideration* whatever, abſolve the obſtinate, perſevering, irreclaimable offender; neither will he acquit any of the guilty race, *abſolutely, unconditionally*, or without ſuch a ſatisfaction as may repair the honour of his injured law.

We have redemption through his blood, ſays the apoſtle, *even the forgiveneſs of our ſins* †. It is forgiveneſs, you ſee, though bought with a price. It is remiſſion, though procured by blood.——It is free, with regard to that *ſovereign* BEING, who pardons. For he was under no obligation to *admit* of a propitiatory ſacrifice; but might, without any diminution of his dignity, have left all mankind to periſh in their ſins.——It is free, with regard to the *obnoxious* creatures, who are pardoned. For it is vouchſafed, without any ſatisfaction demanded at *their* hands, or any penalty inflicted on *their* perſons.——It is in this reſpect alſo free, that an intereſt in the great atonement is granted to us, without the leaſt merit, or any *deſerving* qualifications of our own.

In all this, GOD is not only merciful, but moſt tenderly and immenſely merciful. And will any one calumniate this adorable method of exerciſing mercy? becauſe proviſion is alſo made for the glory of GOD's truth, GOD's holineſs, and ſupreme authority?

Ther. Does not your notion of a propitiatory ſacrifice, derogate from the goodneſs of the *almighty* FATHER, and transfer all our obligations to the *incarnate* SON?

Aſp. Is there not goodneſs, in *allowing* a ſubſtitute to ſuffer in our ſtead?——Is there not ſtill greater goodneſs, in *providing* a ſubſtitute for us, without any ſolicitation on our part?—Is there not the very higheſt exertion of goodneſs, in appointing a *dear*, an *only*, an *incomparably*-excellent SON for the purpoſe?——This marvellous ſcheme, far, very far from obſcuring, moſt illuſtriouſly diſplays the ſuperabundant loving-kindneſs of the FATHER.

GOD ſo loved the world, apoſtate and pollated as it was ——*How* did he love it? To a degree unutterable by any tongue; inconceivable by any imagination; and only to be expreſſed by the infinitely-precious effects. *Loved it ſo, that he gave his only begotten SON, that whoſoever believeth on him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life* ‡. And does this derogate from the goodneſs of the *almighty* FATHER, to give, not barely pardon and life, but give them through the hands, nay, through the *wounds*, the *agonies*, the *death* of his divineſt, deareſt SON?

Such privileges, vouchſafed on any terms, muſt challenge the devouteſt acknowledgments. But, when attended with this *additional* demonſtration of favour, they are enough to inflame us with gratitude, and tranſport us with admiration. They not only manifeſt, but *commend* * the divine love; ſhew it to the greateſt advantage, in the higheſt perfection, with every circumſtance of recommendation and endearment.——By this means, bleſſed GOD, thou haſt unſpeakably enhanced thy benefits! thou haſt rendered them, though invaluable in *themſelves*, exceedingly more ſo, by the *manner* of conferring them!

Ther. Again in your elevations, *Aſpaſio?*—The world, you know, is grown very *rational* and *inquiſitive*; will admit nothing but upon clear evidence, and full conviction. We expect, in all religious inquiries, not the flights of fancy, or the ſallies of zeal, but a ſobriety of reaſon and ſolidity of argument.

Aſp. The world, rational as it is, ſeems, by the taſte of the preſent age, no enemy to *works of fancy*. The world, therefore, may not be diſpleaſed with an affecting ſtory. And a ſtory, ſuitable to the occaſion, juſt occurs to my mind; ſuch as may ſerve to ſhadow forth, though very *faintly*, the ſurpaſſing benignity and grace of our crucified LORD.

An *Aſiatic* queen, departing this life, left behind her three accompliſhed ſons; all arrived to years of maturity. The young princes were at ſtrife, who ſhould pay the *higheſt reſpect* to their royal mother's memory. To give ſcope for their generous contention, they agreed to meet at the place of her interment; and there preſent the moſt honourable gift they knew how to deviſe, or were able to procure.——The *eldeſt* came, and exhibited a ſumptuous monument, conſiſting of the richeſt materials, and ornamented with the moſt exquiſite workmanſhip.——The *ſecond* ranſacked all the beauties of the blooming creation; and offered a garland of ſuch admirable colours, and delightful odours, as had never been ſeen before.——The *youngeſt* appeared, without any pompous preparation; having only a cryſtal baſon in one hand, and a ſilver bodkin in the other. As ſoon as he approached the tomb, he threw open his breaſt, pierced a vein, that lay oppoſite to his heart; received the blood in the tranſparent vaſe; and, with an air of affectionate reverence, placed it on the beloved parent's monument.——The ſpectators, ſtruck with the ſight, burſt into a ſhout of general applauſe, and immediately gave the preference to this laſt oblation.

If it was reckoned ſuch a ſingular expreſſion of love, to expend a *few* of thoſe precious drops, for the honour of a *parent*; O! how matchleſs! how ineffable was the love of JESUS, in pouring out all his vital blood, for the ſalvation of *enemies!*

Ther. My greateſt objection is ſtill to come.——If *CHRIST* ſuffered in our ſtead, he muſt ſuffer *that very* puniſhment which was due to our iniquities. This your orthodox divines affirm to be incomparably worſe than bodily death; to be nothing leſs than the everlaſting diſpleaſure of *GOD*.

Aſp. The puniſhment due to our iniquities, was ſhame, death, and the divine wrath.

As for *ſhame*——Was ever ſhame like that ſhame which our deſpiſed *REDEEMER* bore! Though Prince

* *He will in no wiſe clear the guilty*, Exod. xxxiv. 7. This text is not without its difficulty, eſpecially in the original.—*Steuchus* interprets the words, *Et innocens non erit ſine piaculo*: He ſhall not be acquitted without a piacular ſacrifice.—I think, they may be tranſlated, with a little more propriety and exactneſs, thus; *Pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin*, נקה לא ינקה *though not with impunity*; or rather, *though he will by no means let* it *go unpuniſhed*, meaning *ſin*: which is the immediate *antecedent*; is expreſſed in the three preceding words; and may very properly be referred to in this clauſe. Then the ſenſe will be as follows; "Though "GOD pardons ſin, yet it ſhall not go unpuniſhed. He will "certainly inflict his righteous vengeance, and exerciſe his puni- "tive juſtice, though not on the ſinner, whom he ſpares; yet on "the *SURETY*, whom he has provided."—In the ſame manner *Coccejus* renders the paſſage, *et non exercens impunitatem*; and expounds it much to the ſame purpoſe.—We have this very word in the ſame remarkable conſtruction, *Jer.* xxx. 11. נקה לא אנקך which is tranſlated, and with ſufficient fidelity; *I will not leave thee altogether unpuniſhed.*

† Eph. i. 7. ‡ John iii. 16.

* *Rom.* v. 8. Συνιστησι. It ſeems to be an image taken from the practice of *tradeſmen*; who, in ſhewing their goods, point out their excellencies, and ſet, in the cleareſt light, whatever may beſpeak their worth, or recommend them to the purchaſer.—Perhaps, it may allude to the cuſtom of ſending, with ſome favourite and worthy perſon, *recommendatory letters*: in which his good qualities are deſcribed, and every thing is mentioned, that may embelliſh his character, and render his preſence reſpectable. In this ſenſe St *Paul* uſes thoſe nearly-related words, συνιστανειν, συνιστανες, 2 Cor. iii. 1.

of the kings of the earth, yet *born* in a ſtable, and laid in a manger. When an *infant*, exiled, from his own country, and a vagabond in a foreign land.—When engaged in the diſcharge of his *miniſtry*, accuſed of the moſt flagitious crimes, and branded with the blackeſt names.——When brought to his *exit*, apprehended as a thief; condemned as a malefactor; nay, the vileſt of malefactors, a robber and a murderer is preferred before him.——His executioners poured contempt upon all his venerable offices. As a *king*, they ridiculed him, but putting a mock-ſceptre into his hand; and crowning him with ragged thorns *, inſtead of a royal diadem. They vilified his *prophetic* character, by hood-winking his eyes; ſtriking his bleſſed head; and then aſking, in cruel deriſion, *Who it was that ſmote him* †. They caſt reproach upon his *prieſtly* undertaking, when they ſharpened their tongues with malicious irony, and ſhot out thoſe bitter words; *He ſaved others, himſelf he cannot ſave* ‡.—To render his infamy as *public*, as it was *ſhocking*, they hung him on a tree; and expoſed him, defiled as he was with ſpitting, and diſfigured with wounds, to the gazing eyes and contumelious ſcoffs of numberleſs ſpectators.

If you doubt, whether CHRIST ſuſtained the *wrath* of GOD, let us follow him to the garden of *Gethſemane*. A ſcene, which I would always recollect, when I walk along the *fertile vale*, or expatiate amidſt the *flowery garden* ‖, or enjoy the delights of any rural retirement.—— He had no remorſe, to alarm his ſpotleſs conſcience; yet fearfulneſs and trembling came upon him. No violence was offered to his ſacred perſon; yet a horrible dread overwhelmed him.—'Twas night, cold night; and though our divine MASTER lay proſtrate upon the earth, amidſt the fall of chilling dews, he *ſweat*,—ſweat *blood*,—ſweat *great drops* of blood, *running down* in reeking ſtreams to the ground.——He was anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows §; yet ſo inſupportable was his affliction, that he could not forbear crying out, *My ſoul is ſorrowful,—exceeding ſorrowful,—ſorrowful even unto death* ¶!—What cauſe, what *adequate* cauſe, can be aſſigned for this amazing anguiſh? None but the wrath of his almighty FATHER; who was now become an inexorable JUDGE; treated him no longer as the SON of his love, but as the SURETY for unnumbered millions of guilty creatures.

Ther. Was it poſſible, that the innocent and holy JESUS, the *dearly-beloved* SON of GOD, ſhould be an object of his FATHER's *wrath?*

Aſp. It was not only poſſible, but unavoidable and neceſſary. *Unavoidable*, with reſpect to the divine holineſs; *neceſſary*, for the procurement of our redemption.—Sin was charged upon CHRIST; all the ſins of all believers, in all ages and places of the world. And could the *infinitely-righteous* GOD behold ſuch a deluge of iniquities, (thoſe abominable things, which he hateth), without expreſſing his diſpleaſure? Or could the bleſſed JESUS be puniſhed, *truly* puniſhed for them, without any painful ſenſation of their horrid evil, and of that tremendous indignation which they deſerved?

If this was not the caſe, who can maintain the *dignity* of his conduct, during the agony in the garden? Was there no pouring out of the divine diſpleaſure? Then his behaviour in that hour of trial, did not equal the intrepidity of the three *Hebrew* youths; who continued calm, and without the leaſt perturbation, while the furnace was heated into ſevenfold rage *.—But if this was the time, in which, no created arm being ſtrong enough to give the blow, *it pleaſed the LORD to bruiſe him* †; if the moſt high GOD *bent his bow like an enemy, and ſtood with his right hand as an adverſary* ‡; it is eaſy to account for the prodigious conſternation of our REDEEMER. It is not to be wondered, that his heart, though endued with otherwiſe invincible fortitude, ſhould become like *melting wax*. For who knoweth the power of that wrath, at which the pillars of heaven tremble ‖?

Ah! *Theron*, the vinegar and the gall which they gave him to drink, were not half *ſo bitter*, as the cup of his FATHER's wrath. Yet, for our ſake, he drank it off to the very dregs.—The nails that pierced his hands, and the ſpear that cleft his heart, were not half *ſo ſharp*, as the frowns of his eternal FATHER's countenance; which, for our conſolation, he patiently ſubmitted to bear.—He was rent with wounds, and racked with pain; his bones were diſlocated, and his nerves convulſed; a thouſand thorny daggers were planted in his temples, and life flowed out at ten thouſand guſhing veins. Yet this, all this was *gentle*, was *lenient*, in compariſon of thoſe inexpreſſible agonies, which penetrated his *very ſoul*. The former fetched not a ſingle complaint from his mouth; the latter wrung from his breaking heart that paſſionate exclamation; *My GOD! my GOD! why haſt thou forſaken me?*—Aſtoniſhing words! Surely, a *diſtreſs*, beyond all imagination grievous §, uttered them. Surely, the *vengeance*, not of men, but of heaven itſelf, extorted them. Every ſyllable of which ſpeaks, what the mourning prophet deſcribes, *Is it nothing to you, all ye that paſs by? Behold and ſee; if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me, in the day of his fierce anger* ¶?

Here, now, is *our whole* puniſhment endured; the ſhame of the croſs, and the ſorrows of death; the ſuſpenſion of the ALMIGHTY's favour, and the terrible ſenſations of his wrath.

Ther. Be it ſo. Yet all this amounts to no more than part of payment. For theſe ſufferings were tranſient; *temporary* only, not *eternal*. Therefore the main circumſtance, the moſt bitter ingredient, was wanting.

Aſp. In the eſtimate of divine juſtice, and in point of penal ſatisfaction, they were equivalent to our endleſs puniſhment; eſpecially, if we conſider the ſeverity of the ſufferings, and the dignity of the SUFFERER.

The *ſeverity* of the ſufferings.——At the laſt day, all thoſe fierce eruptive flames, which have raged in *Ætna*, in *Veſuvius*, and in every other burning mountain throughout the world;—all thoſe confined ſubterra-

* To have crowned the bleſſed *JESUS* with *ſtraw*, would have been a vile inſult, and treating him like an ambitious madman. But to crown him with *keen*, *pungent*, *lacerating* thorns, was adding cruelty to their inſults; unheard of barbarity to the moſt contemptuous mockery, *Matth.* xxvii. 29.

† Scornfully inſinuating, that his ſacred prophetic office was fit for nothing, but to ſerve ſuch deſpicable purpoſes, *Matth.* xxvi. 68.

‡ Matth. xxvii. 42.

‖ Alluding to the evangeliſt's deſcription of *Gethſemane*, who repreſents it as a *garden*; and to the etymology of the word, which ſignifies a *fat* or fruitful *valley*, גת שמנים John xviii. 1. Matth. xxvi. 36.

§ Pſal. xlv. 7. ¶ Matth. xxvi. 38.

* Dan. iii. 16, 17, 18.

† Iſ. liii. 10. ‡ Lam. ii. 4. ‖ Job xxvi. 11.

§ To heighten our idea of this diſtreſs, the evangeliſts make uſe of the *moſt forcible* words—ηρξατο εκθαμβεισθαι, he was ſeized with the *moſt alarming* aſtoniſhment—αδημονειν, he was overwhelmed with *inſupportable dejection*—περιλυπος, he was *beſieged* on all ſides, as it were, with an army of *invading ſorrows*—He *wreſtled*, amidſt ſtrong cries and tears, not only with the malice of men, and rage of devils, but with the infinitely more dreaded indignation of GOD: he wreſtled even unto *an agony* of ſpirit, γενομενος εν αγωνια. All theſe circumſtances of horror and anguiſh, conſtitute what a celebrated poet very juſtly ſtyles,

A weight of woe more than ten worlds could bear!

The *critic*, probably, will admire the propriety and beauty of this line: which, compoſed of nothing but monoſyllables, and clogged with the frequent repetition of a cumbrous conſonant, makes the ſound remarkably appoſite to the ſenſe.—May we all be *ſacred* critics! have, not only a *refined taſte*, to reliſh ſuch elegancies of compoſition, but an *awakened heart*, to feel the energy of ſuch important truths!

‡ Lam. i. 12.

rean fires, which have ſo terribly ſhaken the foundations of *Jamaica*, *Sicily*, and *Conſtantinople*;—in a word, the whole element of fire, however employed through all the revolutions of time, where-ever diffuſed through all the regions of the globe, will then be collected from all quarters, and burſt forth in one vaſt, reſiſtleſs, general conflagration. In ſome ſuch manner, all that wrath, which was due to the innumerable multitude of ſinners, redeemed from every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; which, if executed on the offending creatures, had been prolonged to eternal ages; all that wrath was contracted into one inconceivably-dreadful blaze, and at once poured out upon the interpoſing SURETY, at once flamed forth on our heavenly VICTIM.—This will appear more than probable, if, among other particulars, we contemplate the unequalled magnanimity of our LORD, who is ſtyled the Lion of the tribe of Judah *; and compare it with his bloody ſweat in the garden, and his exceeding bitter cry on the croſs †.

The *dignity* of the SUFFERER.—Had our SAVIOUR's ſufferings been the ſufferings of a mere man, or of the moſt exalted angel, I acknowledge, they could have bore no proportion to our demerit. It were impoſſible for a finite being, to ſuſtain the wrath, or diſcharge the debt. But they were the ſufferings of the PRINCE of heaven, and the LORD of glory; before whom all men are as duſt, and all angels as worms.—Was an infinite MAJESTY offended? An infinite MEDIATOR atoned. Weigh the dignity, the immenſe dignity of the REDEEMER's perſon, againſt the everlaſting duration of our puniſhment, and it will not only *counterbalance*, but *preponderate*. Finite creatures can never make an infinite ſatisfaction; no, not through the moſt unlimited revolution of ages. Whereas, when our divine LORD undertook the work, being truly and properly infinite, he finiſhed it *at once*.——So that his ſufferings, though temporary, have an all-ſufficiency of merit and efficacy. They are, in this reſpect, parallel; nay, on account of the infinitude of his nature, they are more than parallel to an eternity of our puniſhment.

It was EMMANUEL, it was the incarnate GOD who *purchaſed the church*, and redeemed the ſinners, *with his own blood* ‡. The eſſential grandeur of our SAVIOUR communicated its ennobling influence to every tear he ſhed, to every ſigh he heaved, and, every pang he felt. This renders his ſufferings as *perfect*, as their vicarious nature renders them a *proper* ſatisfaction. And though *the wood of Lebanon was not ſufficient to burn, nor all the beaſts thereof ſufficient for a burnt-offering* ‖; this ſacrifice fully anſwers the exigence of the caſe.——This ſacrifice ſends up an ever-acceptable odour to the ſkies, and diffuſes its ſweet perfume through all generations; ſuch as appeaſes heaven, and revives the world.

Yes, *Theron*, you muſt give me leave to repeat the delightful truth; It was *the great GOD, even our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, who gave himſelf for us* §. His ſacrifice therefore muſt be *inconceivably meritorious*. O! that ſinners, the *vileſt* of ſinners, knew its all-ſufficient efficacy! they would no longer be holden in the bonds of iniquity, by that deſtructive ſuggeſtion of the devil, *There is no hope* ¶.

Ther. What valuable end could ſuch vicarious ſufferings accompliſh? Suppoſe GOD abſolutely inexorable, and they cannot *avail*. Suppoſe him divinely merciful, and they are *needleſs*.

Aſp. The difficulty you propoſe, I think, has been obviated already. So that I have no occaſion to ſolve your dilemma, but only to anſwer your query. Theſe ſufferings,—as a *puniſhment*, gave ample ſatisfaction to the divine violated law;—as a *ſacrifice*, they perfectly reconciled us to our offended GOD;—as a *price*, they redeemed us from every evil, and purchaſed for us a title to all good.

This is a ſubject of the moſt diſtinguiſhed importance. Let not my *Theron* imagine, I would abuſe his patience, if I dwell a moment longer on the favourite topic.——I might enumerate many ends, all *magnificent* and *gracious*, accompliſhed by this wonderful expedient. I content myſelf with ſpecifying a few; but thoſe, ſuch as bring the higheſt *glory* to GOD,—adminiſter the moſt ſolid *comfort* to man,—and moſt effectually promote the intereſts of *piety*.

In this we have a manifeſtation of the moſt awful juſtice, and at the ſame time a diſplay of unbounded goodneſs.—*Awful juſtice*; in that the great and terrible GOD, though determined to exerciſe mercy, would exerciſe it only in ſuch a manner, as might vindicate the authority of his law; might teſtify the purity of his nature; and declare the inviolable faithfulneſs of his word.—*Unbounded goodneſs*; in that he withheld not his SON, his only SON, but freely gave him up for us all; gave up "the BRIGHTNESS of his glory," to be covered with infamy; gave up "the BELOVED of his ſoul," to expire in agonies; on purpoſe to obtain honour and immortality for apoſtate men.——The *torments* inflicted on all the *damned* in hell, are not ſo fearful a monument of GOD's juſtice, as thoſe dying agonies of the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. Nor could a *thouſand worlds*, conferred on mankind, have been ſuch an act of ſuperabundant munificence, as that gift of his ever-bleſſed SON.

Look we for *power* and *wiſdom*?—To uphold the humanity of *CHRIST*, under all the ſtudied cruelties of men, under the inſatiate rage of devils, and the far more tremendous curſe of the divine law *: to conquer ſin, and death, and hell, by a perſon bound with fetters, nailed to a tree, and *crucified in weakneſs*: to expiate, by *one* offering, the innumerable millions of crimes, committed by all his people from the beginning to the end of time: was not this power? matchleſs power? aſtoniſhing power?—And as for *wiſdom*, how admirable was the contrivance, which could harmonize the ſeemingly oppoſite claims of mercy and of juſtice! and not only *ſatisfy* each, but *magnify* both!—Had puniſhment been executed, in *all* its *rigour*, on the ſinner's perſon, mercy had loſt her amiable honours. Had the ſinner been reſtored to favour, with *any penalties* ſuſtained either by himſelf or his SURETY, juſtice had been ſet aſide as an inſignificant attribute. Whereas, by our LORD's vicarious and expiatory ſufferings, both are manifeſted, and both are exalted. Therefore the ſcripture affirms, that GOD hath not only exerciſed, but *abounded in wiſdom and prudence*,—nay, hath abounded in *all* wiſdom and prudence †, by this combination of righteous vengeance and triumphant grace; which is, at once, ſo honourable to himſelf, and ſo advantageous to his people.

Ther. "Advantageous to his people."——I am glad, you are come to this point. This is what I want to

* Rev. vi. 5.

† I think the language of the *Greek* liturgy, is the language of ſtrict propriety, as well as of fervent devotion, Δι' ὑπερβαν ου καθεμαλον. The ſufferings of our LORD are, in their meaſure and weight, to us *unknown*; abſolutely beyond the reach of human imagination.

‡ Acts xx. 28. ‖ Iſ. xl. 16. § Tit. ii. 13. 14. ¶ Jer. ii. 25.

* *Iſ.* xliii. 6. *I the LORD will hold thine hand, and will keep thee.* This is ſpoken of the *MESSIAH*. It gives him aſſurance of effectual ſupport, when the vengeance of heaven, the fury of hell, and the ſins of the world, ſhould fall upon him with united violence. To ſupport the MEDIATOR under theſe circumſtances, is mentioned as a very diſtinguiſhed act of that omnipotent arm, which *created the heavens, and ſpread forth the earth, and giveth ſpirit to them that walk therein*, ver. v.

† Eph. i. 8.

have

have cleared up. I am for those doctrines, which glorify GOD, by doing good to man. Give *me* the religion, whose aspect is benign, and whose agency is beneficial. Not like a *meteor*, to dazzle us with a vain glitter; not like a *comet*, to terrify us with a formidable glare; but like yonder *sun*, whose beams shed light, and life, and joy all around.

Asp. If this be what you seek, and what you prize, the *Christian* religion, this doctrine in particular, will answer your warmest expectations, and challenge your highest esteem. For it is rich with benefits of the most needful, the most desirable, and most exalted kind.

The first and grand blessing is *pardon* of *sins*.——Pardon, not of small sins only, but of the most *aggravated*, the most *horrid*, the most *enormous*. Be they flaming as scarlet, be they foul as the dunghill, be they black as hell itself; yet they shall be as the spotless wool, or as the virgin snows *; they shall "be, as though they had "never been."——Pardon, not of a few, but of *all* sins. Be they numerous as the hairs of our head, numerous as the stars of heaven, numerous as the sands upon the sea-shore, *the blood of* JESUS CHRIST *cleanseth from them ALL* †.

Hereby we have *victory* over *death*, and *admittance* into eternal *life*. For thus saith the holy apostle, concerning the poor sojourners in clay, *Seeing therefore the children were partakers of flesh and blood*, HE *also partook of the same; that, by* undergoing *death, he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver those, who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage* ‡.—And thus saith the venerable elder, concerning the glorified saints in light, *These are they who came out of great tribulation; and they have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the LAMB; therefore are they before the throne* ‖.

The *Philistines* rejoiced, when *Samson*, the destroyer of their country, was delivered into their hands. How much *greater reason* have we to rejoice, since the blessed JESUS has vanquished our last enemy! has made death the minister of endless life, and the grave a gate to eternal glory!—*Joseph* had cause to be glad, when he put off his prison-garments, and was clothed with change of raiment; when he was brought from the dungeon to the palace, and honoured with a seat at the right hand of the king. But is it not an incomparably-*richer blessing*, to have our robes washed in redeeming blood, and our souls cleansed from all guilt? Is it not an incomparably-*higher advancement*, to be admitted into the blissful presence, and to possess the everlasting kingdom of GOD?

To comprehend all in a word:—Hereby are procured, even for the most unworthy creatures, all the *benefits* of the *new covenant*. Therefore the blood of CHRIST is styled by a prophet, *the blood of thy covenant* §; by an apostle, *the blood of the everlasting covenant* ¶; and our LORD himself says, *This is the new covenant in my blood* †.—Is it a privilege, to know GOD, the infinitely-amiable centre and source of all perfection? Is it a most valuable endowment, to have his laws put into our minds, and written on our hearts? Is it a branch of real felicity, to have our numberless sins forgiven, and not one of our iniquities remembered any more? Is it the compendium of all happiness, to have GOD for our portion, and our exceeding great reward? to be his peculiar treasure, his loving and beloved people ++?—Of all these we may say, They are *the purchase* of EMMANUEL's blood: and whoever is truly interested in the *one*, is unquestionably entitled to the *other*.

Who then would refuse so *comfortable*—

Ther. Too comfortable, we might imagine, to be either *true* in itself, or *safe* in its consequences. Must it not tend to *embolden* the sinner in the prosecution of his vices? Who need scruple to transgress, or be very solicitous to repent, if an all-atoning SACRIFICE has been offered for every kind and every degree of wickedness?

Asp. Would you have sinners *intimidated?* Nothing speaks such terror to the children of disobedience, as the bitter passion and accursed death of CHRIST.——All the rhetorical aggravations of sin, with regard to its loathsome nature, and execrable vileness;—all the severity of vengeance, executed upon rebellious angels, or wicked men;—all, all are weak and inexpressive, compared with the *dreadful emphasis* of this great transaction. For, if the LORD almighty spared not *his own* SON, when guilt was not found in him, but only imputed to him; how much less shall he spare *incorrigible* offenders, who both habitually commit, and obstinately persist in, their daring impieties?

If, by repentance, you mean an *ingenuous sorrow* for our transgressions; nothing is so likely to break the stony, or melt the icy earth, as these doleful effects of sin.——Let us imagine ourselves present at *Calvary*, and standing by the cross. See! the innocent, the amiable, the illustrious SAVIOUR, hangs on a tree: a tree, torturous as the rack, and ignominious as the gibbet! See! his face is foul with spitting, and his sides are tore with the scourge. His veins stream with blood, and his heart is wounded with anguish.—There he hangs, abandoned by his friends; reviled by his enemies; and forsaken even by his *GOD*.—Can we reflect, that *we*, even *we* were the cause of this inconsolable misery; and not feel remorse in our consciences, or sorrow in our minds? Can we reflect, that for *us*, for *us*, he bore this amazing torment; and not smite our breasts, or be pained at our very souls?

If, by repentance, you mean a *thorough renunciation* of all iniquity, no motive is so effectual, to divorce the heart from every abominable idol, and divert the feet from every evil way, as an attentive consideration of our REDEEMER's death.——Whose indignation does not rise against the infamous wretch, that betrayed the blessed JESUS? Who is not ready to detest those envenomed tongues which accused him, and those barbarous hands which crucified him? How then can we cherish those horrid lusts, which were the *principal* actors in this deepest of tragedies? How can we caress, how can we entertain, how can we endure those execrable iniquities, which were *the betrayers and murderers* of the *PRINCE* of life? —*He bore our sins in his own bleeding, agonizing body on the tree;* not that we should be emboldened to repeat them, but incited to abhor them, and induced to forsake them; that, in our practice and our affections, we should not only be averse, but even *dead to sin* *.

If you would have *benevolence*, your favourite principle, take place and operate; it is impossible to urge so endearing a persuasive to universal good-will, as this *kindness and love of GOD our* SAVIOUR †. How can we indulge the sallies of resentment, or harbour the seeds of animosity, when the meek, the merciful, the infinitely-gracious *REDEEMER*, laid down his life for his *bitterest enemies?* How can we treat with contempt or indifference, even the *meanest* of *mankind*, since our divine *MASTER* gave his all-glorious person for vile wretches and miserable sinners?—Never was there so *winning* a call to disinterested charity, as the amiable example of CHRIST; never so *binding* a cement of brotherly love, as the blood of the crucified JESUS.

In short, would you have people possessed of every heavenly virtue, and animated to the practice of every good work? Nothing administers so powerful an incitement to them all, as a *lively* and *appropriating* sense of this wondrous grace. Set home by the

* If. i. 18. † 1 John i. 7. ‡ Heb. ii. 14. 15.
‖ Rev. vii. 14. § Zech. ix. 11. ¶ Heb. xiii. 20.
† *Luke* xxii. 20. The original word διαθηκη signifies either a *testament*, or a *covenant*.
++ Heb. viii. 10. 11. 12.

* 1 Pet. ii. 24. † Tit. iii. 4.

HOLY

HOLY GHOST *, it produces such a warm gratitude, and such a heart-felt joy, as are far more operative than the most awful threatenings, or the most cogent reasonings.—So that, quite contrary to your suspicions, the native tendency of this excellent doctrine is, to suppress ungodliness, and promote piety.

Observe, how the present calm evening, yonder mild declining sun, and these soft balmy breezes, have unlocked the flowery prisons, and detached a *profusion* of *odours* through the air; have inspirited the little songsters of the grove, and fetched *lavish harmony* from their throats. So sweetly will a true belief in JESUS CHRIST and him crucified, draw forth all the powers of the soul, in acts of ready and chearful obedience.—He is therefore said, not only to justify, but also to *sanctify the people with his blood* †.

Let us consider the death of CHRIST, in this its full grandeur and extensive efficacy; and we shall discern the admirable propriety of the apostle's remark; *It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the CAPTAIN of their salvation perfect through sufferings* ‡. IT BECAME; as an *act* of *sovereignty* in GOD, it comported with the dignity, and emblazoned (if I may so speak) the incomprehensible majesty of his perfections.—As an execution of *impartial vengeance* on our SURETY, it asserted the rights of divine government, and secured the utmost veneration to the divine law.——As an emanation of *rich indulgence* to us, it redressed all our misery, and retrieves our whole happiness.——In *each*, in *every* respect, it is worthy of the most grateful and adoring acceptance from sinful man, and such as will be had in everlasting honour by the choirs of saints, and the host of angels.

Ther. I thank you, *Aspasio*. Your arguments have not indeed converted me, but they have strengthened my faith. I never was so unhappily mistaken, as to disbelieve the satisfaction made by our LORD JESUS CHRIST; made to divine justice; made for the sins of the world. But I now see more clearly its *reasonableness* and *importance*; its chearing aspect on the *guilty* conscience, and its benign influence on the *moral* conduct.

Asp. I congratulate you, dear *Theron*, from my inmost soul, on your thorough conviction of this important truth. May you have still more *extensive* and *generous* views of the glorious article! and may every renewed view be more and more influential on your heart!

Reviving, ravishing thought! to have HIM for our bleeding *victim!* HIM for our great *propitiation!* at whose feet the armies of heaven bow, and the saints in light adore!—Reviving, ravishing thought! to have *all* our punishment sustained, and the *whole* curse of the law exhausted; so that justice itself can demand no more! ——Nay, to have so perfect a ransom paid for our redemption, that it is not *barely* an act of favourable indulgence, but of the *highest* righteousness ‖ also, to pardon, accept, and glorify the believer!—In SUCH a method of reconciliation, how fully does the judgment acquiesce, and how securely the conscience rest!

Excuse me, *Theron*. My affections are again upon the soar. But I clip their wings.——Only let me ask. Is not this doctrine the *grand peculiarity* of the gospel, by which it stands distinguished from every other religion professed in the world?——Is it not the *central point*, in which all the lines of duty unite, and from which all the rays of consolation proceed?——Strike this article from the creed, and you reduce the *mystery of godliness* to a system of ethics; you degrade the Christian church into a school of philosophy.——To deny the expiation made by our *REDEEMER*'s sacrifice, is to obscure the *brightest manifestation* of divine benignity, and to undermine the *principal pillar* of practical religion; is to make a desperate shipwreck of our everlasting interests, and to dash (such, I fear, it will be found, in the final issue of things) ourselves to death, on the very *rock* of *salvation*.

Ther. Now, I believe, it is time to repair homewards. And I hope, it will be no disagreeable exchange, if we resign our seat on the mount, for a place in the dining-room.

Asp. Pray, let me inquire, as we walk along (for I was unwilling to interrupt our discourse, merely to gratify my curiosity), what may be the *design* of yonder *edifice*, which rises on a small eminence, near the public road? It is neither a tower, nor a dwelling-house; but looks like a stately column, erected on purpose to beautify the prospect.

Ther. It is a sort of monumental pile; erected, as the story goes, on a very memorable occasion.——Queen *Eleanor* accompanied King *Edward the First* to (what was called) the holy war: in which he gained signal advantages over the infidels, and acquired a large share of renown to himself. After many gallant exploits performed in the field, a treacherous and desperate *Saracen*, demanding admittance into his chamber, under pretence of private business, wounded him with an empoisoned dagger. The consequence of which, his physicians declared, must be inevitable and speedy death, unless the poison was sucked out by some human mouth. This might possibly preserve the royal patient, but would be extremely dangerous to the operator.

Dangerous as it was, his Queen claimed the office; insisted upon it, as the consort's right; and executed it so *faithfully*, that she saved the king's life; so *happily*, that she lost not her own.——After this, she returned to *England*, lived many years, and bore several children. But, sooner or later, royalty itself must pay the debt to nature. Dying on a journey to *Scotland*, she was brought back to the last and long home of our *English* monarchs *. ——Where-ever her corpse rested, in the way to its interment, a structure † (such as you now behold) was raised, in order *to perpetuate the memory of her conjugal affection*.

Asp. And should not our hearts be a *monument* of *gratitude* to the blessed JESUS? who drew the deadly venom, not from our veins, but from the immortal part of our nature; and not at the hazard, but at the loss, the *certain* and *unavoidable* loss of his precious life.——He opened his breast, opened his very soul, to the keenest arrows of vindictive justice; that, transfixing him, they might drop short of us; "the poison whereof drank up *his* spirits ‡," that the balm of peace might refresh *ours*.

* The reader will give me leave, on this occasion, to subjoin the noble doxology of our church; which, when thus applied, may be an excellent means, both of expressing our gratitude, and of quickening our devotion.—*Glory be to the FATHER*, for providing this all-sufficient atonement, and giving his SON to save a ruined world.—*Glory be to the SON*, for humbling himself to the death of the cross, and obtaining eternal redemption for sinners.—*Glory be to the HOLY GHOST*, for testifying of CHRIST in our hearts, and appropriating this great salvation to our souls.

† Heb. xiii. 12.

‡ Heb. ii. 10.

‖ Therefore the apostle says, *GOD is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*, 1 John i. 9. *Faithful*, because he had promised this blessing, by the unanimous voice of all his prophets.—*Just!* surely then he will *punish!* No; for this very reason he will pardon. —This may seem strange; but, upon the evangelical principles of atonement and redemption, it is apparently true: because, when the debt is paid, or the purchase made, it is the part of *equity* to cancel the bond, and consign over the purchased possession.

* *Westminster Abbey.*

† One of these structures stands on the high road, near *Northampton*. It is surrounded with a large flight of steps, at the bottom; and ornamented, towards the top, with four female statues, in full proportion. A *Latin* inscription informs the traveller, concerning its occasion and design;

In perpetuam Reginæ Eleonoræ
Conjugalis amoris memoriam.

‡ Job vi. 4.

O my *Theron!* let our memories be the tablet, to record this unexampled instance of compassion and goodness. Let our affections dwell upon the tragical, the delightfull history; till they melt into contrition, and are inflamed with love.—If we want an *inscription*, let us make use of those noble lines, which, in the finest climax imaginable, describe the magnificence and grace of this astonishing transaction:

——Survey the wondrous cure,
And at each step let higher wonder rise,
Pardon for infinite offence!—and pardon
Through means that speak its value infinite!
A pardon bought with blood!—with blood divine!
With blood divine of HIM I made my foe!—
Persisted to provoke! Though woo'd and aw'd,
Bless'd and chastis'd, a flagrant rebel still!—
Nor I alone! A rebel universe!
My species up in arms!—Not one exempt!
Yet for the foulest of the foul, he dies!

Night-Thoughts, No. IV.

DIALOGUE V.

ASPASIO having some letters of importance to answer, as soon as the cloth was taken away, retired from table.—His epistolary engagements being dispatched, he enquired for *Theron*. The servants informed him, that their master walked into the garden.—A very little search found him, seated on an airy mount, and sheltered by an *elegant arbour*.

Strong and substantial plants of *liburnum* formed the shell; while the slender and flexile shoots of *syringa* filled up the interstices.—Was it to compliment, as well as to accommodate their worthy guests, that they interwove the luxuriant foliage? Was it to represent those tender but close attachments, which had united their affections, and blended their interests?—I will not too positively ascribe such a design to the disposition of the branches. They composed, however, by their twining embraces, no inexpressive emblem of the *endearments* and the *advantages* of friendship. They composed a canopy, of the freshest verdure, and of the thickest texture; so thick, that it entirely excluded the sultry ray; and shed both a cool refreshment, and an amusive gloom: while every unsheltered tract glared with light, or fainted with heat.

You enter by an easy ascent of steps, lined with turf, and fenced with a balustrade of sloping bay-trees.—The roof was a fine *concave*, peculiarly elevated and stately. Not embossed with sculpture; not mantled over with fret work; not incrusted with splendid fresco; but far more delicately adorned with the syringa's *silver tufts*, and the liburnum's *flowering gold:* whose large and lovely clusters, gracefully pendent from the leafy dome, disclosing their sweets to the delighted bee, and gently waving to the balmy breath of spring, gave the utmost enrichment to the charming bower.

Facing the entrance, lay a spacious grassy walk; terminated by an octangular bason, with a curious *jet d'eau* playing in the centre. The waters, spinning from the lower orifices, were attenuated into innumerable little threads; which dispersed themselves in an horizontal direction, and returned to the reservoir, in a drizzling shower. Those which issued from the higher tubes, and larger apertures, either sprung perpendicularly, or spouted obliquely; and formed, as they fell, several lofty arches of liquid crystal, all *glittering* on the eye, and *cooling* to the air.

Parallel to the walk ran a *parterre;* planted with an assemblage of flowers, which advanced, one above another, in regular gradations of height, of dignity, and of beauty.—First, a row of *daisies*, gay as the smile of youth, and fair as the virgin-snows.—Next, a range of *crocuses*, like a long stripe of yellow satin, quilted with threads, or diversified with sprigs of green.—A superior order of *ranunculuses*, each resembling the cap of an earl's coronet, replenished the third story with full-blown tufts of glossy scarlet.——Beyond this, a more elevated line of *tulips* *, raised their flourishing heads, and opened their enamelled cups; not bedecked with a single tint only, but glowing with an intermingled variety of almost every radiant hue.—Above all arose, that noble ornament of a royal escutcheon, the *flower-de-luce;* bright with ethereal blue, and grand with imperial purple: which formed, by its graceful projections, a cornish or a capital of more than *Corinthian* richness; and imparted the most consummate beauty to the blooming colonnade.

The whole, viewed from the arbour, looked like a *rainbow*, painted upon the ground; and wanted nothing to rival that resplendent arch, only the boldness of its sweep, and the advantage of its ornamental curve.

To this agreeable recess *Theron* had withdrawn himself. Here he sat musing and thoughtful, with his eye fixed upon a picture representing some *magnificent ruins*.——Wholly intent upon his speculation, he never perceived the approach of *Aspasio*, till he had reached the summit of the mount, and was ready to take a seat by his side.

Asp. Lost, *Theron!* quite lost in thought! and unaffected with all these amiable objects; insensible amidst this profusion of beauties, which, from every quarter, make their court to your senses!—Methinks, the snarling Cynic in his tub, could hardly put on a greater severity of aspect, than my polite philosopher in his blooming *Eden*.

Ther. Ah! my dear friend, these flowery toys which embellish the garden, are *familiar* to my eye, and therefore *cheap* in my esteem. I behold them frequently; and, for that reason, feel but little of the pleasing surprise,

* Here is, it must be confessed, some little deviation from the general laws of the season; some *anachronism* in the annals of the parterre. The flowers united in this representation, do not, according to the *usual* process of nature, make their appearance together. However, as, by the œconomy of a skilful gardener, they may be thus associated; I hope, the possibility of the thing will screen my flowery productions from the blasts of censure!—Or, may I not shelter my blooming assembly, under the remark of a masterly critic? which is as *pertinent* to the case, as if it had been written on purpose for our vindication; and in all respects so *elegant*, that it must adorn every work, which quotes it; and charm every person, who reads it.

"A painter of nature is not obliged to attend her in her slow "advances, which she makes from one season to another, or to ob- "serve her conduct in the successive production of plants and flow- "ers. He may draw into his description all the beauties of the "spring and autumn; and make the whole year contribute some- "thing to make it more agreeable. His rose-trees, woodbines, "and jessamines may flourish together; and his beds be covered "at the same time with lilies, violets, and amaranthuses. His "soil is not restrained to any particular set of plants, but is pro- "per either for oaks or myrtles, and adapts itself to the product "of every climate.——Oranges may grow wild in it; myrrh may "be met with in every hedge; and if he thinks it proper to have "a grove of spices, he can quickly command sun enough to raise "it. His concerts of birds may be as full and harmonious and "his woods as thick and gloomy, as he pleases. He is at no "more expence in a long vista, than a short one; and can as "easily throw his cascades from a precipice of half a mile high, "as from one of twenty yards. He has his choice of the winds, "and can turn the course of his rivers, in all the variety of *mean- "ders*, that are most delightful to the reader's imagination. In "a word, he has the modelling of nature in his own hands, and "may give her what charms he pleases, provided he does not re- "form her too much, and run into absurdities by endeavouring "to excel." *Spect.* vol. VI. No. 418.

ſurpriſe, which they may poſſibly awaken in a ſtranger.——Something like this we all experience, with regard to events infinitely *more worthy* our admiring notice. Elſe, why are we not ſtruck with a mixture of amazement, veneration, and delight, at the grand machinery and magnificent productions of nature?

That the hand of the ALMIGHTY ſhould wheel round the vaſt terreſtrial globe, with ſuch prodigious *rapidity*, and exact *punctuality*; on purpoſe to produce the regular viciſſitudes of day and night; on purpoſe to bring on the orderly ſucceſſion of ſeed-time and harveſt!——We wonder, when we read of the *Iſraelites* ſojourning forty years in the deſert, marching backward and forward over its burning ſands; and find neither their cloaths *waxing old* * by ſo long a uſe, nor their feet *ſwelling* † with ſuch painful journies. Yet are we neither impreſſed with wonder, nor affected with gratitude, when we enjoy the benefits of the *air*, which clothes the earth as it were with a garment; which has neither contracted any *noxious* taint, through the extenſive revolution of almoſt ſix thouſand years; nor ſuffered any *diminution* of its natural force, though exerciſed in a ſeries of unremitted activity, ever ſince the elementary operations began.

This draught in my hand, ſhews us the inſtability of the grandeſt, *moſt laboured* monuments of human art. They are ſoon ſwept away, among the other feeble attempts of mortality; or remain only, as you ſee here, in ſhattered ruins; memorials of the vain and powerleſs ambition of the builders.—How ſtrange then, that a ſtructure, incomparably more tender and delicate, ſhould be preſerved to *old age*, and *hoary hairs!* that the bodily machine, which is ſo exquiſite in its frame, ſo complicated in its parts, and performs ſo many thouſands ‡ of motions every moment, ſhould continue *unimpaired*, yet act without intermiſſion, ſo many days, and weeks, and months, and years.—How ſtrange all this! yet, becauſe common, how ſeldom does it excite our praiſe, or ſo much as engage our notice!

Aſp. Your remarks are as juſt, as the neglect of them is cuſtomary.——Unaccountable ſupineneſs! Though GOD *doth great things*, worthy of all obſervation; *yea, and wonders without number*: we yawn with indolence, inſtead of being animated with devotion, or tranſported with delight. *Lo! he goeth before us*, in evident manifeſtations of wiſdom and power, *yet we ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo*, and ſcatters unnumbered bleſſings from his providential hand, *but we perceive him not* ‖.

This, though greatly culpable, is to be reckoned among the *ſmalleſt* inſtances of our ungrateful inſenſibility.—Are we not inattentive even to the work of redemption? That work, which, according to the emphatical declaration of ſcripture, *exceeds in glory* §; is by far the greateſt, the moſt marvellous of all ſublunary, perhaps of all divine tranſactions.—Are we not ſhamefully unaffected, even with the appearance of GOD in human fleſh? Though the KING of kings vouchſafes to exchange his throne, for the humiliation of a ſervant, and the death of a malefactor; though he is pleaſed, by the imputation of his active as well as paſſive obedience, to become *the LORD our righteouſneſs*; yet——

Ther. You are taking an effectual way, *Aſpaſio*, to rouſe me from my reverie, and make me indeed like the ſnarling philoſopher. "Imputed righteouſneſs is a "ſcheme groſsly frivolous and abſurd; utterly inſufficient "to anſwer the end propoſed; and, one would think, "could never be depended on, where there is the leaſt "degree of underſtanding, and capacity for reaſoning."

Aſp. Who is warm now, *Theron?* May I not remind my friend, that the *reſentful* is no more fitted to work conviction, than the *rapturous?*—Perhaps, you have not duly conſidered this ſubject; nor ſeen it in the proper point of view. I have ſometimes beheld a ſhip of war ſeveral leagues off at ſea. It ſeemed to be a *dim cloudy* ſomething, hovering on the ſkirts of the horizon; contemptibly mean, and not worthy of a moment's regard.—But, as the floating citadel approached, the maſts aroſe; the ſails ſwelled out; its ſtately form, and curious proportions, ſtruck the ſight. It was no longer a ſhapeleſs maſs, or a blot in the proſpect, but the *maſterpiece* of human contrivance, and the *nobleſt* ſpectacle in the world of art. The eye is never weary of viewing its ſtructure, nor the mind in contemplating its uſes.

Who knows, *Theron*, but this ſacred ſcheme likewiſe, which you now look upon as a *confuſed heap* of errors, may very much improve, when more cloſely examined; may at length appear a wiſe and benign plan, admirably fitted to the condition of our fallen nature, and perfectly worthy of all acceptation?

Ther. I know not what may happen, *Aſpaſio*. But there ſeems to be very little probability of ſuch a change. For, though my laſt oppoſition was a *mock-fight*; in my preſent objections I am *very ſincere*, and to this doctrine I am a determined enemy.——The notion of a ſubſtituted and vicarious righteouſneſs is abſurd even to common ſenſe, and to the moſt natural and eaſy reflections of men.

Aſp. It may not, my dear friend, agree with our natural apprehenſions; nor fall in with the method, which *we* might have deviſed, for the ſalvation of mankind. But this is the voice of ſcripture, and a maxim never to be forgotten: *GOD's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways* †.——*His righteouſneſs is like the ſtrong mountains, and his judgments are like the great deep* ‡; the former immoveable, the latter unſearchable.

Ther. The mention of mountains puts me in mind of what I was reading yeſterday;—the keen irony,

* Deut. viii. 4 † Neh. ix. 21.

‡ *Thouſands*—not to mention the *ſpontaneous*, if we conſider only the *mechanical* motions, which are continually performed in the animal ſyſtem—the digeſtive action of the ſtomach—the vermicular agitation of the bowels—the progreſs of the chyle through the lacteal veſſels—the many, many operations of the ſecreting glands—the compreſſion of the lungs, and all their little cellular lodgments, by every act of reſpiration—above all, that grand impetus, the ſyſtole of the heart; which, by every conſtriction, darts the crimſon current through an innumerable multitude of arteries, and drives, at the ſame inſtant of time, the reſluent blood through an innumerable multitude of correſponding veins—Such a view will oblige us to acknowledge, that *Theron*'s account is far from being extravagant; that it rather *diminiſhes*, than *exaggerates* the real fact.

‖ Job ix. 10. 11. § 2 Cor. iii. 9.

* The reader will probably be diſguſted, at this *heat* of temper, this *aſperity* of diction, and both ſo *abruptly* introduced.——I have no apology to make for my *Theron*. The reader has reaſon to be diſguſted; has reaſon to be chagrined. Only let me deſire him to remember, that this is the very ſpirit, nay theſe are the *very words*, of a celebrated oppoſer of our doctrine; not added, when he has fully proved the abſurdity of the ſcheme; but aſſumed, even upon the entrance to his diſcourſe.

I have often wondered, that diſputants, eſpecially on religious ſubjects, ſhould chuſe to deal in ſuch *acrimonious* and *reproachful* language. *Does the wrath of man work the righteouſneſs of GOD?* Or is a paſſionate invective the proper means, either to conciliate our affections, or convince our judgment?—Why ſhould we not *write* in the ſame genteel and obliging ſtrain, in which we *converſe*? Were we to meet our antagoniſt in a friend's parlour, and have a perſonal conference on the ſubject, our ſpeech would be kind, and our remonſtrances calm;—"I am ſorry, Sir, that you have "eſpouſed ſuch notions. They ſeem to me extremely wrong and "equally dangerous. I am apt to think, you have not duly conſi"dered, either the little ground they have to ſupport them, or the "pernicious conſequences that may attend them."

Why ſhould not our controverſies from the preſs be carried on with ſuch a *candid* and *amicable* ſtrife? This would certainly render them more pleaſing to the reader, more profitable to the public, and much more likely to have their deſired effect upon our opponent.——For my part, I admire the humanity and tenderneſs of the poet's reſolution, even more than the boldneſs of his figures, or the beauty of his expreſſion:

Tu lapides loqueris, ego byſſina verba reponam.

† Iſ. lv. 8. ‡ Pſal. xxxvi. 6.

with

with which *Abimelech*'s principal officer chaſtiſed the bluſtering Gaal: *Thou ſeeſt the ſhadow of the mountains, as if they were men* *. He, it is ſarcaſtically intimated, was afraid, and my *Aſpaſio* ſeems to be fond, of ſhadows.

Aſp. Happy for your *Aſpaſio*, that irony is no argument. If a jury was impannelled to try me and my doctrine, I ſhould certainly except againſt irony. Generally ſpeaking, he is neither *a good man*, nor a *true*. And, if I remember right, you yourſelf conſented to ſet him aſide in this debate. I ſhall therefore adapt my reply, rather to what is ſolid, than what is ſmart.

"This notion," you ſay, "is abſurd even to common ſenſe."——A ſaying, upon which I muſt beg leave to put a query. It was, I own, abſolutely beyond the power of common ſenſe, unaſſiſted by divine revelation, to *diſcover* this truth.——I will grant farther, that this bleſſing infinitely *tranſcends* whatever common ſenſe has obſerved in all her converſe with finite things.—— But, if I have any the leaſt acquaintance with common ſenſe, I am very ſure, ſhe *will not*, ſhe *cannot* pronounce it an abſurdity. To this judge I refer the cauſe.

And to *open* the cauſe a little, let me juſt obſerve, that GOD imputed our ſins to his SON. How elſe could the immaculate JESUS be puniſhed, as the moſt inexcuſable tranſgreſſor? *Awake, O ſword, againſt the Man that is my Fellow, ſaith the LORD of hoſts* †.——Is not this the voice of a judge, pronouncing the ſentence, and authoriſing the execution? Or rather, does it not deſcribe the action of juſtice, turning the ſword from us, and ſheathing it in CHRIST?—who, if he was our ſubſtitute with regard to *penal ſuffering*, why may he not ſtand in the ſame relation with regard to *juſtifying obedience*? There is the ſame reaſon for the one, as for the other. Every argument in favour of the former, is equally concluſive in behalf of the latter.

Ther. I very freely grant, that CHRIST JESUS was puniſhed in our ſtead; that *his* death is the expiation of *our* ſin, and the cauſe of our ſecurity from penal ſuffering. But this——

Aſp. will undeniably prove, that ſin was imputed to him; otherwiſe he could not *truly* ſuffer in our ſtead, nor be *juſtly* puniſhed at all. "And imputation is as reaſonable and juſtifiable in *one caſe*, as in the *other*; for they both ſtand upon one and the ſame foot; and, for that reaſon, he who throws down one, throws down both."——I ſhould not have interrupted my *Theron*, only to introduce this anſwer from an eminent divine: who adds, what ſhould be very ſeriouſly conſidered; "And therefore whoever rejects the doctrine of the imputation of our SAVIOUR's *righteouſneſs* to man, does, by ſo doing, reject the imputation of man's *ſin* to our SAVIOUR, and all the conſequences of it. Or, in other words, he who rejects the doctrine of the *imputation*, does, by ſo doing, reject the doctrine of the expiation likewiſe ‡."

Ther. I know nothing of this divine; and, eminent as he is, can hardly take his *Ipſe dixit* for a deciſion.

Aſp. I was in hopes, you would pay the greater regard to *his* opinion, becauſe he is not in the number of the whimſical fanatics.

Give me leave to obſerve farther, that the imputation of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs, bears an evident analogy to another great truth of *Chriſtianity*. We did not perſonally commit *Adam*'s ſin, yet are we chargeable with guilt, and liable to condemnation, on that——

Ther. How! *We* chargeable with guilt, and liable to condemnation, on account of *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion! This poſition I muſt deny; I had almoſt ſaid, I muſt abhor. None other could, in the eye of juſtice and equity, be blameable for any offence of our firſt parents, but *they only*.

Aſp. So ſays *Theron*; but what ſays St *Paul*? This may be the voice of natural reaſon, but what is the language of divine revelation? *In whom*, that is, in *Adam*, *all have ſinned*.

Ther. The words, if I remember right, are——*For that all have ſinned*.

Aſp. In the margin, they are tranſlated, as I have repeated them. For this interpretation I might contend, as not in the leaſt incompatible with the original phraſe *, and as the *moſt preciſely* ſuitable to the ſacred argument. But I wave this advantage; let the words run into your mould, and the tranſlation take your form. They are equally deciſive of the point in debate.—They aſſign the *reaſon*, why death came upon all men; *infants* themſelves not excepted: *For that*, or *inaſmuch as*, all have ſinned. How? Not in their own perſon; this was utterly impoſſible; but in that firſt grand tranſgreſſion of their federal head; which, as it could not be actually committed by them, muſt, according to the tenor of the apoſtle's arguing, be imputed to them.

Ther. Pray, what do you mean by that ſtiff, and to me unintelligible phraſe, *federal head*?

Aſp. I mean what *Milton* celebrates, when he repreſents the almighty FATHER thus addreſſing his eternal SON.

——Be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's ſon.
As in him periſh all men, ſo in thee,
As from a ſecond root, ſhall be reſtor'd
As many as are reſtor'd, without thee none †.

I mean what the apoſtle teaches, when he calls *CHRIST the ſecond man* ‡, and *the laſt Adam* ‖.——The ſecond! the laſt! How? Not in a numerical ſenſe; not in order of time; but in this reſpect,—That, as *Adam* was a public perſon, and acted in the ſtead of all mankind; ſo *CHRIST* was a public perſon, and acted in behalf of all his people.——That, as *Adam* was the *firſt* general repreſentative of this kind, *CHRIST* was the *ſecond* and the *laſt*; there never was, and there never will be, any other:—That what they ſeverally did, in this capacity, was not intended to *terminate* in themſelves, but to *affect* as many as they reſpectively repreſented.——This is St *Paul*'s meaning, and this is the foundation of the doctrine of imputation.

Ther. If you build it on no other foundation, than *your own* particular ſenſe of the apoſtle's words, perhaps your ground may prove ſandy, and treacherous to its truſt.

Aſp. I build it upon mine, and I deduce it from yours, *Theron*.——But I am far from reſting the whole weight of the cauſe upon a *ſingle* text. It is eſtabliſhed, again and again, in this ſame chapter.——Neither do I wonder at the prejudices which you and others may entertain againſt the doctrine. It lies quite out of the road of reaſon's reſearches: it is among *the wonderful things of GOD's law*. This the inſpired penman foreſaw, and modelled his diſcourſe accordingly. Like ſome ſkilful engineer, who, though he makes the whole compaſs of his fortification ſtrong, yet beſtows *peculiar* and *additional* ſtrength on thoſe parts, which he apprehends will be expoſed to the fierceſt attack: ſo the wiſe, the divinely-wiſe apoſtle, has inculcated, and re-inculcated, this momentous point; has enforced it with all the aſſiduity of zeal, and confirmed it by all

* Judg. ix. 36. † Zech. xiii. 7.

‡ STAYNOE *upon ſalvation by JESUS CHRIST alone*, vol. I. p. 334.—Where the reader may find ſeveral weighty conſiderations, clearly propoſed and ſtrongly urged, for the explanation and eſtabliſhment of this capital doctrine.

* Εφ' ω παντες ημαρτον. Rom. v. 12. Not to mention the famous diſtinction of *Epictetus*, τα εφ' ημιν, nor the well-known adagy of *Heſiod*, μιλπει δ' επι πασιν αριστον. See chap. iv. 18. v. 2. of this very epiſtle; where the prepoſition επι is uſed in *Aſpaſio*'s ſenſe.

† Book III. 285. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 47. ‖ 1 Cor. xv. 45.

the

the energy of expreſſion.——*If through the offence of one many be dead—The judgment was by one to condemnation—By one man's offence death reigned by one—By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation* *.——That there may remain no poſſibility of miſtaking his meaning, or of eluding his argument, he adds, *By* ONE *man's diſobedience,* MANY *were made ſinners* †.

Ther. *Sin*, I am told by a celebrated expoſitor, ſometimes ſignifies *puniſhment*. He farther informs me, that we may be ſaid to ſin in *Adam*, not by the imputation of his diſobedience to us, but by becoming obnoxious to thoſe ſufferings which were due to his ſin.

Aſp. Then the apoſtle's reaſoning will ſtand in this form: *Death came upon all men, for that all have ſinned*; that is, Death came upon all men, becauſe all have been puniſhed; or, an obnoxiouſneſs to puniſhment came upon men, becauſe all are become obnoxious to puniſhment. A *goodly* ſtrain of argumentation for an inſpired writer to uſe!—But ſurely *Gamaliel*'s pupil would diſclaim, much more would CHRIST's ambaſſador ſcorn, ſuch weak and unmeaning chicanery. He mentions ſin and its puniſhment; but never hints, that they are intended to ſignify *one* and the *ſame* thing. He all along maintains a diſtinction between them; repreſents the former as the cauſe of the latter. *Judgment, condemnation, death*, are owing to *ſin, offence, diſobedience*. It is by the imputation of theſe, that we become obnoxious to thoſe.

This account is clear, is natural, and wants no ſtrained criticiſms to ſupport it. This account demonſtrates the equity of that providential government, which executes the ſentence of death, even on thoſe deſcendents of *Adam*, who have not *ſinned* in their own perſons. It alſo illuſtrates the procedure of that ſovereign grace, which treats as righteous, and entitles to life, even thoſe believers in JESUS, who have not *obeyed* in their own perſons.——What ſays our church? You have a great veneration for the *church of England*, *Theron*.

Ther. I have. But I fear, my *Aſpaſio* has neither ſo honourable an opinion of her worthip, nor ſo ſteady an adherence to her conſtitution: otherwiſe he would not ſo highly extol thoſe ambitious and canting hypocrites the *Puritans*; who were the moſt inveterate enemies of our excellent eſtabliſhment, and would have rejoiced in its utter ſubverſion.

Aſp. As to the Puritans, you will do me the juſtice to acknowledge, that I ſpeak only of their *evangelical* tenets, abſtracted from all political principles.——As to myſelf, your fears are friendly, but I truſt they are *groundleſs*. I would only aſk, Who are to be deemed the moſt affectionate and faithful ſons of their ſacred mother?—Thoſe, I preſume, who moſt *cordially* embrace her doctrines, and moſt *dutifully* ſubmit to her precepts. By this touchſtone let my fidelity be tried. And for an immediate trial, be pleaſed to repeat her ninth article.

Ther. I cannot ſay, that I remember the particular words of any, though I have often read, and very much approve them all.

Aſp. I wiſh, you would commit to your memory, four or five of the moſt diſtinguiſhed ‡. They are a valuable treaſure, and contain the quinteſſence of the goſpel.

Ther. Theſe are the words of the ninth article. "Original ſin is the fault and corruption of every man, that naturally is ingendered of the offſpring of *Adam*." It is the *fault*, ſays the pious Biſhop *Beveridge*, and therefore we are guilty of it; it is the *corruption* alſo, and therefore we are defiled with it.—Our homilies have recourſe to no ſuch palliatives, and qualifying interpretations, as my *Theron*'s expoſitor uſes. One of them affirms point-blank, that "in *Adam* all men ſinned univerſally." This ſeems to be a paraphraſe on the text, whoſe tranſlation you lately controverted.——In what ſenſe our great poetical divine underſtood the ſacred writer, is apparent from the following words; which are ſuppoſed to have been ſpoken by JEHOVAH himſelf:

——*Adam's crime*
Makes guilty all his ſons *.

And from another paſſage, where our rebellious progenitor, bewailing his aggravated miſery, and the extenſive malignity of his ſin, declares,

——*In me all*
Poſterity ſtands curs'd †.

For my own part, I muſt confeſs, that, if the tranſmiſſion of original depravity be granted, I know not how the imputation of *Adam's* deſtructive apoſtaſy can be denied. If we had no concern in the one, how could we be juſtly puniſhed with the other? I ſay *puniſhed*. For, to loſe the primitive integrity of our nature, and inherit a depraved diſpoſition, is at once a moſt deplorable calamity, and a moſt terrible puniſhment.—Corruption tranſmitted, and guilt imputed, ſeem to be doctrines *indiſſolubly* connected. To allow the former, and reject the latter, is, in my apprehenſion, to acknowledge the effect without admitting the cauſe.

Ther. To make us parties in a covenant, which we did not agree to, can this be *equitable*? To ruin us for a crime, which we never committed, can this be *merciful*? Surely, this is a flagrant injuſtice, never to be aſcribed to the all-gracious GOD. A diabolical barbarity, add ſome, never to be mentioned without the utmoſt deteſtation.

Aſp. I ſee no cauſe for ſuch a tragical outcry of barbarity, nor indeed for any complaint of injuſtice. Not to inſiſt upon the ſovereignty of an all-creating GOD, and his unqueſtionable right to *do what he will with his own*, I would only aſk,—Did he not condeſcend to tranſact with man, not on the foot of abſolute uncontrollable authority, but in the honourable and delightful way of a *covenant*?—Were not the terms of this covenant perfectly eaſy, and wonderfully gracious? *Wonderfully gracious*: for they propoſed a ſtate of inconceivable and everlaſting felicity ‖ to creatures, who were entitled to *no* happineſs; had not the leaſt claim to *any* good; no, not ſo much as to the privilege of exiſtence. *Perfectly eaſy*: for what was the condition on man's part? Not any rigorous act of duty, nor ſevere courſe of ſelf-denial, but the free enjoyment of *millions* of bleſſings and pleaſures, with only the prohibition of *one* pernicious indulgence. Here then is made, on one hand, a promiſe of the moſt *glorious* reward that GOD himſelf could give: and nothing required, on the other, but the *ſmalleſt* expreſſion of allegiance that man himſelf could wiſh. And is this juſtice? is this barbarity?

Ther. All this was equitable enough with regard to *Adam*: but why ſhould we be condemned for *his* violation of the covenant? Or how was ſuch a conſtitution of things gracious, with reſpect to *us*?

Aſp. "Why condemned?" Becauſe we ſhould have been partakers of the benefit and the glory, if he had perſevered in his duty. To this, I preſume, none would object. And if they *would not* to the one, they *ought not* to the other.

You aſk farther, "How was ſuch a conſtitution "of things gracious with reſpect to us?"——I anſwer, Becauſe it was the *moſt likely* means to ſecure the happineſs of us and all mankind. Was not *Adam*, of all perſons, by far the beſt qualified to act as a general head?

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* Rom. v. 15, 16, 17, 18. † Rom. v. 19.

‡ Eſpecially, articles IX. X. XI. XII. XIII.

* MILTON, book III. 290. † Book X. 817.

‡ Math. xx. 15. ‖ Luke x. 28.

head? He had a perfection of knowledge to discern his true interest, a perfection of holiness to capacitate him for obedience, and a perfection of happiness disposing him to perseverance. As none could have more eminent qualifications, none could have *so many* obligations. His own welfare, both bodily and spiritual, was at stake; the eternal interests of his rising family, and of his remotest posterity, were depending; the lives, the souls, the *everlasting all* of the whole human race, were embarked on the single bottom of his fidelity. Therefore the felicity of every individual that should spring from his loins, was a fresh motive to vigilance, an additional engagement to duty *.—As *his* love to his offspring was more refined, more exalted, more godlike than ours, all these considerations and inducements must operate upon him, in their fullest scope, and with the strongest energy. What an entrenchment was here to keep out disobedience, and ward off ruin! An intrenchment *deep* as hell, *high* as heaven, *wide* as the whole extent of the human species.

Here then I may venture to throw the gauntlet, and challenge the whole world. Let the most penetrating mind devise a scheme, so wisely and graciously calculated to *ascertain* the success of a *probationary* state. If this be impracticable, then must every mouth be stopped: no tongue can have the least reason to complain: I, for my part, shall think myself obliged to admire the benignity of my CREATOR's conduct; and GOD may justly demand of all intelligent creatures, *What could have been done more* for the preservation and felicity of mankind, *that I have not done* †?

Especially, when to all this we add, that the same almighty BEING, who appointed *Adam* to be our representative in the first covenant, without asking our *actual consent*; appointed also CHRIST to be our representative in the second covenant, without staying for our *actual solicitation*. When we take *this* into the account, there remains not the least shadow of injustice; but goodness, transcendent goodness, shines forth with the brightest lustre.

Ther. Goodness, *Aspasio!* This is surprising indeed. Why, if *Adam's* transgression be laid to our charge, we are *damnable* creatures, the very moment we exist; and are liable to the torments of hell, even on account of his disobedience. To term this goodness, is the greatest of paradoxes! to affirm it of the DEITY, is little less than blasphemy!

Asp. Let us be calm, my dear friend, and consider the case impartially. If it is not a real truth, I shall be as willing to relinquish it, as yourself.

Is not death, eternal death, the wages of every sin? And if of every sin, then doubtless of *original*; which is the *fountain*, from whence all the streams of actual iniquity flow; or rather the *abyss*, from whence all the torrents pour.—That which could not be pardoned, but by the humiliation and agonies of GOD's adorable SON, may reasonably be supposed to deserve the most dreadful vengeance. And it is affirmed, by an authority which you will not dispute, that, "for original as well "as actual sin, the offering of CHRIST is a propitiation "and satisfaction ‡."

Does not St *Paul* deliver it as a maxim in divinity, That, *by the offence of one*, Adam he undoubtedly means, *judgment came upon all men to condemnation* ‖? The import of the words, together with the connection of the passage, lead us to understand this of a condemnation to *eternal misery*.——*The import of the words*; for they are doubled *, to make them peculiarly strong in their signification; and each word, within the compass of this very epistle, is used in that awful latitude of meaning †. *The connection of the passage*: because it stands opposed to that justification which is unto life. This, we are sure, includes the idea of an everlasting duration. And why should its tremendous counterpart be less extensive?

This sense is evidently *patronized*, and this doctrine most peremptorily *asserted*, by our established church. What says the book of *Homilies*, when treating of the miseries consequent upon the fall? "This so great and "miserable a plague, if it had only rested on *Adam*, who "first offended, it had been much easier, and might the "better have been borne. But it fell not only on him, "but also on his posterity and children for ever; so that "the whole brood of *Adam's* race should sustain the self-"same fall and punishment, which their forefather by "his offence most justly had deserved ‡."—Lest any should misapprehend the design of our reformers, and suppose the punishment to consist only of some bodily suffering, or the loss of immortality, it is added in the same alarming discourse: "Neither *Adam*, nor any of "his, had any right or interest at all in the kingdom of "heaven; but were become plain reprobates and cast-"aways, being perpetually damned to the everlasting "pains of hell."

Lest you should imagine, this might be written under a sally of hasty zeal, or that it is to be reckoned among the doting opinions of a credulous antiquity; let me remind my friend, that it is ingrafted into the *articles*; those articles, which were approved by the archbishops and bishops of both provinces; were ratified by the general consent of the clergy; and are, to this day, the *national standard* of our belief. The ninth article, beginning with a description of our depraved nature, subjoins an account of its proper desert: "In "every person born into the world, it deserveth GOD's "wrath and damnation ‖."

Ther. How *miserable* then is man!

Asp. In *himself* he is miserable beyond expression. But a conviction of this misery is the beginning of all happiness. *The valley of* Achor *is a door of hope* §.

Ther. Explain yourself, *Aspasio*. You seem to deal very much in the incomprehensibles.

Asp. Such a conviction would demonstrate the *absolute insufficiency* of all human attainments, and all human endeavours, to procure life and salvation.—For, in case we could perform every jot and tittle of the divine law, offend in no instance, fall short in no degree, persevere to the very end; yet this would be no more than our present bounden duty. Not the least pittance of merit could arise from all this. Much less could this be sufficient to expiate original guilt, or remove the dreadful entail of the primitive all-destroying sin.

This, therefore, would most effectually preclude every false confidence, and *sweep away*, at one stroke, *every refuge of lies* ¶. It would lay us under an immediate, indispensable,

* Should any person imagine himself more capable of standing than *Adam*, who was endowed with all the perfections of an innocent, holy, godlike nature; I think, by this very imagination, he begins to fall; *fall* into pride.—Should any person suppose, from a view to his own particular salvation, he would continue faithful; when *Adam* was not engaged to fidelity, from a regard to his own and the final happiness of all his posterity; he seems to be just as wise as the mariner, who persuades himself, that, though a *thousand* anchors could not secure the ship in a storm, yet *one* might have done it effectually.

† Is. v. 4. ‡ Article XXXI. ‖ Rom. v. 18.

* Κριμα εις κατακριμα. † Rom. ii. 3. iii. 8. viii. 1.

‡ Homily on the nativity of CHRIST.

‖ I am surprised to see a learned author attempting to *sheath* the *sting* of this awful denunciation; attempting to prove, that the words "do not signify GOD's eternal wrath, and the damnation "of hell."—I shall take no pains to confute what he is pleased to advance. I leave the question in the reader's own breast. Let him discover, if he can, a different meaning in the sentence. Unless he has a pretty shrewd knack at *sophistry*, I am persuaded, he will find it a difficult matter to give *any other* tolerable rush to the passage.—Surely it must be a reproach to our venerable mother, if she delivers her doctrine in language so *fallacious*, as must necessarily mislead the general of her sons; or in terms so *abstruse*, as even a good understanding cannot develope, without some proficiency in critical legerdemain.

§ Hos. ii. 16. *Achor* signifies *trouble*.

¶ Is. xxviii. 17.

dispensable, and happy necessity, of betaking ourselves to CHRIST.—I say *happy* necessity; because then we should know, by experience, what each part of our LORD's awful yet tender declaration meaneth: *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in ME is thy help* *.—We should then find, that as sin and misery have abounded through the first *Adam*, mercy and grace have *much more abounded* through the second. For, if we were ruined by a crime which we committed not, we are recovered by a righteousness which we performed not; a righteousness infinitely surpassing whatever we could have acquired; even though our nature had been transmitted to us, free from any depravity, and exempt from all guilt.

Ther. In your opinion then, and according to your scheme, *salve* and a *regimen* are better than a sound constitution.

Asp. No, *Theron*. My opinion is, that none can think himself aggrieved, or have any reason to complain, at that grand and beneficent regulation, which suffers the *glimmering* taper to be obscured or extinguished, but spreads abroad the *boundless* and *majestic* beams of day. And if any comparison be made between the most perfect human obedience, and the everlasting divine righteousness of CHRIST, it should be taken from the glimmering taper and the meridian sun.

Ther. I cannot persuade myself to admire such mysterious and unaccountable notions. They must puzzle some, will offend others; but cannot edify any.

Asp. This point, That *we all died in Adam*; were undone by his apostasy; cannot *puzzle* the simplest, if unprejudiced, mind.—Nor will it *offend* any but the proud philosopher, or the self-righteous moralist. And I assure you, I should not mention it, much less insist upon it, did it not subserve, and in a very singular manner, the purposes of *edification*. The doctrine of a REDEEMER obeying and dying in our stead, is the very hinge and centre of all evangelical revelations; is the very life and soul of all evangelical blessings. This doctrine is not a little illustrated, and comes greatly recommended, by the imputation of *Adam*'s sin.

Contraries, you know, cast light upon, and set off each other. Winter and its severe cold, make spring and its cheering warmth more sensibly perceived, and more highly pleasing. Such an influence has the present subject, with respect to the vicarious obedience of our MEDIATOR. The more clearly we see the *reality* of the first, the more thoroughly we shall discern the *expediency*, the *excellency*, the *glory* of the last. The more we are humbled under a conviction of the former, the more we shall covet, or the more we shall triumph in, the enjoyment of the latter.—The apostle draws a long parallel, or rather forms a strong contrast between them, in the fifth chapter to the *Romans*. He speaks copiously of *Adam*'s guilt, imputed to all mankind for condemnation and death, that he may speak the more acceptably, the more charmingly of CHRIST's righteousness, imputed to all believers for justification and life. In that *dark ground*, he well knew, this fairest loveliest flower of Christianity appears with *peculiar beauty*; indeed with all the beauty of consummate wisdom, and adorable benignity.

Ther. It really seems to me a thing *impossible*, that one man's righteousness should be made another's. Can one man live by the soul of another? or be learned by the learning of another?—Good *Aspasio*, never attempt to maintain such palpable absurdities. They will expose Christianity to the scorn of infidels.

Asp. If infidels scoff at this comfortable truth, their scoffing will be, like all their other cavils, not the *voice* of reason, but the *clamour* of prejudice.

My friend's objection insinuates, what we never assert, that the *essence* of this righteousness is *transfused* into believers: which would doubtless be in fact impossible, as it is in theory absurd.—But this we disavow, as strenuously as you can oppose. The REDEEMER's righteousness is made ours, not by *infusion*, but by *imputation*. The very terms we use, may acquit us from such a ridiculous charge; as imputation signifies "a placing to "the account of one, what was done by another." Accordingly we believe, that the essence of this righteousness abides in CHRIST, but is placed to our account; that CHRIST, and CHRIST alone, actually performed it; that CHRIST, and CHRIST alone, personally possesses it; but that performing it in our stead, and possessing it as our covenant-head, GOD imputes it to us,—GOD accepts us for it,—accepts us *as much, as if* we had, on our own behalf and in our own persons, severally fulfilled it.

Though one man cannot live, be actuated with a principle of life, *by the soul* of another; yet you must allow, that one man, nay, that many men may live, be continued in the possession of life, *for the righteousness* of another. Or else you must do, what I am sure you abhor;—you must charge with absurdity and impossibility, even the declaration of the DEITY; *If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then will I spare all the place* FOR THEIR SAKES *.

Ther. Not all your refinements can reconcile me to this uncouth notion.——The practice is *unexampled*, and absolutely inconsistent with the rules of *distributive* justice.

Asp. Ah! my *Theron*, if we seek an example of GOD's unbounded goodness amongst the puny proceedings of men, we shall be led into the most egregious misapprehensions. To measure one of the sparks on your ring, and fancy we have taken the dimension of the *Alps* or the *Andes*, would be, in comparison of this error, a small mistake. Since between a brilliant speck, and a range of mountains, there is *some* proportion; but between human beneficence, and this heavenly bounty, there cannot possibly be *any*.——However, the all-condescending CREATOR has been pleased, so to dispense his infinitely rich grace, that we may find, though nothing parallel, nothing correspondent, yet some *faint* shadow of its *manner*, among the affairs of mankind; something that may perhaps give us such an idea of the stupendous subject, as a *glow-worm* would give of the sun's splendor, in case a person had never beheld that magnificent luminary.—This remark I must entreat you to recollect, whenever I attempt to *elucidate* the mysteries of the gospel, by the occurrences of common life.

When your worthy minister was disabled, by a rheumatic disorder, from attending on the business of his function, several of the neighbouring clergy gave him their assistance. Was he not, by this *vicarious* performance of his office, *entitled* to all the profits of his living?—It seems therefore not so unexampled a thing, for one person to act in another's stead. And when a service is thus discharged by the *proxy*, the benefit may, according to the received maxims of mankind, accrue to the *principal*.——Did not *Jehu*'s descendents, even to the fourth generation †, reap the advantage of their great grandfather's zeal? Does not the *Duke of* * * * * enjoy the honours and rewards, won by the sword of a victorious ancestor?—And may not the whole world of believers, with equal, with *far greater* justice, receive life and salvation, on account of their all-deserving SAVIOUR? Especially since he and they are one mystical body; represented as such in scripture, and considered as such by GOD.

No, say you: this is contrary to the rules of distributive justice. What is your idea of a *SURETY*? How was the affair stated, and how were matters negotiated, with relation to your generous acquaintance *Philander*? He, you know, was bound for an unfortunate brother, who lately stepped aside.

* Hos. xiii. 9.

* Gen. xviii. 26. † 2 Kings x. 30.

Ther.

Ther. The debt, by his brother's abſconding, devolved upon *Philander*.

Aſp. He was reſponſible for all, and obliged to pay the whole ſum.

Aſp. Was not his payment *as ſatisfactory* to the creditor, as if it had been paid in the debtor's own perſon, by the debtor's own hand?

Ther. Certainly.

Aſp. Was not the debtor, by this vicarious payment, cleared from all fear of proſecution, and *acquitted* from any future demand on this ſcore?

Ther. He was.

Aſp. Apply this inſtance to the redemption of ſinners by JESUS CHRIST: who is, in the ſacred writings, expreſsly ſtyled a SURETY *.——If *Philander*'s act was deemed, in the eſtimation of law, the act of his brother; if the deed of the former was imputed, in point of advantage, entirely to the latter; why ſhould not the ſame effects take place, with regard to the divine bondſman, and poor inſolvent ſinners? Why ſhould *that* be exploded in our ſyſtems of divinity, which is univerſally admitted in our courts of juſtice?

Ther. Obedience and righteouſneſs are, in the nature of the things themſelves, *perſonal* qualities, and *only* ſo. Every man is that only (and can be nothing elſe) which he is in himſelf.

Aſp. Righteouſneſs, as *dwelling in* us, is undoubtedly a perſonal quality; and obedience, as *performed by* us, comes under the ſame denomination. But does this ſuperſede the neceſſity, or deſtroy the exiſtence of imputed righteouſneſs?—Your firſt propoſition is ambiguous. Let it ſpeak diſtinctly; add *inherent* to your righteouſneſs; and the ſenſe becomes determinate, but the argument falls to the ground.

"Every man is that only (and can be nothing elſe) "which he is in himſelf."——If I had never ſeen the Bible, I ſhould have yielded my ready aſſent to this propoſition. But, when I open the Old Teſtament, and find it written by the prophet, *In the LORD ſhall all the houſe of Iſrael be juſtified* †; when I turn to the New Teſtament, and hear the apoſtle ſaying, *Ye are complete in HIM, who is the head of all principalities and powers* ‡; I cannot concur with *Theron*, without contradicting revelation.——*Iſrael*, or the true believer, is ſaid to be juſtified; and the foundation of this bleſſing is declared to be, not in himſelf, but in the LORD. The *Coloſſians* are ſaid to be complete; which, we are very certain, they were not in themſelves; and are expreſsly aſſured, they were ſo in CHRIST.——Hence it appears quite contrary to my friend's aſſertion, that ſinners both *have* and *are* that in CHRIST, which they neither have nor are in themſelves. They have, by imputation, *a righteouſneſs* in CHRIST; they are, by this imputed righteouſneſs, *complete* before GOD.

I believe, your miſtake proceeds from neglecting to diſtinguiſh between INHERENT and IMPUTED.—We never ſuppoſe, that a profane perſon is devout, or an intemperate perſon ſober. This is *inherent* righteouſneſs.—But we maintain, that the profane and intemperate, being convinced of their iniquity, and betaking themſelves to the all-ſufficient SAVIOUR for redemption, are intereſted in the merit both of his life and of his death. This is *imputed* righteouſneſs.——We farther affirm, that though really abominable in themſelves, they are fully accepted by GOD, for his beloved SON's ſake. This is *juſtification* through imputed righteouſneſs.

However ſtrange this may ſeem, it is no precarious or unwarrantable opinion, but the clear and poſitive declaration of ſcripture. *He juſtifieth*, he abſolves from guilt, he treats as righteous—*Whom*? Upright, obedient, ſinleſs creatures? This were nothing extraordinary—No; but *he juſtifieth the ungodly* *, *that believe* in the LORD JESUS; imputing as the ground of this juſtification, *their* treſpaſſes to him, and *his* righteouſneſs to them.

Ther. I ſee no occaſion for ſuch *nice* diſtinctions, and *metaphyſical* ſubtilties, in plain popular divinity. Hard terms and abſtruſe notions may perplex the head, but ſeldom improve the heart.

Aſp. Why then do you oblige us to make uſe of them? If ſome people twiſt and entangle the reins, it behoves others to *clear* them of the embarraſſment, and *replace* them in their due order.——Many writers, either from an artful deſign, or through a ſtrange inadvertence, have jumbled and confounded theſe two very different ideas. Hence they have ſtarted objections to our doctrine, which, the moment you introduce this obvious diſtinction, vaniſh into air. They fall into a miſtake of their own, and then charge the abſurdity upon others.

I am no more fond of hard terms, and abſtruſe notions, than my *Theron*. Neither can I think the inſtance before us ſo abſtruſe a notion. I am very certain, you are capable of comprehending much higher and nicer refinements. Therefore I muſt once again entreat you to remember the very material difference between *inherent* and *imputed* righteouſneſs. The former is the eſſence of ſanctification; the latter is the ground of juſtification. By *this*, we are reſtored to the favour of GOD; by *that*, we are made meet for his heavenly kingdom.——Let this diſtinction, which is eaſy, which is ſcriptural, which is important, take place; and we may for the future diſmiſs what you call the metaphyſical ſubtilties. Our diſagreement will ceaſe, and our opinions tally.

Ther. I queſtion that, *Aſpaſio*. There are other difficulties to be got over, before I can digeſt ſo crude an opinion.——If we are juſtified by the righteouſneſs of CHRIST, then the righteouſneſs which juſtifies mankind is *already* wrought out.

Aſp. And this you take to be a moſt enormous falſehood. Whereas, I look upon it as a moſt delightful truth.—The righteouſneſs which juſtifies ſinful man, was *ſet on foot*, when GOD ſent forth his SON from the habitation of his holineſs and glory, to be born of a woman, and made ſubject to the law.——It was *carried on*, through the whole courſe of our SAVIOUR's life; in which he always did ſuch things, as were pleaſing to his heavenly *FATHER*.——It was *completed* at that ever-memorable, that grand period of time, when the bleſſed EMMANUEL bowed his dying head; and cried, with a ſtrong triumphant voice, IT IS FINISHED.

If the juſtifying righteouſneſs was to be wrought by *ourſelves*, we could never be truly and fully juſtified till death; till our warfare is accompliſhed, and our *laſt* act of obedience exerted.——But how uncomfortable is ſuch a notion! How miſerable would it render our lives! And how directly does it run counter to the determination of the apoſtle, *Ye* ARE *juſtified* ‡!

Ther. Soothed then with this pleaſing ſurmiſe, may not the *libertine* ſay to his ſoul?—"Soul, take thine eaſe "in the moſt idolent ſecurity! All my carnal appetites, "indulge yourſelves without reſtraint. Conſcience, be "under no ſolicitude to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and "godlily. For the work *is done; all done* to my hands. "I am like ſome fortunate heir, whoſe parents have "been ſucceſsfully induſtrious; and have left nothing "to exerciſe the diligence of their ſurviving ſon, but only to poſſeſs the inheritance, and live on labours not "his own."

Aſp. The libertine, who only ſpeculates or diſputes, may indeed abuſe the *doctrine* of grace. But the believer, who feels the *power* of grace, will improve it to better purpoſes. Where the former only *fluctuates* in the underſtanding, ſuch deteſtable conſequences may enſue.

* Heb. vi. 22.

† Iſ. xlv. 25.

‡ Col. ii. 10.

* Rom. iv. 5.

† 1 Cor. vi. 11.

cuſue. Where the latter *operates* on the heart, it will always produce very different effects. Such a perſon, from ſuch a faith, will be no more inclined to inactivity or licentiouſneſs, than our buſy humming companions are inclined, by this bright ſunſhine and all thoſe expanded bloſſoms, to *ſleep away* their hours in the hive. And you may as ſoon expect to ſee theſe colonies of the ſpring, ſwarming in *December*, clinging to an icicle, or diſperſing themſelves to gather honey on the ſnow; as to ſee a truly-gracious man, who *is dead to ſin, living any longer therein* *. Whoever, therefore, ſo ſhamefully *perverts* ſo ſweet and glorious a doctrine, is a witneſs againſt himſelf, that he has neither lot nor portion in the ineſtimable privilege. If an animal ſuck poiſon from the moſt wholeſome herbs, we are ſure, from that infallible indication, it is the vile ſpider, or ſome envenomed inſect, not the valuable and induſtrious bee.

Ther. Truly, *Aſpaſio*, I know not how to call that doctrine ſweet, much leſs can I recommend it as wholeſome, which renders repentance, perſonal reformation, and inherent rectitude, *needleſs*. And if your tenet is once received, all theſe duties may fairly be diſmiſſed. So that if the thing was poſſible, yet it would be *pernicious*.

Aſp. The prophet was of another mind: *They ſhall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn* †. Sinners ſhall look, by faith, to their crucified LORD; ſhall ſee him faſtened with nails to the curſed tree; ſee him ſtabbed to the heart by the bloody ſpear. And *remembering*, that this was the puniſhment due to their provocations; *believing*, that, by this puniſhment, they are freed from all penal ſufferings, and entitled to all ſpiritual bleſſings; they ſhall not be tempted to tranſgreſs, but incited to mourn; not play the profligate, but act the penitent.—The apoſtle exactly agrees with the prophet; and both are diametrically oppoſite to my friend; *The goodneſs*, the tranſcendent and amazing goodneſs of GOD our SAVIOUR, inſtead of diverting from, *leadeth to repentance* ‡.

Far from obſtructing, it powerfully promotes, *perſonal reformation*. For thus ſaith that all-wiſe BEING, who intimately knows our frame, and diſcerns what is moſt effectual to work upon our minds; *The grace of GOD, which bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared; teaching us, that, denying all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godlily in this preſent evil world* ‖. Grace, you obſerve, even that gloriouſly free grace, which bringeth ſalvation to unworthy creatures, is a diſſuaſive of all vice, and an encouragement to every virtue.

As to *inherent rectitude*, how can that be rendered needleſs by imputed righteouſneſs? Is health rendered inſignificant, by the abundance of our riches? Does eaſe become ſuperfluous, through the beauty of our apparel?—Holineſs is the *health* of our ſouls, and the *eaſe* of our minds. Whereas, ungovernable paſſions create keener anguiſh, than a brood of vipers gnawing our boſoms. Inordinate deſires are a more intolerable nuiſance, than ſwarms of locuſts infeſting our abodes. To regulate *theſe*, and to reſtrain *theſe*, can never be needleſs, till comfort and ſorrow change their properties; till the diabolical nature becomes equally deſirable with the divine.

Ther. The believer, indeed, out of mere generoſity, *may*, if he pleaſe, add works of righteouſneſs of his own. But his main intereſt is ſecure without them.

Aſp. Rather, *Theron*, he *muſt* out of duty, he *will* out of gratitude, and from the new diſpoſition of his nature he *cannot but*, add to his faith works of righteouſneſs.

How runs the heavenly *edict*, in this caſe made and provided? *I will, that they who have believed in GOD, be careful to maintain good works* §.——How beats the *pulſe* of a believing ſoul? You may feel it, in that truly generous demand, made by the *Pſalmiſt*: *What ſhall I render unto the LORD for all the benefits that he hath done unto me?* *? A grateful heart wants not the goad, but is a ſpur to itſelf.——How leans the *bias* of his nature? He is new-born; created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works †; his delight is in the law of the LORD ‡. And whatever is our ſupreme delight, we are ſure to proſecute, and proſecute with ardour. *We cannot but ſpeak the things which we have ſeen and heard* ‖, was the profeſſion of the apoſtles; and, if applied to practical godlineſs, is the experience of the *Chriſtian*.

Nor can his main intereſt be ſecure without a holy obedience. Becauſe the Judge of the world, at the day of eternal retribution, will declare to the workers of iniquity; *I never knew you; depart from me* §: Becauſe holineſs, though not the cauſe of our admittance to the beatific viſion, is ſo neceſſary a qualification, that *without it no man ſhall ſee the LORD* ¶. Without it, there is no acceſs to heaven, neither could there be any enjoyment in heaven.

Ther. Pray, recollect yourſelf, *Aſpaſio*. According to the tenor of your own illuſtration, the neceſſity of *perſonal* obedience is evidently vacated. For how can the law demand a debt of the principal, which has been fully diſcharged by the ſurety?

Aſp. The debt of penal ſuffering, and the debt of perfect obedience, are fully diſcharged by our divine SURETY: ſo that we are no longer under a neceſſity of obeying, in order to obtain an exemption from puniſhment, or to lay the foundation for our final acceptance. We are nevertheleſs engaged, by many other obligations, to walk in all dutiful and conſcientious regard to the law. Becauſe—this is the moſt authentic proof of our love to the gracious REDEEMER; *If ye love me, keep my commandments* ‡:—This is a comfortable evidence of our union with that exalted head; *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit* †:—This is alſo the moſt effectual method of adorning our profeſſion, of magnifying its Author, and of winning our neighbours to embrace the goſpel; *Let your light*, the light of your exemplary converſation, not only appear, but *ſhine before men; that they, ſeeing your good works*, may think honourably of your religion ††; *may glorify your FATHER which is in heaven*; and ſay, with thoſe proſelytes mentioned by the prophet, *We will go with you.*

Do we then make void the law, through the imputed righteouſneſs of our LORD? No, verily: but—if gratitude to our dying SAVIOUR have any conſtraining influence; if a concern for our own comfort have any perſuaſive energy; if there be any thing inviting, any thing deſirable in the proſpect of honouring GOD, and edifying man,—*we eſtabliſh the law*. By all theſe generous, manly, endearing motives, we enforce its precepts, and provide for its obſervance.

* Rom. vi. 2. † Zech. xi. 10.

‡ Rom. ii. 4. ‖ Tit. ii. 11, 12.

§ *Tit.* iii. 8. The original word προϊσταϑαι has a beauty and an energy, which, I believe, it is impoſſible for our language to preſerve, by any literal tranſlation. It implies, that a believer ſhould not only be exerciſed in, but eminent for, all good works; ſhould *ſhew* others the way, and *outſtrip* them in the honourable race; be both a *pattern*, and a *patron* of univerſal godlineſs.

* Pſal. cxvi. 12. † Eph. ii. 10. ‡ Pſal. i. 2.

‖ *Cannot but*—This is an expreſſion uſed by the apoſtles, *Acts* iv. 20. It deſcribes the genuine and habitual propenſity of their new nature. As the compaſſionate bowels cannot but yearn at ſpectacles of miſery; as the benevolent heart cannot but dilate with pleaſure, at the ſight of a brother's happineſs; ſo the new creature in CHRIST cannot but *deſire* to glorify, and *delight* to obey the ever-bleſſed GOD.

§ Matt. vii. 23. ¶ Heb. xii. 14.

‡ John xiv. 15. † John xv. 5.

†† *Matth.* v. 16. Therefore, by our LORD in this place, and by St *Paul* in his Epiſtle to *Titus*, good works are called καλα εργα, *graceful, beauteous, ornamental.*

Ther.

Ther. Should we admit this doctrine, mankind could no longer be conſidered as in themſelves, and ſolely in themſelves *accountable* creatures. Nor would the future judgment be an *equitable* diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments; but only GOD's awful and uncontrollable execution of his own arbitrary and irreverſible decrees.

Aſp. I have never been accuſtomed to conſider mankind, under the goſpel-diſpenſation, as accountable *ſolely* in themſelves: becauſe, in this comfortable and benign ſcheme, a MEDIATOR intervenes; undertakes to anſwer for his people; and bears the *chaſtiſement of their peace*. Were we accountable ſolely in ourſelves, CHRIST, our great HIGH PRIEST, would be ſet aſide; and his ſacrifice, as a propitiation for ſin, be of none effect.

Why may not the future judgment be an equitable diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments? If thoſe who reject the atonement of the dying JESUS, and refuſe to depend on his conſummate righteouſneſs, are left to ſtand or fall according to the iſſue of their own obedience; if believers, on the other hand, are accepted through their moſt meritorious REDEEMER; but rewarded with higher or inferior degrees of felicity, in proportion to the ſanctity of their nature, and uſefulneſs of their lives:—I ſee nothing arbitrary in this procedure; but an admirable mixture of juſt ſeverity, and free goodneſs;—on thoſe who reject the atonement, *juſt ſeverity*;—to thoſe who rely on their SAVIOUR, *free goodneſs*.

Ther. The obedience of CHRIST was *wholly* due for himſelf; and therefore could not merit for another.

Aſp. A bold aſſertion this! Whoever can make it good, would infallibly overthrow my opinion; and, at the ſame time, deſtroy all my hopes. But ſurely, *Theron*, it is not your real ſentiment.

Could it then be matter of duty in the eternal SON, to be born of a woman; and in the LORD of lords, to become the ſervant of all? Could it be matter of duty in the KING of glory, to embrace the infamy of the croſs; and in the PRINCE of life, to pour out his ſoul unto death?—If all this was matter of duty, the ever-bleſſed JESUS (how ſhall I ſpeak it? who can believe it?) was no better than an unprofitable ſervant. For ſuch is the acknowledged character of every one who does no more than is his duty to do *.

Ther. Not ſo faſt, not quite ſo vehement, my friend. Remember what the ſcripture affirms. CHRIST is ſaid to receive a *commandment*, and be *ſubject* to the law: both which expreſſions evidently imply duty.

Aſp. In order to accompliſh our redemption, the SON of GOD ſubmitted himſelf to the authority of the law, and became obedient to its precepts. But this was his own *ſpontaneous* act; the matter of his *free* choice; to which he lay under no manner of obligation, till he engaged to be our Surety.

Being in the form of GOD, he was Lord of the law; and no more ſubject to its commands, than obnoxious to its curſe. Nevertheleſs *he took upon him the form of a ſervant*; and *was made under the law*. Wherefore? *That he might* obtain everlaſting life and glory for himſelf? No; but that he might *redeem thoſe who were under the law* †. From which it appears, that both his engagement and his obedience were, not for himſelf, but for his people. Therefore the prophet cries out, with holy exultation, *To us a Child is born; to us a Son is given* ‡! His incarnate ſtate and human nature, together with all that he did and ſuffered in both, were for us; *thoſe* aſſumed on our account, *theſe* referred to our advantage.

Let us conſider this, and be amazed, and be charmed. The great univerſal LORD vouchſafes to pay univerſal obedience! What *condeſcenſion* was here!—He vouchſafes to pay it, for us men, and for our redemption! What *goodneſs* was this!

Ther. Before we indulge the devotional ſtrain, we ſhould take care that our devotion is founded on *rational* principles; otherwiſe it may prove, like the flaſh of a ſky-rocket, tranſient and momentary.

Aſp. For this, I think, there is a ſolid foundation in reaſon, as well as ſcripture. As ſoon as the man CHRIST JESUS was united to the ſecond perſon of the TRINITY, he muſt have, by virtue of that union, an unqueſtionable right to everlaſting life and glory. Therefore he could be under no neceſſity of obeying, in order to procure either honour or happineſs for *himſelf*. But all that he performed in conformity to the preceptive part of the law, he performed under the character of a *public perſon*; in the place, and for the benefit of his ſpiritual ſeed; that they might be intereſted in it, and juſtified by it.

Ther. Be it ſo: the believer is intereſted in CHRIST's righteouſneſs.——Pray, is he intereſted in all, or only in part?—If in *all*, then every believer is equally righteous, and equally to be rewarded. Which is contrary to an allowed maxim, That there will be different allotments of happineſs in the heavenly world.—If in *part* only, how will you aſcertain the degree? what proportion belongs to this perſon, and what to the other?—— Either way, your ſcheme is inextricably embarraſſed.

Aſp. The reply to my *Theron*'s inquiry is eaſy; and the embarraſſment he mentions, is but imaginary.—— Every true believer is intereſted in *all* CHRIST's righteouſneſs; in the *whole* merit of his ſpotleſs nature, of his perfect obedience, and expiatory death.

Leſs than the whole would be unavailable. Whereas the whole renders us completely juſtified.

You are a great admirer of anatomy, *Theron*, and muſt undoubtedly remember the very peculiar ſtructure of the *ear*. Other parts of the body are progreſſive in their growth. Their bulk is proportioned to the infantile, or manly age. But the organs of hearing, I have been informed, are *preciſely* of the *ſame* ſize, in the feeble infant, and the confirmed adult.——Juſtification likewiſe, being abſolutely neceſſary to a ſtate of acceptance with GOD, is, in every ſtage of the Chriſtian courſe, and even in the firſt dawn of ſincere faith, complete. With regard to the *exiſtence* of the privilege, there is no difference * in the babes, the young men, the fathers in CHRIST. The *perception*, the *aſſurance*, the comfortable *enjoyment* of the mercy, may increaſe; but the mercy itſelf is incapable of augmentation.

The various advances in ſanctification account for the *various degrees* of future glory; and not account for them only, but render them entirely reaſonable, and, according to our apprehenſion of things, unavoidable.—As to ſettling the *proportion*, we may ſafely leave that to the ſupreme ARBITRATOR. He, who *meteth out the heavens with a ſpan*, and *ſetteth a compaſs upon the face of the deep*, cannot be at a loſs to adjuſt this particular.

Ther. The organs of hearing, though not preciſely, are *very nearly*, of the ſame bulk, in the babe and the man. They acquire, from advancing years, ſcarce any thing more than an increaſe of ſolidity. So that I make no objection to your illuſtration, but to your doctrine.

* Luke xvii. 10.

† Gal. iv. 5.

‡ Iſ. ix. 6. *Eſt præterea emphaſis ſingularis in voce* nobis. *Significat id, quod omnes ſentiunt*, noſtro bono et commodo *natum eſſe hunc Puerum Imperatorem.* VITRING. in loc.

* To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks one of our moſt celebrated divines; as great an adept in ſacred literature, as ages have produced.——"All are juſtified *alike*: the *truth* of faith juſtifying, not "the *meaſure*. Juſtification therefore is the ſame in all that believe; though their belief be in different degrees. So, once in "the wilderneſs, all gathered not manna in the ſame meaſure; "yet, when all came to meaſure, they had all alike; none above "an omer, none under."

LIGHTFOOT, vol. II. p. 1052.

If CHRIST has done all, and we are entitled to his whole merits only by believing; to be saved, must be the *easiest* thing in the world. Whereas the Bible represents Christianity, as a *race* and a *warfare*, a state of conflict and a course of striving.—In good truth, *Aspasio*, you prophesy pleasing things. Divinity is not your profession; or else, I should number you among "the "smooth, emollient, downy doctors." For, according to the articles of your creed, there is no more difficulty in securing heaven, than in rising from our seat.

Asp. A *speculative* assent to all the principles of religion is, I acknowledge, a very easy matter. It *may*, it *must* exist, where-ever there is a tolerable capacity for reasoning, and a due attention to evidence.——This notional faith forced its way into the breast of *Simon* the sorcerer*; and extorted a confession from the dying lips of *Julian* † the apostate. Irresistible as the stroke of lightning, terrible also as its fiery glare, it flashes conviction into the very devils. Even those execrable spirits *believe and tremble* ‡.

But the faith, which, far from resting in speculation, exalts the desires, regulates the passions, and refines the whole conversation;—the faith which, according to the expressive language of scripture, *purifies the heart, overcomes the world, and sets the affections on things above*;—this truly noble and triumphant faith is no such easy acquisition. This is the gift of an infinite BENEFACTOR; the work of a divine AGENT: called, therefore, by way of super-eminent distinction, *faith of the operation of GOD* *; because GOD himself, by the effectual working of his mighty power, produces it in the human soul.

The exercise of this faith, I would not compare to an active gentleman, rising from his seat; but rather to a *shipwrecked* mariner, labouring to gain some place of safety.—He espies a large *rock*, which rears its head above the boisterous flood. To this he bears away, and to this he approaches; but whirling winds, and dashing waves, drive him back to an unhappy distance.—Exerting all his strength, he advances nearer still; and attempts to climb the desirable eminence. When a sweeping surge interposes, and drenches him again in the rolling deep.—By determined efforts, he recovers the space he had lost. Now he fastens on the cliff, and has almost escaped the danger. But there is such a numbness in his limbs, that he cannot maintain his hold; and such an impetuous swell in the ocean, that he is once more dislodged, and plunged afresh into the raging billows.—What can he do? His life, his precious life, is at stake. He must renew, still renew, and never intermit his endeavours.—Neither let him abandon himself to despair. The MASTER sees him, amidst all his fruitless toil. Let him cry earnestly, *LORD, save me, I perish!* and HE, who commandeth the winds and the waves, will be sure to put forth his beneficent hand, and rescue him from the devouring sea.

Such, my friend, so *painful*, so *assiduous* are the struggles of faith, before it can rest, in peaceful security, on the *Rock of Ages*, *CHRIST JESUS*. Of this you may, some time or other, be assured, not only from my lips, but from your own experience.

Ther. What may happen in some future period of time, is beyond my power to foresee. At present, I am apt to think, we must put a stop to the theological lecture. Don't you remember our engagement with *Altinous*? and you will own, that punctuality in performing our promises, is at least a *moral* virtue, if it be not a *Christian* grace.

* Acts viii. 13.

† It is related in ecclesiastical history, that when the Emperor *Julian* was setting out upon his *Parthian* expedition, he threatened to persecute the *Christians* with the utmost severity, as soon as he returned victorious. Upon this occasion, *Libanius* the rhetorician asked one of them with an insulting air; *What the carpenter's son was doing, while such a storm hung over his followers? The carpenter's son*, replied the Christian, *is making a coffin for your Emperor.*—The event proved the answer to be *prophetic*. For in an engagement with the enemy, that royal but wretched apostate was mortally wounded; and cried, with his expiring breath, *Vicisti, O Galilæe! I am vanquished, O Galilean! thy right hand hath the pre-eminence!*

‡ Jam. ii. 19.

* Col. ii. 12.

DIALOGUE VI.

ASPASIO's affairs called him to *London*. He staid in town a few days: but as soon as business was finished, he quitted the city, and hastened to his friend's *country-seat*.—Upon his arrival, he found some agreeable company, that came on purpose to spend the evening with the family. This incident prevented the immediate prosecution of their subject.——As the next morning proved misty, and unfit for walking abroad, *Theron* invited *Aspasio* to pass an hour in his *study*.

It was situate at the extremity of a large gallery: which, while it conducted the feet to a repository of learning, interposed between the ear, and all the disturbance of domestic affairs: so that you are accommodated with every thing that may *regale* a studious mind; and incommoded with nothing that may *interrupt* a sedate attention.—*Aspasio* readily consented to the proposal; but desired, first, to take a turn in this beautiful *oblong*, and divert himself with the decorations of the place.

Asp. A very short survey, *Theron*, is sufficient to discover the correctness of your judgment, and the true delicacy of your taste.—Here are no *impertinent* and *frivolous* exhibitions of romantic tales, or poetic stories. Here are no *indecent* pieces of imagery, that tend to corrupt a chaste, or inflame a wanton fancy.—On the contrary, I am presented with a collection of maps, accurately drawn by the most able hands; and with several remarkable transactions of antiquity, most eloquently told in the language of the pencil.—You have happily hit that grand point, which the gentleman of refinement, as well as the author of genius, should ever keep in view,—the union of the *beneficial* with the *delightful* *.

Ther. Indeed, my *Aspasio*, I have often been disappointed, sometimes even shocked, in the gardens, the porticoes, and the walks of some modern *virtuosi*. Their portraits and statues are little else, but an assemblage of elaborate trifles. *Ixion* stretched upon the wheel, or *Phaeton* precipitated from the chariot. *Apollo* stringing his lyre, *Jupiter* (I beg his supreme highness's pardon, for not giving him the precedence in my catalogue) bestriding his eagle, and balancing his bolts.—Pray, where is the advantage of being introduced to this *fabulous* tribe of gentry? What noble idea can they awaken, or what valuable impression leave upon the mind? The best we can say of such performances, is, that they are limning and sculpture expensively thrown away.

This celebrated trumpery one can bear with, however. But, when the painting and sculpture, instead of cultivating virtue, and improving our morals, are calculated to be the very *bane* of both,—will you call *this* an elegant entertainment? No: 'tis a nuisance; 'tis a pest.——In the *statues*, I grant, every dimple sinks, and every muscle swells, with the exactest propriety.—The countenance is animated with life, and the limbs are ready to start into motion.—The *picture*, I am sensible, is as highly finished as the effigy; the distributions of light and shade most arfully adjusted; the di-

* *Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci.* Hor.

minutions

minutions of the perſpective true to a nicety; nor can any thing exceed the eaſy flow of the robe, unleſs it be the graceful attitude, and almoſt-ſpeaking aſpect, of the principal figure.——But is this *maſterly* execution an equivalent for the moſt *malignant* effects; for ſullying the purity of my fancy, and poiſoning the powers of my imagination?

Is it an indication of the owner's *judicious* taſte, to prefer regularity of features in the hammered block, before orderly and harmonious affections in his own breaſt? Does it beſpeak a *refined* diſpoſition, or a *benevolent* temper, to be ſo extravagantly enamoured with the touches of a laſcivious pencil, as to expoſe them in the moſt frequented paſſages, and obtrude them on every unwary gueſt?—Surely, this can create no very advantageous opinion of a gentleman's *intellectual* diſcernment. Much leſs can it raiſe an amiable idea of his *moral* character *. On ſuch occaſions, I am ſtrongly tempted to ſuſpect, that real honour is a ſtranger, where common decency † is wanting.

As for the artiſt, one can hardly forbear execrating his hateful folly, who could *proſtitute* ſuch fine talents to ſuch infamous purpoſes.——Deteſted be the chiſel! that teaches, though with inimitable dexterity, the cold obdurate marble to enkindle diſſolute affections.——Abhorred be the pencil! that makes no other uſe of the moſt lovely colours, than to pollute the canvaſs, and inſnare the ſpectator.

It is argued, I know, that many of thoſe pieces are the completeſt models extant.——An *everlaſting reproach* this to the art; but no apology for the performances. Since the more nicely they are executed, the more miſchievous ‡ is their influence. It ſtrikes the ſurer, and ſinks the deeper. It dreſſes deſtruction gay, and paves with beauty the way to ruin.

It is my chief ambition, *Aſpaſio*, to have all my decorations ſo circumſtanced, that the beholder may learn ſome *valuable leſſon* in morality, or be reminded of ſome *important event* in hiſtory; may find, even in the ſcenes of his amuſement, ſomething to eſtabliſh his virtue, or enlarge his knowledge.

I frequently entertain my eldeſt ſon, who is reading the *Greek* and *Latin* hiſtorians, with an explanation of my principal drawings; that he may behold in colouring, what he has peruſed in narrative.——At this inſtant, the youth happened to make his appearance; paying his reſpects to *Aſpaſio*, and dutifully ſaluting his father.——It juſt recurs to my memory, ſaid *Theron*, that ſome neceſſary affairs of the family require my attendance for a few minutes. Will you excuſe my abſence, good *Aſpaſio*; and permit my ſon to ſupply my place?

You will very much oblige me, by leaving me ſuch a companion.—And come, my dear Sir, addreſſing himſelf to *Eugenio*, as I know you are a lover of learning, what think you of diverting ourſelves with theſe agreeable books? which give us their inſtructive leſſons, not in puzzling languages, but in pleaſing colours.——*Eugenio* ſpoke his conſent, and expreſſed his modeſty, by a becoming bluſh, while *Aſpaſio*, proceeded——

Aſp. This is a ſtriking picture indeed! Hills piled on hills form a moſt aſtoniſhing proſpect. What *horrible magnificence* reigns amidſt thoſe wild and ſhaggy rocks! Nature ſeems to have deſigned them for the boundaries of the world. Yet thoſe daring troops are attempting to paſs the prodigious barrier. Who are they, *Eugenio*, and whom ſhall we call their leader?

Eug. This, Sir, is the famous *Hannibal*, heading and encouraging his army in the paſſage of the *Alps*. The ſons of *Africa* ſeem to ſhiver with cold, as they traverſe thoſe frozen regions, and march among the clouds.

Aſp. 'Tis the very ſame. Some, you obſerve, climb, with exceſſive toil, the ſteep and craggy cliffs. Others, with far greater difficulty, deſcend through dreadful declivities of ice; expoſed, all the while, to the arrows of the mountaineers——Some, endeavouring to avoid the ſhowers of ſteel, ſlip with their feet, and tumble headlong down the vaſt projecting promontories. See! from what a height they are falling! carriages and their drivers, the horſe and his rider! and at what a diſtance ſtill, from the ſtony abyſs below!—Some lie, with cloſed eyelids, and ghaſtly features, daſhed to death at the very bottom. Others, writhing with the torture of mangled limbs, and broken bones, lift up an agonizing look to their comrades.——Their comrades, inſenſible of a brother's miſery, and wholly intent upon their own preſervation, hang frightfully ſuſpended on the edges of the precipice. The precipice ſeems to totter as they cling; and the alarmed ſpectator expects, every moment, a hideous downfal.——Are you not ſtartled at the view, *Eugenio*, and in pain for the hardy adventurers?

Eug. I am, Sir. And I wonder, how they will extricate themſelves from theſe perilous circumſtances. I have read in *Livy*, that they cut their way through the rocks, after they had ſoftened them with *vinegar*. But is this probable? how could they procure a ſufficient quantity, amidſt thoſe deſolate mountains?

Aſp. I believe, their *reſolution* and their *perſeverance* were the vinegar. Theſe open a road through rocks. Theſe, under the conduct of prudence, and the favour of heaven *, ſurmount all obſtacles,. Influenced by

* 'Tis pity, but the advice of *Cicero*, that great maſter of elegant taſte, and polite manners, was received as a *ſtandard* of regulation by all our connoiſſeurs in the fine arts. *In primis providebit ne ornamenta ædium atque hortorum vitium aliquod indicent ineſſe moribus. De Offic.*

† A gentleman, obſerving ſome groſs indelicacies of this kind, at the ſeat of a perſon of diſtinction, very acutely (and, I believe too juſtly) ſaid,

His paintings are the gibbet *of his name.*

‡ I hope it will not be thought improper, I wiſh it was entirely needleſs, to animadvert upon a practice which is not only a reproach to our *Chriſtian profeſſion*, but an inſult upon *national decorum*; the practice of expoſing to public view, and offering to public ſale, ſuch ſhameful *prints* as are fitted only to awaken licentious deſires, and cheriſh the moſt profligate diſpoſitions.

Such ſpectacles are a ſpecies of the *rankeſt* poiſon. And can the poiſon be leſs pernicious, becauſe it is received at the eye, inſtead of paſſing through the lips? becauſe it tends *more immediately* to debauch the morals, and *but remotely* to deſtroy the conſtitution?—No wonder, ſo many of our youths are corrupted, and ſo many robberies committed, while ſuch ſcenes of pictured lewdneſs are ſuffered to inflame them with luſt, and habituate them to impudence.

Another very indecent cuſtom has unaccountably ſtole its way into ſeveral performances of genius and elegance. The cuſtom, I mean, of repreſenting the *muſes*, the *graces*, and other romantic perſonages, in the form of beautiful ladies, partly, if not entirely, naked.—'Tis true, here are no looſe adventures, no immodeſt geſtures; nay more, the artiſt expreſſes *his own*, and conſults *your* modeſty, by preſenting you with a poſition in profile, by the intervention of a foliage, or the lappet of a robe.—But let me aſk the ingenious operator, If he would chuſe to introduce his wife or his daughter in ſuch a manner, to public company?—Is he ſtartled at the queſtion? is he ſhocked at the thought? Then let him reflect, and let others conſider, whether *that* can be graceful or allowable in a picture, which would be brutal and unſufferable in common life?

Socrates (who, before his application to philoſophy, practiſed as a ſtatuary) could not but bluſh at this abuſe of his art; and being to form a repreſentation of the *graces*, he repreſented them properly *habited*.

* Under the *favour of heaven*.—I cannot but wiſh, that the relator of *Lord Anſon's voyage round the world*, had anticipated *Aſpaſio*'s remark; had made ſome grateful acknowledgements to an interpoſing PROVIDENCE, in that maſculine, nervous, noble narrative:—A narative of ſuch ſignal deliverances, ſo critically timed, and ſo ſurpriſingly circumſtanced, as, in the courſe of one expedition, are ſcarcely to be paralleled.

I am perſuaded, it would have been no diſparagement of the great commander, and his gallant officers, to have it thankfully

these, the survivors press boldly on; and are determined to vanquish the horrors of nature, as a prelude to their victory over the forces of *Rome*. Let these, resolution and perseverance I mean, be the companions of my *Eugenio*'s youthful studies, and they will enable him also to conquer difficulties,—even all the difficulties which lie in his way.

What is our next draught? At each end we have a group of living figures. All the intermediate space is an extensive tract of land, diversified only by rapid rivers, horrid deserts, and mountainous ridges; with here and there a few savage natives, in uncouth dresses, and formidable arms.—It is more like a *map*, than a *picture*.—And the most remarkable beauty is the *aereal perspective*; which puts a very agreeable cheat upon our eyes; causing us to behold, on an ell of canvas, the space of many hundreds of miles.

Eug. This represents *the retreat of the ten thousand* Greeks. First we behold them, in the plains of *Media*; at an immense distance from their native country, without guides, without provision; and, what is the most desperate calamity of all, deprived of their ablest officers by treachery and murder.—Well may they look dejected. How have I pitied them, as I read their story! abhorred the perfidy of their enemies, and wished them all success in their hazardous enterprise!

Asp. Don't you perceive, their drooping spirits begin to revive, and some gleam of hope diffuses itself through their countenances, while they listen to the eloquent *Xenophon*? who stands conspicuous in the midst, haranguing his soldiers, and rousing their courage. But, ah! what a vast extent of unknown climes must they traverse, with a numerous and victorious army, harassing them in flank, or hanging upon their rear? What fatigues must they sustain, what hardships endure, before they arrive at their wished-for home?—*Home!* Fired by the enchanting name, and animated by their brave philosophic leader, they resolve to push their way through all the extremes of peril and of pain. To scatter, with their little band, the encircling millions of *barbarians*, is the smallest of their achievements. They cross rivers, they scale rocks, whose slippery banks, and craggy summits, are lined with opposing nations. They wade through deserts of snow, and pass over inhospitable mountains, the far more dreaded abodes of *desolation, drought*, and *famine*. They encounter the keenness of the northern storm, and all the rigour of the most malignant seasons.—As some of these articles are incapable of being expressed by the pencil, the artist remits us to the historian, and has contented himself with marking out the most distinguished stages of this memorable expedition. Only we view the courageous itinerants, once again, on a pretty lofty eminence. There they appear, not with their former dejection, but in all the transports of joy.

Eug. This, Sir, is the mountain *Teigne*. From whence they had the first view of the sea, and the first dawn of safety. There they embrace one another, and extol their commanders, especially the noble *Xenophon*; whose history gives me great delight, and his manly yet benign aspect, strangely attracts my esteem. Methinks, under such a general I could have been willing to take my share in all the toil, and all the hazards of the expedition.

Asp. Would my *Eugenio*? Then I will list him under a Captain unspeakably more accomplished and benificent. Young as you are, you shall, from this hour, commence a soldier and a traveller. A *soldier*, to fight against sin, and every temptation. A *traveller*, to pass through the wilderness of this world, unto the land of everlasting rest.——Though your enemies may be numerous, and your journey tedious, yet faint not, neither be discouraged. The LORD of heaven is your guide, and heaven itself shall be your exceeding great reward. When you arrive at those happy abodes, your delight will infinitely surpass all that the *Grecians* felt on *Teigne*, when their ravished eyes beheld, and their tongues with ecstasy, shouted, *The sea! the sea!*

The scene of yonder picture, I would venture to affirm, lies among the ancient *Jews*.

Eug. How can you tell this, Sir, at such a distance?

Asp. By *the fringes in the borders of their garments, and on each fringe a riband of blue.*——GOD almighty commanded all the *Jews*, to observe all this peculiarity in their habit *; that, their very cloaths, being different from the apparel of their *Heathen* neighbours, might admonish them not to be conformed to their idolatrous worship and licentious manners.—This, as well as every other divine command, our LORD JESUS CHRIST most exactly obeyed. Therefore we are told by the evangelical historian, that the diseased woman, *who touched but the hem of his garment, was restored to health.*—*Hem* it is in our *English* Bibles. But, if you consult that most excellent of all books, the *Greek* Testament, you will find, that the original word might more properly be rendered *fringe* †.—However, let us pass from the drapery to the design.

Eug. Here we see *David* in one of the most threatening exigencies of his whole life. *Saul*, more like a bloodhound than a king, pursues the best of sons, and the most valuable of subjects. He has extended the wings of his very superior army, in order to surround ‡ the injured hero, and his handful of associates.

fully recognized, on some very unexpected, yet most advantageous turn of affairs, THIS HATH GOD DONE!—Neither could it have detracted from the merit of the brave sailors, to have confessed, on many hazardous emergencies, that all their resolution, all their address, and the exertion of their utmost abilities, had been only *lost labour*, without the remarkable co-operation of divine goodness.—And I am apprehensive, that it must considerably diminish the delight of many readers, to observe the blessed AUTHOR of *all* these mercies passed by unnoticed, unacknowledged, and without *any* share of the praise.

The sarcasm on Pope *Adrian* and his exploits, I fear, would be too proper on this occasion, *Hic DEUS nihil fecit.*

* One would wonder how the *Jews* can so *tenaciously* adhere to their law, and yet so *apparently* neglect its precepts. Where are the sons of *Abraham*, who observe this express and positive command of JEHOVAH? Though this indeed *might* be obeyed, yet many of the *Mosaical* injunctions are rendered, and by nothing less than the dispensations of providence, absolutely impracticable. Is not this therefore a most incontestable proof,—a proof, not invented by the arts of sophistry, but written by the finger of the ALMIGHTY himself,—that the *legal* ordinances are abolished, in order to make way for a *better* dispensation?—When the avenues are become inaccessible, the house untenantable, and the principal apartments *irreparably* decayed, is not this the most cogent admonition to the inhabitants, that they betake themselves to some new and more commodious residence?—See *Numb.* xv. 38.

† Mat. xi. 20. Κρασπεδοις.

‡ To this, or some such incident, may be applied a passage of the *Psalms*, which, in our translation, is very obscure; has scarce any sense, or, if any, a very unjustifiable one. *Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the wickedness of my heels compasseth me round about?* Psal. xlix. 5.—*Wherefore?* The reason is very *apparent*. When wickedness cleaves to a person's heels, or habitually attends his goings, it raises an army of terrors. It unsheaths the sword of divine vengeance, and levels at his guilty head every threatening in the book of GOD.

Surely then another translation should be given to the words, and a different turn to the sense! And another translation the words will bear; a different sense the connection demands.—*Wherefore should I fear, when wickedness compasseth me about at my heels?* This is a fine spirited interrogation. This implies a great and edifying truth. From this also the verse appears, not only with propriety, but with beauty.—*When wickedness*, or the malicious attempts of wicked men—*compass me about*, surround me, threaten me on every side,—nay when they are *at my very heels*, just upon the point to seize, overwhelm, and crush me; so that the danger seems both inevitable and imminent:—yet even then, having GOD's almighty power and inviolable faithfulness for my protection, *wherefore should I be alarmed?*

Asp. This is the most *animated*, and, I think, the most *terrible* performance, that has hitherto come under our view.—Consternation and doubt agitate their looks. Shall they surrender themselves, as so many tame victims, to the tyrant's fury; or shall they cut their way to safety, through the hearts of countrymen, friends, and brothers? What a fearful dilemma!—While they are debating, the pursuers are closing upon them. A few, a few minutes more, must decide their fate.—But who is the person that intervenes, just at this *critical* juncture?

Eug. It is a messenger from the principal inhabitants of *Sychar*. He comes breathless and trembling, amazement in his face, and dust upon his head. "An invasion!" he cries,—"An invasion! The *Philistines* have poured themselves upon our frontiers!—The *Philistines* are over-running the land *!"

Asp. Upon the receipt of this news, see! what vexation reddens in the disappointed monarch's aspect! What anger lightens in his eye! At the same time, what black reflections on his country's danger, mingle themselves with the fiery passions, and almost quench the flame enkindling in his cheeks. Shall the vulture relinquish his prey, even when it lies fluttering under his talons? Galling thought! But his kingdom is at stake. If he does not immediately advance to repel the enemy, all, all his all is lost. Burning therefore with indignation, yet chilled with fear, he turns, hasty though reluctant, away †.——Are you not charmed, *Eugenio*, with the description of *tumultuous* and *contrary* passions, which afford the finest subject for historic painting, and are so happily expressed in this piece?

Eug. Indeed, Sir, I am *shocked*, rather than charmed. The very looks of that revengeful monarch fill me with horror. What must he suffer in his mind, who discovers such rage and anguish in his features! I would not have his furious temper, for all his royal power.

Asp. Then, my dear *Eugenio*, you must endeavour to suppress every emotion of envy and malevolence. You must cherish a cordial good-will to all men; and learn to rejoice in *their* excellencies and happiness, as well as *your own*. Envy is the worm that gnaws, envy is the fury that embroils, his wretched heart. And an author, with whom you will ere long be acquainted, has assured us,

Invidia Siculi non invenere tyranni
Tormentum majus. HOR.

The next is a kind of *night-piece*. Stars are in the sky, and the new moon rides on the skirts of the hemisphere; which affords just light enough to distinguish objects.—This is a perfect contrast to the foregoing. We see no conflict of jarring passions. But the principal person appears *sedate* and *composed*, as the night that surrounds him. He stands on the bank of a river, thoughtful and attentive; as though he was pondering, or executing, some important project.

Eug. This is *Cyrus the Great*. He stands upon the banks of the *Euphrates*; not far from *Babylon*. He points with his sceptre, and is giving directions to his army. The directions are, to pass through the channel of the river, (which is drained of its water) in order to surprise the city.

Asp. This is a prince of very superior dignity; the honoured instrument of executing JEHOVAH's counsels. He was foretold by the prophet *Isaiah*, and even mentioned by name ‡, more than two hundred years before his birth. Let us wish him prosperity. For he goes to humble the pride of *Babylon*, and release the captivity of *Israel*.——See! with what regular movements, and what calm alacrity, his troops advance! Silence seems to escort them: while, under covert of the shades, and with providence at their head, they march along a road, never before trodden by the foot of man.——The soldiers of the garrison have abandoned their station on the wall, to join in the dissolute indulgence of this fatal night. The inhabitants, like many a heedless sinner, are lulled in indolence, and dreaming of pleasures, even on the very brink of ruin.

Eug. Why are those *brazen gates* which lead to the river, placed in such a distinguished point of view? They strike my eye more, I think, than all the monuments of art and grandeur, which adorn that superb city.—And let me farther ask, whether the painter has not offended against probability, in suffering them to stand wide open? On the approach of so formidable an adversary, I should expect to have found them shut with all possible security.

Asp. In this particular, the painter has shewed his judgment, and not forgotten his piety. GOD had devoted that haughty and oppressive metropolis to destruction. And you will perceive, from this circumstance, how wonderfully he *over-rules* all events, for the accomplishment of his sacred purpose. Had those ponderous gates been shut *, the city had continued impregnable, and the whole enterprise been defeated. But, through some accidental forgetfulness, occasioned by the disorders of this riotous solemnity, or rather by a very *signal interposition* of divine vengeance, they are left open, and afford an easy entrance to slaughter and death; which rush upon the unhappy creatures, all sunk in sleep, or overcharged with wine, as a concealed snare, in some dreadful unexpected moment springs up, and inextricably entangles the unwary bird.—Was I to inscribe this picture with a motto, I would chuse the apostle's admonition, BE SOBER: BE VIGILANT.

Who is this, with his length of hair † flowing up-

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armed! Alarmed! No; confiding in such a safeguard, I will bid defiance to my enemies, and bid adieu to my fears.

* This event is related, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 25. &c. And it is one of the most extraordinary instances of a divine interposal, at the very crisis of need, that any history has recorded.

† ——————Εκαν αχνυσθε θυμω.

Thus *Homer* expresses the contrariety of passions, that frequently operate, at the same time, in the same breast.

‡ Is. xliv. 28. xlv. 1.

* See this very momentous, though seemingly-inconsiderable circumstance, finely illustrated by Mr *Rollin*, and compared with a remarkable prophecy in *Isaiah*. *Ancient Hist.* vol. II. p. 144. 153.—A work, in which the most *entertaining* and *instructive* events of antiquity are regularly digested, elegantly related, and stripped of those minuter incidents, which make the story move slow, and are apt to fatigue the attention.—Concise, but judicious observations are interspersed; which may teach young minds, to form a right judgment of things, and not be misled, by the *plausibility* of popular notions, or the *partiality* of prejudiced historians.—Many very distinguished predictions of scripture, are explained and confirmed by correspondent facts, from the most authentic memoirs of classical literature. Indeed, a perpetual regard to the elucidation and honour of the *sacred oracles*, runs through and ennobles the whole performance.—Which method, if not strictly conformable to the rules of historical composition, is a transgression of them greatly to their advantage. It may be said to resemble the *golden branch*, celebrated by *Virgil*, and plucked by his hero; whose growth, though a departure from the usual laws of vegetation, was far from depreciating the value of the tree.

Though I admire the whole, I am charmed with the *conclusion*. It is, I think, peculiarly pertinent, and inimitably grand; has a dignity, an elevation, a majesty, which, somewhat like the kingdom it describes, is quite unequalled, and little less than stupendous;

Πεπληθυν αριστος, χρυσειη δ' επιθηκε κορυνη.

† I believe it was not customary with the *Romans*, especially their warriors, to have long flowing hair. This therefore might seem an offence against what the *Italians* call *il costume*, if the painter was not supported by the authority of *Livy*; who, in his descriptive picture of *Scipio*, gives us the following touches: *Species corporis ampla ac magnifica. Præterquam quod simplici naturæ multa majestas inerat, adornabat promissa cæsaries, habitusque corporis, non cultui mundities, sed virilis vere ac militaris.*

Lib. XXVIII. c. 35.

T t on

on his ſhoulders; with ſuch amplitude of perſonage, ſuch magnificence of mien, and noble plainneſs of habit?

Eug. This is my favourite piece.——My father ſometimes ſhews me the heads of the philoſophers; but there is ſomething ſo uninviting and ſevere in *Socrates* and *Diogenes*, that I could never much admire them.—But this, Sir, is *Scipio*; the thunderbolt of war, as *Virgil* calls him. Here is ſomething ſo lovely and engaging, as well as grand and majeſtic, that I am never weary of looking on him.

Aſp. He appears with a lady of diſtinguiſhed beauty in his hand.

Eug. This is the captive princeſs, who had been taken in war, who was ſet apart for the general's prize, but whom he is now reſtoring to her eſpouſed huſband.

Aſp. You are right, *Eugenio*.—He has juſt led in his lovely captive, attended by her huſband and parents, amidſt a full aſſembly of *Romans* and *Celtiberians*, the victors and the vanquiſhed. His modeſt eyes, you obſerve, are rather turned from, than gazing upon, the blooming virgin.—Cannot you ſuppoſe, how the ſpectators muſt be affected, upon the opening of this very extraordinary ſcene? Every one beholds the hero with admiration, the lady with delight. Every boſom is big with expectation, or in pain for the event. After a ſhort pauſe, he addreſſes himſelf to the lover, in words to this effect:—"I am no ſtranger to your intereſt in "this fine woman. The fortune of war has put her en"tirely into my power. The circumſtances of my "youth cannot render me inſenſible to ſo engaging a "perſon. But with us *Romans*, honour and generoſity "have a more prevailing influence than tranſitory gra"tifications. Take your bride; be happy in each other; "and when you look upon this gift, admire the *Romans*, "be a friend to *Rome*."—Upon this he delivers her (as you beheld the action here repreſented) to the enamoured prince.

See! how the crouds, that cluſter and hang around, are ſtruck with the beneficent deed!—In the *Celtiberians*, we behold a mixture of veneration and ſurpriſe. Their looks are full of meaning. Methinks they are going to cry out, *Excellent man!*—In the *Romans*, we diſcern a conſcious ſuperiority, and exultation of mind. Triumph is in their features; as though they would ſay, *This wondrous man is ours!* In the *lady*, we admire the accompliſhed and modeſt fair, uniting all the dignity of her birth with all the delicacy of her ſex. What ſoft confuſion and what tender joy appear in her countenance! She is loſt in wonder, and at a loſs for words; ſhe ſpeaks the acknowledgments of her heart, by the ſilent eloquence of a tear; which ſteals down her glowing cheek, to bedew the kind hand, that has protected her innocence, and is delivering her to her lord.—*Her lord* is under an apparent and a graceful ſtruggle of love and gratitude. He dotes upon his charming princeſs, and he almoſt adores his generous benefactor. We can hardly tell, whether he is going to claſp the former in his arms, or throw himſelf at the feet of the latter. The *aged parents* expreſs their tranſport in a different manner. Their knees are bent to the earth; their eyes are lifted up to heaven; they implore, for their noble guardian, every bleſſing that the gods can beſtow.—*Scipio* himſelf diſplays all the magnanimity of the conqueror, tempered with the ſedateneſs of the philoſopher, and ſoftened with the gentleneſs of the friend. He gives happineſs, but he enjoys a greater. His eyes ſparkle with a ſublime delight; and he ſeems to anticipate the applauſe, which this truly-heroic act will gain, in all countries and in all ages.

Eug. Is not this a greater victory than any that he had won in the field of battle; and a nobler triumph than any that could be voted him by the applauding ſenate? Amiable *Scipio!* Might I be a *Roman*, I would be no other than *Scipio*.

Aſp. I wiſh you, my dear Sir, the temperance and generoſity of *Scipio*; but from a better motive than h*e*. *He*, I fear, was too much ſwayed by a ſpirit of ambiti*on* which *you* muſt endeavour to ſuppreſs, rather than c*h*riſh.——A *ſpirit* of *ambition*, which pants after diſtin*c*tion, and thirſts for applauſe, is diametrically oppoſ*ite* to the genius of the goſpel*.——It is a leſſon wh*ich* muſt infallibly be unlearned, if ever we become poſſ*eſ*ſors of faith, or partakers of CHRIST †.——It is a r*o*ot of bitterneſs, which naturally produces envy‡; th*e* moſt odious, and (as you have juſt now ſeen) moſt ſ*e*tormenting of all tempers.——It is a habit of mi*nd* which generally renders men incendiaries in the chur*ch* and diſturbers of its tranquillity ‖.——It is therefo*re* more like an inchanted potion which inebriates, than *genuine cordial* which animates.

Eug. From what motive then would you encour*age* me, to be diligent in the purſuit of learning, and in t*he* cultivation of every virtue?

Aſp. Not, that you may acquire the poor, contem*pt*ible, periſhing honour, which cometh from men;—but that you may *pleaſe* GOD, your almighty CR*E*ATOR;—that you may *glorify CHRIST*, your in*fi*nitely condeſcending REDEEMER;—that you m*ay* yourſelf attain what is the true dignity and only felic*i*ty of your nature; and may be ſerviceable to the *beſt in*tereſts of your fellow-creatures,—even their preſent ho*li*neſs, and their eternal happineſs.

Theſe are the *grand* and *endearing* encouragemen*ts* which our holy religion propoſes. Theſe will operat*e*, I am bold to aver, with a much ſweeter and a far mo*re* ſovereign efficacy, than all the glittering enticemen*ts* which ambition can deviſe. And, what is above a*ll* other conſiderations weighty, theſe will be more likel*y*, or rather theſe will be very certain, to receive the *divi*ne *bleſſing*.

You told me you was never weary of contemplatin*g* *Scipio*. For which reaſon, I promiſe myſelf, you w*ill* not be fatigued or diſpleaſed, though I have ſo long co*n*fined your attention to this portrait.—But have we n*o* hero of *Britain*, fit to join this illuſtrious triumvirate fro*m* *Rome*, *Perſia*, and *Judea*?

Eug. The very next we meet, is one of our *Engli*ſh kings. But I cannot ſay, that I remember either h*is* name, or his ſtory.

Aſp. How, my young gentleman! Do you read th*e* annals of *other* nations, and not acquaint yourſelf wit*h* the affairs of *your own* country?—If I was in your place I would apply myſelf to the claſſical writers by way o*f* ſtudy, and to ſome valuable *Engliſh* hiſtorian by way o*f* amuſement. Such an amuſement is infinitely preferab*le* to *novels* or *romances*; and will not only relax your at*t*ention, but enrich your mind.

Eug. I thank you, good Sir, for your admonition. And, if you pleaſe, I will now begin the ſtudy you re*c*ommend. Your explanation of theſe drawings ſha*ll* be the rudiments of my knowledge; and I ſhall think i*t* a happineſs, to receive my firſt inſtructions from ſo abl*e* a maſter.

Aſp. It is honour enough for *me*, *Eugenio*, to have given you the hint. I only point out your game, o*r* ſpring the covey; you ſhall be taught by a more ex*p*ert proficient, to make it your own. Yet, though others may direct you with greater ſkill, none will re*j*oice in your ſucceſsful purſuit, more ſincerely than myſelf.

This is our renowned *Henry the Fifth*, as he appeared after the victory of *Agincourt*. You ſee the gallant conqueror clad in ſteel, and recent from the ſlaughter of the inſulting foe. He ſeems to breathe an heroic ardour, which is irradiated and exalted by a lively devotion. If *courage* can be expreſſed by the pencil, that is its genuine likeneſs; keen, yet compoſed; graſping the ſword, yet looking up to heaven.—He

* Gal. v. 26. † John v. 44. ‡ Gal. v. 26
‖ 3 John 9. 10.

that,

that, a little while ago, drove the battle, like a whirlwind, on the legions of *France*, now bends a ſuppliant knee, and offers the euchariſtic hymn, to the LORD GOD of hoſts. No turbulent or diſorderly joy riots among the ſoldiery. They expreſs not the triumph of their hearts, in frantic exultations, or drunken revels, but in acts of thankſgiving to JEHOVAH; in an attitude, which ſpeaks the devout acknowledgment of the prophet, *Thou art our battle-axe and weapons of war* *; or the grateful declaration of the pſalmiſt, *Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto* THY *name be the glory* †.

This laſt inſtance informs my *Eugenio*, that *prayer* is an honourable employ,—has been practiſed by perſons of the moſt admired endowments,—is the ſureſt method of *obtaining ſucceſs*, in whatever buſineſs we undertake; and of *enjoying proſperity*, in whatever circumſtances we are placed.

The next piece is different from all the preceding. In *thoſe*, armies with their banners diſplayed, ſhips of war riding at anchor, battering engines and inſtruments of death, form the perſpective. In *this*, we have, all around, a lovely and rural landſcape; expreſſive of peace, and enriched with plenty. Corn and cattle in the valleys; fruitful vineyards on the hills; and beautiful gardens ſurrounding the houſes.—But who is that *graceful* and *auguſt* perſonage, ſeated on a ſtately throne of ivory and gold?

Eug. This is *Solomon*, having an interview with the Queen of *Sheba*. A large train of her attendants throng the avenues of the palace: ſome leading foreign animals; ſome bearing vaſes and caſkets; all arrayed in ſtrange apparel. The *Iſraelites* ſtare upon their outlandiſh viſitants, their coſtly preſents, and peculiar habits. Their viſitants are as much ſurpriſed at the walls, the towers, and eſpecially the temple of *Jeruſalem*. But you, Sir, I apprehend, are moſt pleaſed with the venerable perſon who fills the throne.

Aſp. Indeed I am; and ſo is his royal gueſt. You obſerve, in her robe, or retinue, or deportment, an unpoliſhed kind of grandeur. But all in *Solomon* is ſo ſplendid, and at the ſame time ſo elegant; diſplays ſuch a delicacy of taſte, and ſuch a magnificence of ſpirit, that the *Sabæan* princeſs is perfectly in raptures. See! how ſhe ſtands fixed and gazing with ſpeechleſs admiration ‡; like one loſt in aſtoniſhment, and tranſported with delight! Her looks ſpeak, what, when ſhe recovers the power of utterance, her tongue expreſſes; *It was a true report, that I heard in my own land, of thy acts, and of thy wiſdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had ſeen: and behold! the half was not told me: thy wiſdom and proſperity exceed the fame which I heard.*

Eug. This is a great compliment. Is it right, Sir, to praiſe a man, in ſuch plain terms and ſuch high ſtrains, to his very face? I think, I have heard *Philenor* blame ſuch a practice, as inconſiſtent with refined manners; and I have heard my father ſay, No one is a better judge of fine breeding than *Philenor*. And if the moſt agreeable behaviour, added to the moſt winning converſation, are what you call *fine breeding*, I am ſure, *Philenor* is maſter of it to a very great degree. I love to be in his company, and am never better pleaſed, than to hear him talk.

Aſp. The compliment is high, but it is juſt. It is ſtrictly conformable to truth, and proceeds from the moſt unaffected *ſincerity*. If we take what follows into conſideration, we ſhall have a pattern of true politeneſs; a propriety and a refinement of addreſs, far ſurpaſſing her Majeſty's external ſtate.——*Happy are thy men; happy are theſe thy ſervants; which ſtand continually before thee, and that hear thy wiſdom.* Inſtead of envying, ſhe congratulates the domeſtics of *Solomon*, and rejoices in their ſuperior felicity. This is *benevolence*.——*Bleſſed be the LORD thy GOD, which delighted in thee, to ſet thee on the throne of Iſrael. Becauſe the LORD loved Iſrael for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and juſtice.* Here ſhe aſcribes all his royal virtues, and matchleſs accompliſhments to the bounty of heaven. Though they are applauded in the perſon of *Solomon*, they are recognized as the free gift of GOD. This is *piety*.——When the endowments we celebrate, lead us to magnify, not their poſſeſſor, but their author; then the poiſon is corrected and turned into medicine. Praiſe thus circumſtanced, loſes its malignity, and is rendered ſalubrious.

It pleaſes me to perceive, that you take ſo much notice of the converſation, which paſſes between your worthy father, and his ingenious friends. I promiſe myſelf, you will alſo remember the maxim, which we have now learned from a queen: A queen, whom not only the ſacred hiſtorian, but our LORD JESUS CHRIST himſelf vouchſafes to mention, and with marks of approbation. Whoſe name therefore will be had in honour, when *Semiramis* and *Cleopatra*, the heroines, and the beauties, are conſigned over to oblivion. The maxim which I mean, is this:——There muſt be an union of ſincerity, of benevolence, and of piety, in order to conſtitute *true politeneſs*. Whoever pretends to fine breeding, and is deſtitute of theſe qualities, is nothing more than a pretender. He bears juſt the ſame proportion to this ornamental character, as the ape and the monkey bear to the man.

But we have not ſufficiently examined our picture. The dome is of cedar; ſupported by pillars of marble; to which are annexed curtains of ſilk and embroidery. ——The pillars ſhine with the moſt gloſſy poliſh, and ſwell upon the eye with the boldeſt projections. The curtains, pendent in large and eaſy folds, ſeem not adheſive to the canvaſs, but waving in the air.——The throne is exquiſitely contrived, richly ornamented, and highly finiſhed. It is evident, the painter had in his eye that remarkable obſervation of ſcripture, *There was not the like made in any kingdom*; and he has really done all which art could deviſe, or colours execute, in order to exemplify the great encomium.

If the monarch was abſent, we ſhould deſire no better entertainment, than to view the beauties of the apartment; but can hardly allow any attention to the edifice, when ſo graceful and ſo grand a preſence beſpeaks our regard. For I muſt own, there appears to me ſomething peculiarly excellent in this figure; a *ſerenity* and *dignity*, without any of that martial air, which adds a tincture of ferocity to the warrior; a *ſagacity* and *penetration*, not to be equalled by the wrinkles of age, yet tranſparent through all the bloom of youth. Piety and wiſdom, the love of GOD and the grace of his SPIRIT, give an elevation to the mind, a ſecret charm to the countenance, and ſomething more than mortal to the whole man.——I am apt to ſuſpect, *Eugenio*, that you yourſelf are ready to adopt a new favourite; that you now prefer *Solomon* even to *Scipio*; and had rather be like the "beloved of the LORD," than the darling of *Rome*.

Eug. Every thing in *Solomon* is ſo venerable and heavenly, that I am filled with awe, rather than fired with emulation. It is not for a boy to think of imitating ſuch high perfection!

Aſp. Why not, my dear Sir? It was GOD who gave *Solomon* his ſuperior wiſdom, and exalted accompliſhments. And GOD is *the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever*: as willing to hear, and as able to help *you*, as he was to hear and bleſs his ſervant *Solomon*.—Neither let your youth be a diſcouragement. *Out of the mouth of very babes and ſucklings, HE ordaineth ſtrength,*

* Jer. li. 20. † Pſal. cxv. 1.

‡ This, I apprehend, is the meaning of that remarkably ſtrong expreſſion, uſed by the ſacred hiſtorian; *There was no more ſpirit in her*, 1 Kings x. 5.

strength, and perfects praise *. *Samuel* ministered in the temple, when he was but a child †. *Josiah*, while he was yet young, began to seek after the GOD of his fathers ‡. *Timothy* was acquainted with the holy scriptures from his earliest years ‖. And *Solomon* himself was none of the oldest, when he was favoured with that extraordinary vision, and made that admirable choice at *Gibeon* §: A passage of scripture which, I dare say, you have read; which I would recommend to your attentive consideration; and which I hope, you will take for the model of your conduct.——And if you, like that illustrious young prince, desire a wise and understanding heart, more than the affluence of wealth, or the distinctions of honour; if you *seek wisdom as silver, and search for her as for hid treasure; then shall you also understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of GOD* ¶.

The next that occurs, presents us with a view of the *sea*; and a most tremendous view it is.

Eug. This is the voyage related by the evangelist, when our LORD sailed with his disciples, and bid the storm be still, and made the ocean calm.

Asp. Then we may truly say, *A greater than Solomon is here!*—Give me leave to hint, upon this occasion, that every picture of CHRIST must necessarily, *depretiate* his glorious person. Therefore you will never think, that a few rays beaming round his sacred head, can properly distinguish the SON of GOD, or express the grace of his offices, and the divinity of his nature. It is not to display the perfections of the LORD JESUS *himself*, but only to give us an idea of one of his *works*, that the pencil has been employed on this grand subject.

You will also remember, that it was not the main ocean, but the lake of *Tiberias*, on which they sailed. However, the painter is at liberty to make his sea as large as he pleases, and his *storm* as terrible as he can. Accordingly he has collected all the horrors of a tempest. ——Lightnings fire the arch above; and thunders, could thunders have been painted, would have rocked the ground below. Those flaming bolts have smitten a huge promontory, and tore its rugged brow. See! how the rocky fragment is tumbling, with impetuous bound, from cliff to cliff.——The waters, lashed by furious winds, heave and toss their tumultuous billows. Here they rise in rolling ridges; there they rage in devouring whirls.——Amidst these horrible commotions, you behold a *vessel* in all the extremity of *distress*. Straining under the blast, battered and half-overwhelmed by the surge, she can no longer maintain the unequal conflict; she yields to the resistless flood; and begins, evidently begins to sink.——Perplexed, amazed, and at their wit's end, the disciples run to and fro. They shift the tackling; lighten the stowage; try every expedient; and find, to their inexpressible affliction, every expedient ineffectual.

We cast our eye forward, and their divine MASTER appears, sedately rising from a gentle slumber.—He sees the perplexity and horror of his companions, without the least emotion of alarm. He sees destruction approaching, heaven and earth mingled, and, instead of being dismayed, *enjoys* the elemental war.—— What composure in his mien! what dignity in his attitude! what majesty, sweetened with compassion, in his aspect! such as could arise from no other cause, but a conscious and undoubted certainty, that not one of the company should perish; not a hair of their head be injured; and that all this mighty uproar of nature should end in a demonstration of his *mightier* power, and a confirmation of his disciples *faith*.——He looks abroad into the mutinous sky, and the turbulent deep. He waves, with an authoritative air, his sacred hand; and adds the great commanding word, PEACE: BE STILL,

——Do you inquire after the effect? Let *Milton* declare it:

Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
Stood ruled.

This is expressed in another draught; where all is hushed; the tremendous agitations cease, and the most profound tranquillity takes place. The water is smooth as glass; we have the picture of a perfect *calm*; and view those very persons, who, a little while ago, were in the wildest distraction, and in the jaws of ruin, surrounding their LORD as men alive from the dead *. Their consternation is turned into wonder, and their pangs of fear into ecstasies of joy. They acknowledge the omnipotence, and adore the goodness of JESUS.

Eug. Well may they acknowledge his *omnipotence*; since *winds and waves obey him*. Great reason have they to adore his *goodness*, since he rescued them from the very jaws of death; that worst of deaths, perishing in the stormy deep.

Asp. If JESUS CHRIST had vouchsafed such a deliverance to my *Eugenio*; what would he have thought, or how would he have been affected?

Eug. I should have thought myself *inexpressibly* obliged; and that I could never shew *sufficient* gratitude to so great a Benefactor.

Asp. Assure yourself then, my dear Sir, that he has done infinitely more for you:—That he has delivered you, not indeed from being swallowed up by the raging billows, but from sinking into the pit of everlasting perdition:—That he has not only rescued you from endless destruction, but obtained eternal life and heavenly happiness for you.——This he has done, not by speaking a word, or issuing a command; but by bearing your guilt, suffering your punishment, and dying the death, the most ignominious and tormenting death, in your stead.—— Should you not then *unfeignedly* love HIM? *study* to please HIM? and make it the *reigning* endeavour of your life to glorify HIM?

Here *Theron* returned, and the young student withdrew, after receiving some affectionate and encouraging compliments from *Aspasio*; who was going to enlarge upon the excellent taste of his friend, the instructive style of his pictures, the good sense and great proficiency of his son. But *Theron*, far from coveting the praise, and fully satisfied with the consciousness, of acting the becoming part, prevented his discourse, by stepping to a pair of glass folding-doors, which, thrown open, admitted them into the *study*.

* Psal. viii. 2. † 1 Sam. ii. 18. ‡ 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3.
‖ 2 Tim. iii. 15. § 1 Kings iii. 5. 6. &c.
¶ Prov. ii. 4. 5.

* The circumstances of this miracle, as related by the evangelists, are truly wonderful, and to the last degree picturesque.

Master! Master! we perish! How concise, how abrupt, and how ardent is this exclamation! Therefore how strongly significant of imminent danger, and of the utmost distress! They have not time to be explicit. A moment's delay may be fatal. What they utter is conciseness itself, and all rapidity, *Luke* viii. 24.—This is nature; this is the *genuine* language of the heart; this is true historic painting. Every impartial reader must admire this exquisitely just and fine stroke, far beyond the diffuse and (I had almost said *impertinently*) florid speech, which *Virgil* puts into the mouth of his hero on a like occasion. *Æn.* I. 93.

Σιωπα, πεφιμωσο. What a majesty in this command! 'Tis admirable; 'tis inimitable; 'tis worthy of GOD.—I think, we may observe a peculiarly-proper word, addressed and adapted to each element, the first enjoining a *cessation* of the *winds*, the second a *quiescence* of the *waves*: silence in all that roared, composure in all that raged. As though (to give a short paraphrase on the grand injunction) it had been said, Winds, *be hush'd*; Waves, *be calm*, Mark iv. 39.

The *effect* on the disciples is described, with all the force of imagination, and all the energy of diction. To represent in colours, what the evangelical historian has left upon record, would be a subject fit for the immortal *Raphael*; and perhaps not to be equalled even by his masterly pencil. Λιαν τε περισσου εν εαυτοις εξισαντο και εθαυμαζον—εθαυμαζον, *they were amazed*—εξισαντο, *they were transported with amazement*—*nay, to the very greatest degree*—εκ περισσου, *exceeding all* that language can express. *Mark* vi. 51.

A chimney-piece of grey marble, with plain, but bold and protuberant mouldings, formed a very handſome appearance.—In various little niches, were fixed elegant *buſts*; and on the ſeveral interſtices, hung beautiful *prints*; repreſenting many of the moſt eminently-learned men, who were the ornaments and bleſſings, both of ancient and modern times. The ſhelves, all around, were accommodated, not encumbered, with books. *Aſpaſio*, running over the lettered backs, obſerved a collection of the moſt valuable authors, in hiſtory and natural philoſophy, in poetry and divinity.

You will eaſily perceive, ſaid *Theron*, that I am ſomewhat ſingular in furniſhing my ſtudy, as well as in ornamenting the avenue. My books are not for ſhew, but uſe; and claim a regard, rather on account of their worth, than their number.—An immenſe multitude of volumes, I have always thought, is more likely to embarraſs the attention, than to improve the underſtanding. A *huge* library ſeems to reſemble a perplexing *labyrinth*; and often bewilders the mind, inſtead of leading it expeditiouſly to the acquiſition of truth.

When people are eager to peruſe a multiplicity of writings, it frequently happens, that in reading all, they digeſt none *. They taſte ſome empty and tranſient amuſement, but collect no ſolid or laſting advantage. Their minds are ſomewhat like thoſe capacious looking-glaſſes, which we have ſeen expoſed in the moſt frequented and populous ſtreets of *London*. They receive all manner of ſhadowy images, but no ſubſtantial impreſſion. A thouſand figures *paſs through* them, not one *abides* in them.

Our books, replied *Aſpaſio*, as well as our friends, ſhould rather be *ſelect*, than *numerous*. For my part, I would deſire no more than two or three of the moſt correct and maſterly writers in any ſcience. Theſe a perſon of moderate capacity may be able to comprehend; and not comprehend only, but enrich his memory with the choiceſt ſentiments, and make the ſubſtance of their works his own.—He will, by repetition and familiar converſe, enter into their *ſpirit*, and acquire their *manner*. While a rambler in reading does little more than gratify his fancy, without refining his taſte, or amending his heart.

Upon this *Aſpaſio* turned himſelf; and eſpied, in one corner of the apartment, the celeſtial and terreſtrial *globes*; in another a large reflecting *teleſcope*; and on the top of a bureau, one or two of the beſt *microſcopes*.

Theſe inſtruments, reſumed *Theron*, have opened an inexhauſtible fund of the fineſt entertainments †. They have furniſhed us with *new eyes*; and brought up, I may venture to ſay, a *new world* into our view. They give us a ſight of wonders, which may ſeem incredible to the incurious vulgar, and were utterly unknown to the moſt inquiſitive ſages of antiquity. They charm the eye with a diſplay of inimitable beauties, where nothing worthy of notice was expected. They throw the mind into a pleaſing tranſport of admiration; and from the meaneſt loweſt objects, raiſe the moſt *amiable* and *exalted* ideas of the all-glorious CREATOR.

I have often regretted, that ſuch rational and manly gratifications ſhould be almoſt univerſally ſupplanted by the *fantaſtical* and *childiſh* amuſements in vogue. Why ſhould not the contemplation of nature's ſurpriſing novelties, be as acceptable an entertainment, as the ſtale diverſion of quadrille; be as refined an employ for a leiſure-hour, as to count the ſpots on a pack of cards?—The ladies, I am very ſure, might find brighter colours, and more delicate ornaments, in the robes and headdreſs of a common *fly*, than ever they found amidſt the trinkets of a *toy-ſhop*. And was the fair circle of females once acquainted with the radiant varniſh and rich ſtuds, which enamel the cover of a *beetle*'s wing, I am apt to think, they would view with leſs rapture, with more indifference, perhaps, with a becoming diſdain, all the pretty fancies of a *beau*'s wardrobe.

A few days ago, when the accompliſhed *Manilia* favoured us with a viſit, I ſhewed her, through a magnifying glaſs, the ſting of a bee, the ſcale of a ſoal, the wing of a gnat, and ſome other *beautiful minims* of nature, together with the powder which adheres to our finger, when we touch the body of a moth.—"Amaz-
"ing!" cried the young lady. "What elegant figures!
"What inchanting finery!

——Smalleſt lineaments exact,
In all the liveries deck'd of ſummer's pride,
With ſpots of gold and purple, azure and green *.

"How perfect the poliſh, and how high the finiſh-
"ing, of that little *weapon!*—This piece of *defenſive* ar-
"mour, how ſkilfully contrived, and how curiouſly
"wrought! Here riſing into little ridges, like the boſſes
"of a buckler, fitted to repel injuries. There ſcooped
"into little cavities, deſigned, I ſuppoſe, to diminiſh
"its weight; that the coat of mail may not encumber,
"even while it defends, the puny wearer.——What I
"took to be a whitiſh deſpicable rag, is the *neateſt fan* I
"ever beheld; mounted on ſticks † inimitably tapering
"and ſlender, tinged with all the ſoft and lovely colours
"of the moſt glofſy mother of pearl.—But what aſto-
"niſhes me more than all, is the view of that coloured
"duſt, which your inſtrument has turned into a *cluſter*
"of *feathers*. Every one wrought off with a regularity
"and a delicacy, that are beyond the power of deſcrip-
"tion. The fineſt ſtroke drawn by the *Italian* pen, com-
"pared with the extreme minuteneſs of the ſhaft, is
"broad and bulky as an admiral's maſt. A ſpeck of
"leaf-gold, could it be weighed againſt the exquiſite at-
"tenuations of the vane ‡, would ſeem more ſubſtan-
"tial and ponderous than yonder marble ſlab.

"How nice, even to a prodigy, muſt be the me-
"chaniſm of the *animalcule* race! I ſee globules, I ſee
"tides of blood, rolling through mæanders inexpreſ-
"ſibly finer than the fineſt hair.—Stranger ſtill! I ſee
"whole ſholes of active creatures expatiating in a
"ſingle drop of water ‖; taking their paſtime amidſt

* The author of *Night-Thoughts* has touched this ſubject, with great judgment, and equal ſprightlineſs.

Voracious learning, often over-fed,
Digeſts not into ſenſe the motley meal.
Thus forager on other's wiſdom, leaves
Her native farm, her reaſon quite untill'd.
With mix'd manure ſhe ſurfeits the rank ſoil,
Dung'd, but not dreſs'd; and rich to beggary.

† Gentlemen of taſte and ſerioufneſs cannot, I think, have a nobler piece of furniture for their ſtudies, than the *microſcope* and the *teleſcope*; the *orrery* and the *air-pump*. This apparatus would afford them a moſt delightful and improving amuſement in a ſolitary hour.—It would alſo give them an opportunity of entertaining their company, in a truly-elegant and very inſtructive manner. It would open a fine and ample field, for diſplaying the glories of GOD the CREATOR, and of GOD the REDEEMER.—As the diſcoveries made by theſe inſtruments, are ſo *ſurpriſing* in themſelves, and *new* to the generality of mankind, every edifying hint deduced from *ſuch* obſervations, would come with a peculiar recommendation.—This, I am ſure, would be a method of reducing to practice, what the polite hiſtorian has recorded of the politer Scipio; *Elegantiſſimo intervalla negotiorum otio diſpunxit.* VELL. PATERC.——And, I believe, it might be a happy means of turning the ſoul, to bear a part in that immortal hymn; *Worthy art thou, O LORD, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou haſt created all things; and for thy pleaſure they* now *exiſt, and were* at firſt *created*, Rev. iv. 11.

* MILTON, book VII.

† Theſe *ſticks* are the little *ribs*, which ſupport, at proper intervals, the fine tranſparent membrane of the wing.

‡ *Vane* is the *feathery* part of a quill.

‖ In a ſingle drop of water, Dr *Hook* is ſaid to have diſ-

"such a ſcanty canal, as unſtraitened and as much at "large, as *leviathan* in the abyſſes of the ocean. A whole "kingdom of theſe creatures, though collected into a "body, are quite undiſcernable by the naked eye. What "then muſt be the ſize of every individual? Yet in "every individual there is a complete ſyſtem of limbs; "each endowed with ſpontaneous motion; all aſſem-"bled, though not crouded, in a living *atom*.—To re-"flect upon the texture of veſſels, and the operation of "organs, ſo complex, ſo numerous, yet ſo inconceiv-"ably minute; how it awakens admiration! fills me "with reverence of the almighty MAKER! and yields "a pleaſure, infinitely ſuperior to all the modiſh amuſe-"ments of our ſex!—Your diſcoveries of *life in miniature*, "have given me a diſguſt of what is called *high life*, and "its ſolemn fopperies. You have ſpoiled me, *Theron*, "for a faſhionable trifler. I ſhall no longer reliſh the "dull œconomy of the fan, or the poor parade of the "ſnuff-box."

Aſp. Have you nothing to ſay of the *teleſcope*?—I believe, it muſt be my province to celebrate this admirable invention; and I wiſh I could do it, with *Manilia*'s brilliant imagination.—If the *microſcope* leads us downward, to the curious ſecrets of the animalcule creation; the *teleſcope* bears us upward, to the grand peculiarities of the ſtarry regions. The eye, conducted by this wonderful guide, viſits a variety of majeſtic orbs, which would otherwiſe be loſt in unmeaſurable tracts of æther.—This, far more ſurpriſing than the diſcoveries of *Columbus*, has found out new colonies of worlds, in every quarter of the nocturnal ſkies. This has placed a glittering creſcent on the brow of one * of the planets; and has given others a moſt ſtately train of attendants †.

Tell me, *Theron*, could you diſcern the full choir of the conſtellations, or diſtinguiſh the variegated face of the moon, without the aid of your *teleſcopic* tube? Could you, with your unaſſiſted eye, get a ſight of *Jupiter*'s ſatellites, or procure a glimpſe of *Saturn*'s ring?—Without that ſupplementary aid to our ſight, they are quite imperceptible; though the ſatellites of the former are incomparably more magnificent, than the *retinue* of all the monarchs in the world; and compared with the ring of the latter, all the *bridges* on ten thouſand rivers, are leſs than the ferule of your cane.

As the *teleſcope* to the eye, ſo is *revelation* to the underſtanding. It diſcovers truths, which, excluſive of ſuch a diſcovery, had been for ever hid from the moſt ſagacious minds.—'Tis ſtrange to the unlearned obſerver, that this ponderous globe of earth and ſeas ſhould wheel its rapid circuit round the ſun. But the *teleſcope* has rendered this fact clear to a demonſtration.—'Tis ſtrange likewiſe to our natural apprehenſions, that we ſhould die in *Adam*, and be undone by our firſt parent's diſobedience. Nor leſs ſo, that we ſhould be made alive in CHRIST, and derive our recovery from his *imputed* righteouſneſs. But revelation makes this doctrine as certain, as it is comfortable.

Ther. Does revelation make it certain?—This is a point not yet eſtabliſhed, but taken for granted. I rather apprehend, that revelation in no place maintains it, in many places diſavows it.—Since your abſence, *Aſpaſio*, I have ſpent ſome time in ſearching the ſcriptures, with a particular view to this tenet. And I can find no ſuch expreſſion in the whole Bible, as the imputation of CHRIST's righteouſneſs. If it was ſo *leading* an article, as you repreſent, ſurely it could not have been entirely forgotten by the inſpired writers, nor utterly excluded from *their* body of divinity.

Aſp. The very identical expreſſion may not occur, and yet the doctrine be abundantly taught. I believe you never met with the word *reſurrection* in any part of the Pentateuch, nor ever read the phraſe *ſatisfaction* in all the New Teſtament. Yet our LORD fully proved the truth of the former from the writings of *Moſes*; and you yourſelf have acknowledged the latter to be the unanimous ſenſe of the apoſtles and evangeliſts.

In the epiſtle to the *Romans*, we have expreſs and repeated mention of a righteouſneſs imputed. *What* or *whoſe* righteouſneſs, can be the ſubject of this aſſertion?—Not the righteouſneſs of *angels*. They are a ſuperior claſs of beings, and have no ſuch intimate connection with our nature.——Not the righteouſneſs of eminent *ſaints*. This is the exploded error of Popery; and furniſhes the *Romiſh* zealots with that chimera of arrogance and folly, works of ſupererogation.——Not any righteouſneſs of our own: for it is poſitively declared to be *without works* *; in which no works of our own have any concurrence, or the leaſt ſhare.—What other righteouſneſs then can be meant, but the righteouſneſs of our great SUBSTITUTE, SURETY, and SAVIOUR? who took our nature; diſcharged our debt; and is therefore ſtyled, *JEHOVAH our righteouſneſs* †.

Ther. This ſeems contrary to the whole tenor of the ſacred inſtructions. What ſays the prophet? *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive* ‡. Here that greateſt of bleſſings, the ſalvation of the ſoul, is aſcribed to a *departure from evil*, and a *perſeverance in good*, to a real alteration in a man's *own* temper and conduct, not to any fanciful application of ſome tranſmiſſive righteouſneſs from another.

Aſp. Let me aſk my *Theron*, Is there no wickedneſs but riot and debauchery, profaneneſs and injuſtice?—*Unbelief*, though it may paſs without cenſure or notice in a ſyſtem of morality, is, in the volume of revelation, declared a *capital* crime. Our LORD, ſpeaking of the HOLY SPIRIT, mentions it as a ſignal part of his office, that *he ſhall convince the world of ſin*.——Of what ſin? Scandalous violations of moral rectitude? This were a needleſs employ. The light of reaſon is ſufficient to evince ſuch a charge, and the court of conſcience is erected to paſs the deſerved ſentence.—Of ſin, adds the heavenly TEACHER, *becauſe they believe not on me* ||; on my death, as the cauſe of their forgiveneſs; on my righteouſneſs, as the ground of their acceptance; on my SPIRIT, as the powerful principle of their holineſs.

Unbelief treats GOD as a liar §; becauſe it rejects the teſtimony, which he has borne concerning his beloved SON.——Unbelief tramples on the blood of *CHRIST*, and is a moſt contemptuous affront to all his ſaving-offices.—Unbelief would counteract the operations of the HOLY GHOST; whoſe peculiar work it is, to teſtify of *CHRIST*, and make manifeſt his righteouſneſs.—Unbelief inſtigates (could we have thought it poſſible?) a child of duſt, a ſlave of ſin, to ſcorn himſelf and his own performances.——To ſay all in a word, unbelief is that *great*, that *comprehenſive* iniquity which ſcornfully rejects, or impiouſly renounces, the moſt glorious method of ſalvation, which Omniſcience itſelf could deviſe.

covered, with his *microſcope*, eight millions two hundred and eighty thouſand *animalcules*.—This is mentioned, becauſe it is the prevailing philoſophy of the age. Though I muſt confeſs, that Mr *Gautier* ſeems to have gone a conſiderable way towards giving it another turn. As he has proved, before a learned aſſembly at *Paris*, that the *vermiculares* of *Leuvenhoeck*, and the living *moleculæ* of Mr *de Buffon*, were only balls of air agitated by the fermenting of the ſeed. If ſo, it is not impoſſible, but Dr *Hook*'s *animalcula* may be nothing more than *balls* of *air*, agitated by the fermenting of the pepper.

Be this as it will, the young lady's remarks on the wonders of *mechaniſm* in the animalcule creation, I believe, will never be controverted.

* The planet *Venus*.

† The ſatellites of *Jupiter* and *Saturn*.

* Rom. iv. 6. † Jer. xxiii. 6.

‡ Ezek. xviii. 27. || John xvi. 9. § 1 John v. 10.

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The wicked man, therefore, never turns from his wickedneſs, till he turns, by a true faith, to JESUS CHRIST. Till then, he is a rebel againſt the *goſpel*, however he may pay ſome ſpecious and partial regard to the law. So flagrant a rebel, that he ſtands particularly excepted, in the act of evangelical indemnity. For *as he that believeth on the SON, hath everlaſting life; ſo he that believeth not, is condemned already, and the wrath of GOD abideth on him* *.

Ther. What are the *pſalmiſt*'s ſentiments on this ſubject? Does not he repreſent the matter in a very different light? *Thou, LORD, art merciful; for thou rewardeſt every man according to his*, not another's *works* †.

Aſp. Weighty ſaying! May it impreſs our very hearts! —GOD is merciful, and *therefore* rewardeth. From whence it appears, that what we call a reward, is really an act of mercy, rather than of juſtice. The wages of *ſin* is death; but the *gift*, (ſays the apoſtle, altering his ſtyle, and making a moſt important diſtinction), the gift of GOD is eternal life ‡.——The inſpired penman ſubjoins, not *for*, but *according to*, every man's works. His works are the meaſure, not the meritorious cauſe. To merit, is the ſole prerogative of the SAVIOUR. To him it is owing, that our imperfect ſervices are honoured with any acceptance; much more that they are recompenſed with any reward.

Ther. Does not this expoſition of yours, claſh with that truly-generous acknowledgment of St *Peter? In every nation, he that feareth GOD, and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted with him* ‖. Here, it is undeniably evident, that acceptance with our CREATOR is founded on a man's *own* piety, and *perſonal* integrity.

Aſp. Rightly to underſtand this text, we ſhould inquire into the circumſtances of the hiſtory.——The apoſtle had been ſtrongly and moſt unreaſonably prejudiced in favour of the *Jews*; imagining, that the ſalvation of CHRIST, like the diſpenſation of *Moſes*, muſt be confined to his countrymen.——But now, having conſidered the purport of his late heavenly viſion; having compared it with the angelic meſſage delivered to *Cornelius*; and being made acquainted with the character of that valuable man; he breaks out into this truly-catholic declaration.——"My prejudices are vaniſhed. My ſenti-"ments are enlarged. From the inſtance before me, it "is *demonſtrably* certain, that GOD does not appropriate "the bleſſings of his covenant to any particular perſon, "family, or people. *But, in every nation, he that feareth* "*him, and*, from a principle of religion in the heart, "*worketh righteouſneſs* in the life, *is accepted*; ſo accept-"ed, as to be an object of the divine favour, and an in-"heritor of eternal happineſs."

This, I think, is the exact meaning of the place. And let it be recollected, that no one truly *fears*, or can poſſibly *pleaſe* GOD, without faith §. For which reaſon, it is neceſſary to ſuppoſe, that *Cornelius*, though a Heathen by birth, had believed through grace.——Nay, it is evident from the context, that he had heard of JESUS CHRIST: had ſome acquaintance with the deſign of his coming, and the execution of his office ¶; enough to be the ground of a *real*, though perhaps an *infantile* faith. The buſineſs of the apoſtle was, to lead this convert into the *clear* light, and *full* privileges of the goſpel; to ratify and confirm his title to them, by the ſacred *ſeal* of baptiſm; and introduce him, as the *firſt-fruits* of the Gentiles, into the Chriſtian church.

So that nothing can be concluded from this paſſage, but that the glad tidings of *Chriſtianity* are for *Jews*, for *Gentiles*, for all people;—that faith, even when weak, is productive of good works;—and when ſincerely improved, will certainly be increaſed; "will go from "ſtrength to ſtrength."

Ther. Does not our SAVIOUR, in deſcribing the proceſs, and foretelling the iſſue of the laſt deciſive trial, aſſign a kingdom to the righteous? aſſign it in this preciſe view, as a proper remuneration of *their own* good works; ſaying in the moſt expreſs terms, *Come, ye bleſſed of my FATHER, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world:* FOR *I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat;* FOR, *&c.* FOR, *&c.* *

Aſp. Be pleaſed to take notice of the expreſſion. They are bidden to *inherit*; and what is freer than an inheritance?—Obſerve alſo the *reaſon* alledged, and compare it with the rule of judicature. *He that believeth*, ſaith the ſupreme JUDGE, *ſhall be ſaved.* This is the avowed, the invariable ſtandard, by which he proceeds in adminiſtering everlaſting judgment. Accordingly, he confers eternal life on the righteous, as perſons entitled to this great felicity, on the foot of his own gracious appointment.

FOR denotes, not the *foundation*, but the *evidence* of their right. "I acquit ſuch a perſon," ſays the arbitrator in a judicial claim; "*for* the witneſſes depoſe, that "the debt is paid." The depoſition, which anſwers to theſe righteous acts, is the *proof*; payment of the debt, which correſponds with CHRIST's perfect obedience, is the *cauſe* † of the diſcharge.——*For ye have given*; Ye have abounded in all inſtances of duty to ME, and love to your brethren; and thereby have manifeſted yourſelves true believers.

It may be farther obſerved, that our LORD ſays not, Ye have done it to your fellow-creatures, but *to theſe my brethren* ‡. He commends not every random act of good nature or generoſity, but ſuch kinds of beneficence only, as carry the *Chriſtian* ſtamp; were exerciſed to a diſciple, "in the name of a diſciple." And *theſe* moſt evidently ſpring from faith; *theſe* undeniably atteſt its ſincerity.

Ther. Are not theſe diſtinctions more *ſubtile*, than ſolid?

Aſp. To me they appear in no ſuch light. If you think otherwiſe, let us appeal to thoſe excellent perſons themſelves. The turn, the very remarkable turn of their ſentiments, will fully decide your queſtion.—— Do they lay *any ſtreſs* upon their own religious duties, and beneficent deeds? Far from relying on them, farther ſtill from pleading them, they beſtow not a *ſingle thought* upon them. Having fixed their hopes on the ROCK of Ages, they forget theſe tranſient bubbles ‖. Nay, they *wonder*, that their exalted MASTER

* *John* iii. 18. 36. The words are exceedingly emphatical, and no leſs awful.—Not barely he *ſhall* come into condemnation, but he (that believeth not) *is* condemned already. Though ever ſo civilized or refined in his outward converſation, he lies under a ſentence of death, and is the object of divine wrath.—Which not only will *viſit* him, but *abideth* on him. So that, where-ever he may be, whatever he may do, the diſpleaſure of the tremendous JEHOVAH hangs over him, like a dreadful deſtructive ſword; which, if he dies in ſuch a condition, will inevitably fall upon him, and cut him in pieces eternally.

† Pſal. lxii. 12. ‡ Rom. vi. 23.

‖ Acts x. 35. § Heb. xi. 6.

¶ See *ver.* 36, 37. Indeed it could hardly be otherwiſe, ſince *Cornelius* was ſettled at *Cæſarea*, the reſidence of the *Lord-Lieutenant*, and ſeat of the *civil*, as *Jeruſalem* was of the *eccleſiaſtical* government. In a place of ſuch general reſort, ſo very remarkable an event could not be unknown; eſpecially, as *Philip* the evangeliſt had fixed his abode in that city. See *Acts* viii. 40.

* Matth. xxv. 30.

† The ſpring is come, ſays the countryman; *for* the orchard blooms, and the black-bird ſings. The blooming of the trees, and the melody of the birds, were never ſuppoſed to *create*, only to *characterize*, the delightful ſeaſon. They are, not its cauſe, but the proof of its taking place. ‡ Matth. xxv. 40.

‖ *Bubbles* they are, compared with the all-glorious obedience of *CHRIST*, or conſidered in reference to the grand affair of juſtification before GOD.—But as bubbles, or watery veſicles inflated with air, are the means of exhibiting the beauti-

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ſhould condeſcend to make any honourable mention of ſuch imperfect ſervices.—O! that we may be enabled, through the whole courſe of our lives, to follow the example of their piety; and, when we ſtand before the tremendous tribunal, to imitate their humility and wiſdom! *Their humility*, in renouncing themſelves, and diſclaiming all deſert of their own. *Their wiſdom*, in repoſing their whole confidence on the merits and righteouſneſs of their REDEEMER.

Ther. Our LORD makes no mention of this doctrine, in his ſermon on the mount. Whereas, if it had been ſo *very material*, he would at leaſt have touched upon it, in that comprehenſive ſummary of true religion.

Aſp. Our LORD ſays not a word concerning the ſacrifice of his death. Neither is there a ſyllable relating to his interceſſion for tranſgreſſors. But are theſe articles of our *faith* to be deemed fictitious or ſuperfluous, becauſe they are not expreſsly inculcated, in that admirable treatiſe of *practical* divinity?

However, upon a more attentive examination, perhaps, we ſhall find the point moſt ſtrongly *implied*, though not diſtinctly *ſpecified*; its neceſſity demonſtrated, though its nature be not explained.——The illuſtrious TEACHER opened his mouth, and with a peculiar ſolemnity ſaid, *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit* *,——But *who* are they? Not the perſons who ſooth themſelves with the flattering conceit of the *Laodicean* church; *I am rich* in obedience, *and increaſed in* ſpiritual *goods* †. Thoſe rather, who ſee their indigence, bewail their guilt, and hunger and thirſt after the juſtifying merit of a REDEEMER; who, from the very bottom of an humbled heart, confeſs, "LORD, I am no more able to "conform all my conduct to thy moſt holy law, than I "am capable of atoning for my innumerable ſins. "CHRIST muſt be my righteouſneſs, as well as my "propitiation, or elſe I am irrecoverably undone."

The inimitable PREACHER farther aſſures his hearers, that, *unleſs their righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, they ſhall in no wiſe enter into the kingdom of heaven* ‡.—How muſt Chriſtians exceed the Phariſees? Not only in being *ſincere*, in having reſpect unto *all* GOD's commandments, but alſo in poſſeſſing a *complete* righteouſneſs; ſuch as the divine holineſs can, with complacency, accept; and in which the divine juſtice may, with honour, acquieſce. Nor can this be anything leſs, than the perfect obedience of the great MEDIATOR.—St *Paul*'s memorable teſtimony, concerning his attainments in the *Phariſaical*, and his hopes in the *Chriſtian* ſtate ‖, afford the very beſt comment upon this important declaration of our LORD.

Ther. The ORACLE of heaven, you know, was once conſulted upon that moſt momentous of all queſtions, How a perſon may aſcertain his title to life and immortality? And what is the tenor of the ſacred reſcript?—We are referred to the ten commandments; and, in the moſt explicit terms, with the moſt peremptory air, told, *This* DO, *and thou ſhalt live* §.

Aſp. That particular perſon, if you pleaſe, was referred to the ten commandments; not *we*, and mankind in general.—Our *LORD*, in the preceding verſes, had been informing his diſciples, that they muſt *receive the kingdom of GOD*, or the grace of the goſpel, and the bleſſings it propoſes, *as a little child*. And this can hardly ſignify, in conſequence of their own doings.

Ther. "That particular perſon referred to! Not we, "and mankind in general!"——I don't underſtand your meaning, *Aſpaſio*.

Aſp. You will obſerve then, that our LORD's reply was not an univerſal direction, but an anſwer *ad hominem*; peculiarly adapted * to the young gentleman's application; which, however it may be admired, was none of the wiſeſt.—Inſtead of aſking, "How ſhall a "*poor guilty* mortal, who is every day offending, obtain "forgiveneſs from the righteous GOD!" inſtead of ſaying, "How ſhall I, who am not able to think a good "*thought*, make ſure my title to an eternal weight of "glory!" our queriſt demands, *What good thing ſhall I* DO, *that I may inherit eternal life?* The reply proceeds upon the inquirer's own principles.—"*If* you expect "ſalvation upon ſuch *legal* terms, know, that your "obedience muſt be nothing leſs, than a *perfect* conformity to the divine law. Perform all its precepts in "their utmoſt extent, and with an unremitted perſeverance, then"—But alas! ſuch perfection is too high for fallen creatures; they cannot attain unto it. Neceſſarily, therefore, muſt they drop all ſuch pretenſions, and have recourſe to ſome other method of juſtification.

Ther. Why did that "wonderful COUNSELLOR," if ſuch was the purport of his anſwer, expreſs himſelf ſo obſcurely? Why did he not divert his promiſing ſcholar from this fruitleſs attempt, and put him in the right, the practicable way of obtaining ſalvation?

Aſp. This he did, with the fineſt addreſs, and in the moſt ſkilful manner.—Had our LORD affirmed, "You "are worldly; you are covetous; your riches are your "GOD;" ſuch a charge would, in all probability, have been as confidently denied, as it was plainly urged.—Therefore he brings this ſpecious hypocrite to *a teſt*, which could not be evaded, and which was ſure to diſcover the truth; a teſt, which laid open the palpable and enormous defects of his ſo much boaſted obedience; which made it appear, that, inſtead of keeping *all* the commandments, this vain ſelf-juſticiary had not obeyed the very *firſt*: but amidſt all his towering imaginations of himſelf, had been, and at that very inſtant was, a ſordid grovelling idolater; who preferred his tranſitory poſſeſſions on earth, to an everlaſting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven.—Could any expedient be more ſuitable to the caſe? or better calculated to reduce him, intoxicated as he was with pride, to a ſober humble mind? to beat him off from his falſe foundation, *the righteouſneſs which is of the law*; and lead him to a reliance on the promiſed, the expected, the preſent MESSIAH?

It puts me in mind of my friend *Sagacio*'s conduct, which ſeems to have ſome conformity with our LORD's procedure, and may, poſſibly, tend to illuſtrate its propriety.——Viſiting one of his unlearned neighbours, he found him in company with a certain talkative ſtranger; who was haranguing, at an *extravagant* rate, on the wonders of aſtronomy.——*Sagacio* ſoon perceived, that the chief furniture of this extraordinary adept,

* It is delightful to obſerve the *πολυποικιλος σοφια*, the *curious variety*, yet the *conſummate propriety* of our LORD's conduct; how exactly this divine caſuiſt ſuits his counſel to the different ſtates and characters of mankind.—The ſecure and preſumptuous he ſends to the *law*, that they may be *humbled*. To the contrite and penitent he preaches the *goſpel*, that they may be *comforted*.—When the *Phariſee*, full of ſelf-conceit, ſtands up, and ſays, *What ſhall I do!* the anſwer is, *Do all that is commanded*. When the ſinful woman falls at his feet, and ſpeaks in tears the guilt of her life; *Thy ſins are forgiven*, is the gracious reply.

† *Matth.* xix. 21. *If thou wilt be perfect, ſell all that thou haſt and give to the poor.* This direction ſeems to be much of the ſame nature, with that other part of our LORD's reply, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* Both were perſonal, both occaſional, both adapted to particular circumſtances. The latter is no more the ſtated evangelical way to heaven, than the former is indiſpenſably obligatory on all Chriſtians.

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ful colours of the *rainbow*; ſo theſe ſervices, though poor and defective, *bear teſtimony* to the exiſtence of that precious grace—*faith*.

* Matth. v. 3. † Rev. iii. 17.

‡ Matth. v. 20. ‖ Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9.

§ Matth. xix. 17. Luke x. 28.

ay in a little acquaintance with the technical terms, and somewhat more than a little ſhare of aſſurance. How ſhould he bring the ſelf-plumed ſciolift to a little *modeſty* of ſentiment, and *decorum* of converſation? He took leave to aſk, "What the word *aſtronomy* might ſignify?" The orator was ſtruck dumb in a moment. He had never informed himſelf, it ſeems, that aſtronomy related to the order and regulation of the ſtars. This ſingle queſtion taught our minute philoſopher, more effectually than twenty lectures on the ſubject. It taught him his *own ignorance*, and that he had the very rudiments of his ſo much admired ſcience ſtill to learn.

Ther. What will you ſay to thoſe famous paſſages in the epiſtle of St *James*: *By works a man is juſtifyed. Was not Abraham our father juſtified by works* *? Can any words be plainer in their meaning? or can any meaning be more directly oppoſite to the whole ſcope of your argumentation?

Aſp. This I would ſay, *Theron.*—The paſſages you quote, when detached from the context, may *ſeem* inconſiſtent with the declarations of another apoſtle; as a limb, when wrenched from its natural ſituation, appears with an air of diſproportion. Whereas, reduce the diſlocated part, and it will recover the ſymmetry of its ſhape; it will harmonize exactly with the animal ſyſtem.—Replace likewiſe theſe aſſertions; conſider them in *connection* with the whole paragraph; and they will be found, if not uniſons, yet perfect concords, with the ſtrain of St *Paul*'s teaching.

What is the point which St *James* undertakes to illuſtrate?—To diſtinguiſh a genuine from an inſincere faith. *If a man* ſay, *he hath faith* †; this is mentioned, as the boaſt of ſome hypocritical profeſſor. So that the apoſtle is evidently dealing with a *pretender* to the precious gift; and therefore replies, *Shew me thy faith*: Prove the reality of thy claim; prove it to *me* and to the church, to thy fellow-creatures and fellow-*Chriſtians*. If unproductive of righteous and godly works, we muſt pronounce it ſpurious, worthleſs, dead.

Having detected the *counterfeit*, he proceeds to deſcribe the ſterling. The grand characteriſtic of which is, a frame of mind and a courſe of action, correſponding with the doctrine believed. By this touchſtone the faith of our renowned progenitor was tried; and, being tried, was "found unto praiſe, and honour, and "glory." *Was not Abraham our father juſtified by works?*—Juſtified! how? as to acceptance with the ſupreme JUDGE? No: this was effected, long before the patriarch offered up *Iſaac*. But when he exerciſed that heroic act of ſelf-denial, reſignation, and obedience, then his juſtification was evidenced, to all his contemporaries, and to all generations. *His faith was made perfect* ‡; anſwered its proper end; and appeared to be of the true, the triumphant, the ſcriptural kind; ſince it overcame the world, overcame ſelf, and regarded GOD all in all.

Upon the whole, St *Paul* ſpeaks concerning the juſtification of our *perſons*; St *James* concerning the juſtification of our *faith* ‖.—St *Paul* deſcribes the *manner* of being juſtified before the all-ſeeing God; St *James* points out the *proof* § of a juſtified ſtate, as it is viſible to men.—The former proceeds from the immaculate righteouſneſs of CHRIST, placed to our account; the latter conſiſts in the fruits of righteouſneſs, adorning our life.—Rightly underſtood, therefore, theſe paſſages are not in the leaſt contradictory to the epiſtles of St *Paul*, or to the ſcope of my argumentation; but are a ſeaſonable caveat and a proper preſervative, againſt miſunderſtanding *thoſe*, or perverting *this*.

Ther. I wiſh you would read that conciſe, but judicious abridgment of true religion, compriſed in the fifteenth *Pſalm*. The ſacred penman, for his own, and for the information of all mankind, aſks, *LORD, who ſhall dwell in thy tabernacle, or who ſhall reſt upon thy holy hill?* To this moſt intereſting inquiry, the following verſes are a full and ſatisfactory anſwer: the whole of which turns upon the diſcharge of moral duties; *walking uprightly, and working righteouſneſs*; without a ſyllable or a ſingle hint, concerning the very ſuperior excellence of faith, or the extreme neceſſity of a vicarious obedience.

Aſp. I have often read, and I well remember, that beautiful, that inſtructive *Pſalm*. And I beg leave to obſerve, once for all, with relation to ſuch paſſages of the Old Teſtament, that they ſuppoſe the perſons whom they deſcribe, to be convinced of their *natural corruption*, to be humbled under a ſenſe of their *actual* guilt, and to live in a conſcientious obſervance of the *expiatory ſacrifices*; all which had an invariable reference to CHRIST, and derived their whole virtue from his mediation.

Would any of the *Jewiſh* ſaints, think you, have dared to advance a plea for eternal bleſſedneſs, upon the foot of their own conformity to ſuch *moral* directions? neglecting, at the ſame time, the ſacrifices of the three great feſtivals, or a believing improvement of the daily oblation.—By no means. They were, and they would acknowledge themſelves, deplorably defective. They would plead the promiſe of free grace, and fly to the blood, which GOD himſelf had appointed *to make an atonement for their ſouls*.—By ſuch ſentiments and ſuch a conduct, they reduced to practice the very eſſence of our doctrine; diſavowing their own deeds, however virtuous or religious; and truſting in the ſtrength of *Iſrael, the LORD our righteouſneſs*; who alone fulfilled all the precepts contained in this excellent formulary of duty; who was alſo the ſubſtance of every purifying and of every propitiatory rite.

Ther. Has not the ſacred writer expreſsly ſaid, at the cloſe of the *Pſalm*, *Whoſo* DOTH *theſe things, ſhall never fall?*

Aſp. He has: and this, I apprehend, is his meaning.—"Perſons of ſuch a temper, and ſuch a practice, bear "the marks of GOD's children, and are meet for his "glory. Accordingly, they ſhall never fall, either into "total apoſtaſy HERE, or final condemnation HEREAFTER. They are now heirs, and in due time ſhall "be poſſeſſors, of his eternal kingdom."

But you will take notice, that all theſe duties and qualifications, only *characterize*, not *conſtitute* the inheritor of heaven.——You will likewiſe advert to another very remarkable circumſtance in the deſcription: *He ſetteth not by himſelf, but is lowly in his own eyes* *.

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* Jam. ii. 21. 24. † Jam. ii. 14.

‡ Ετελειωθη. In this ſenſe, I ſuppoſe we are to underſtand St John's aphoriſm: *He that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous*; manifeſts the truth of his converſion, and *juſtifies* his profeſſion from the charge, and from the ſuſpicion of inſincerity, 1 *John* iii. 7.

‖ That the expreſſion uſed by St *James*, ſignifies this *declarative* juſtification, is plain from 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. where the apoſtle, ſpeaking of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, ſays, εδικαιωθη, *He was juſtified in* or by *the SPIRIT*; *declared* to be the true SON of GOD; *manifeſted* on earth, and *recognized* from heaven, as the undoubted SAVIOUR of the world.

§ A very little reflection, I ſhould imagine, muſt convince every unprejudiced reader, that St *James* cannot poſſibly be ſtating the method of juſtification before the infinitely-righteous GOD: Becauſe he never ſo much as mentions the death of CHRIST—*who made his ſoul an offering for ſin*—*to whom gave all the prophets witneſs, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins*—*and beſides whom, there is no other name given under heaven, whereby we can be ſaved*—Could an apoſtle ſo *abſolutely* forget his LORD; and in a caſe, where every other inſpired writer acknowledges him; nay, acknowledges him to be ALL IN ALL?

* *Pſal.* xv. 4. נבזה עיניו נמאס I cannot ſay, that I admire

Or, as the more expressive original speaks, he is *despicable* and *vile* in his own sight. So far from aspiring to *self-justification*, that he even condemns and abhors himself, and falls down, as a most unworthy wretch, at the foot of infinitely free grace.

Ther. I cannot but think, it is the *current doctrine* of scripture, and I am sure, it is one of the first principles which the light of nature teaches,—That the most high GOD must necessarily love righteousness, and take pleasure in the righteous.

Asp. If the light of nature was to publish a gospel, I believe, it would be formed upon your plan. It would bestow favour only on the *innocent*, the *virtuous*, and the *holy*.—But the gospel of CHRIST runs in a very different strain. This brings pardon for the condemned, and blessings for the accursed. This is health to the sick, and recovery to the ruined. *The LORD hath anointed me*, saith its divine AUTHOR, *to preach good tidings to the meek*, who are humbled under a sense of their sinfulness.—*He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted*, who are wounded with a conviction of their undone state; *to proclaim liberty to the captives*, the wretched captives of *Satan*; *and the opening of the prison to them that are bound*, bound in the chains of ignorance, impotence, and misery.

As I am myself a most unworthy sinner, you must not be displeased, if I espouse the cause of those unhappy creatures. Yet, though a friend of sinners, I am no enemy to the righteous. I entirely agree with my *Theron* in allowing, that the most high GOD necessarily loves righteousness. Only I want to be informed, where this admirable and lovely quality is to be found?—Not among the *Gentiles*. They have swerved from the dictates of natural conscience.—Not among the *Jews*. They have broke the holy commandment delivered on mount *Sinai*.—Not among *Christians*. For, if GOD should enter into judgment with us, we could not answer him one of a thousand.—In the kingdom of *Abyssinia*, or in the country of the *Moors*, where will you find the *native* whites?

The SON of GOD found none among the race of *Adam*, that were entitled to the character of righteous. He who gave himself a ransom for all, makes no application to such persons *.—Why? Because he fully *discerned* personal goodness, or was unable to *distinguish* the excellency of inherent virtue?—No; but because he knew, that, amiable as these qualifications are, they have no existence in the human heart, till the sinner, reconciled by his death, be sanctified also by his SPIRIT.

You remember, perhaps, that remarkable answer, which the *Spartans* once returned to a threatening embassy from some of the neighbouring states. Nothing could be more concise; and, I think, nothing was ever more spirited and significant.

Ther. Those neighbours gave them to understand, by their ambassadors, "That, if they entered their territories, they would burn their towns; make the inhabitants prisoners; and spread destruction wherever they "advanced."—To which insolent menace, the brave *Lacedemonians* made no other reply, than—IF.

Is this the story to which you refer?

Asp. The very same.—And when you are speaking of human righteousness, as the cause of our acceptance with the eternal GOD, I would borrow the language of a *Spartan*. IF, shall be my reply.—*If*, exclusive of the obedience, and independent on the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, you can furnish yourself with this endowment; or *if* you can carry your righteousness to that perfection, which may equal the purity of the law, and comport with the majesty of the LAWGIVER, *then* trust in it; let it be the ground of your confidence; and seek no better foundation.

But whoever shall, in this manner, seek for his recommendation to the favour of GOD, will act like the mistaken countryman in *Horace*;—who, being unable to ford the river, took up a resolution to wait, till the stream was all run by:

—*At ille*
Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum †.

Ther. Here, I fancy, we must take leave of your countryman. If he adheres to his resolution, we shall find him in the very same situation, when breakfast is over; and may resume our subject, just where it is discontinued.

* *Matth.* ix. 13. *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

† *Vain man, desist: such flatt'ring hopes forego;*
It flows, and flows, and will for ever flow.

DIALOGUE VII.

Ther. TO me, who have spent the greatest part of the winter in *town*, these scenes of the *country* are inexpressibly pleasing. Take who will the gilded saloon, and the silken settee; so long as I can shelter myself under the canopy of such a spreading beech, and use one of its coarse, mis-shapen roots for my seat.

'Tis true, we see no longer those splendid brocades, and elegant toupees, which distinguish the *Park* and the *Mall*.—But we have, full in our view, a multitude of honest rustics, pursuing their chearful labours in yonder *meadow*; some mowing the luxuriant herbage; some raising it into regular cocks; others loading their waggons with the hay, or clearing the ground with their rakes. The ground, cleared of its late incumbrance, appears fresh and green, like another spring. While the exhalations of the recided grass, floating in the air, give a rural perfume to the gale.—And which, my *Aspasio*, which are the most valuable objects? The *little labourers* of the hive, that enrich

the Bible translation of this clause: *In whose eyes the vile person is contemptible.* Methinks, it does not savour of the tender and benign spirit of our religion, which teaches us to *honour all men*; to despise no one's *person*, but only to detest the *wickedness* of the wicked.

Should the sense I have quoted, have its weight; the sense I have preferred, is incomparably *weightier*. If to despise the vile, is a religious act; to think meanly of ourselves, is a much more advanced, and a far more difficult instance of true religion. This is to copy the highest PATTERN of human excellence, who, notwithstanding his very superior attainments, accounted *himself less than the least of all saints*; nay, *the very chiefest of sinners*.

Upon this passage of *Isaiah* I would beg leave to observe, that the word *meek* seems not to answer or convey the prophet's idea. By *the meek*, we are inclined to think of persons, endued with that placid and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of GOD of great price. This might *discourage* many people, who know themselves to be destitute of such a gracious habit. This might lead others to suspect, that some amiable disposition is *previously* necessary in order to receive the benefits of redeeming grace. Which is a very mistaken, and will prove a most uncomfortable forbidding notion.

The original ענוים signifies, in this place, *the afflicted*; not so much those who are beautified with meekness, as those who are oppressed with misery, spiritual misery especially: not excepting even those who are slaves to their own unruly passions. The LORD JESUS never finds, but makes people meek. Meekness is one of the fruits of his SPIRIT; one of the blessings which he bestows on the unworthy.

The whole paragraph is a description of extreme wretchedness. What can be more distressed than the man, whose outward circumstances are impoverished and *ruined*; whose spirit is *broken* under the weight of his calamities; who is taken *captive* by the enemy, is thrown into a *dungeon*, and loaded with *irons*?—This is the proper representation; this is the picture of unconverted sinners; and to these, *in these* CHRIST JESUS is a ransom, a deliverer, a portion.

enrich themſelves, and regale their maſters? or the *gay flutterers* of the garden, whoſe whole life is nothing but ſport; and their higheſt character is, to be inſignificantly pretty?

Aſp. In this retirement, we hear none of the wanton and corrupting airs of the *opera*; no, nor the majeſtic and ennobling melody of the *oratorio* *.——But we have a band of muſic, ſtationed in the grove; and a concert of native harmony, warbling from the boughs. We are entertained with the muſic, which charmed the human ear, long before † *Jubal* found out his inſtruments; and thouſands of years before *Handel* compoſed his notes.——The bull-finch, and a multitude of little tuneful throats, ſtrike the key. The thruſh below, and the ſky-lark reſponſive from above, *diverſify* and *exalt* the ſtrain. The blackbird, ſomewhat like the ſolemn organ, with notes perfectly mellow, and gracefully ſonorous, crowns the choir. While the turtle's melancholy voice, and the murmuring water's plaintive tone, *deepen* and *complete* the univerſal ſymphony.

This is the muſic, which conſtituted the firſt ſong of thankſgiving, and formed the firſt vocal praiſe, that the all-gracious CREATOR received from his new-made world. This is neither the parent of effeminacy, nor a pander for vice; but refines the affections, even while it amuſes the imagination.

Ther. All the entertainments of nature, are calculated to ſecure our innocence, as well as to gratify our fancy. And what is another very agreeable circumſtance, thoſe gratifications which afford the ſublimeſt pleaſure, are exhibited *gratis*. While thoſe which enervate the mind, and debauch the affections, muſt be *dearly purchaſed*.—Every one cannot gain admittance into the boxes or the pit, when ſome celebrated *tragedy* is brought upon the ſtage. But every one may behold the beauteous exhibitions of *ſpring*, and the finiſhed productions of *autumn*. All may contemplate the machinery of nature, and the wonders of creation; thereby enjoying a far more exquiſite amuſement, without any of the guilt, or any of the danger.

The inhabitants of yonder villages have never beheld the ſplendid proceſſion, which ſolemnizes the coronation of a monarch; nor the *gaudy illuminations*, which diſtinguiſh the anniverſary of his birth. But they ſee, almoſt every morning, a much nobler ſpectacle diſplayed in the eaſt. They ſee the great *ruler* of the *day*, or rather the envoy from day's eternal *SOVEREIGN*, making his entry amidſt the ſpaces of the ſky.——The heavens are ſtrewed with colours, which outvie the pinks and carnations. The graſs is decked with dew-drops, and every plant is ſtrung, as it were, with pearls. All around the darkneſs retires, and ſweet refreſhing gales ariſe.—At length the magnificent luminary appears.—And what is all the oſtentatious pomp of kings? what is all the glitter of the moſt brilliant court? compared with his tranſcendent luſtre?—This ſpectacle we may behold, without loſs of time, or prejudice to health. Nay, we cannot behold it, without *improving* one, and *redeeming* the other. So beneficial are even the pleaſures which nature yields; ſo ſerviceable the very diverſions, to which ſhe invites!

Aſp. Thus gracious is the almighty MAKER, in the conſtitution of *material* things. The ſubſtantial and the valuable, are open to every one; are acceſſible by all. Only the tinſel and the trappings, are the property of a few; the poor prerogative of wealth.

No leſs gracious is GOD, in the diſpoſal of *ſpiritual* favours. Theſe are infinitely more excellent; and yet are equally free. We are invited to *buy them without money, and without price* ‡.—What do you give for the benefits of the riſing ſun, or the delights of this rural melody? The caſe is much the ſame, with regard to the righteouſneſs, by which we are juſtified, and all the bleſſings of ſalvation.

Ther. This brings to our remembrance the countryman, whom we left on the banks of the river. And, for aught I can ſee, *Theron* and the ruſtic are pretty much upon a footing. The firſt as far from acceding to your notions, as the laſt is from gaining his point.

Aſp. Have you any objection, *Theron*, to theſe gifts of nature, becauſe they are neither purchaſed by your money, nor produced by your own toil?

Ther. But who can ever expect to obtain pardon, and acceptance, and eternal ſalvation, at ſo cheap a rate? It ſeems to be all deluſion, *Aſpaſio*.

Aſp. So cheap! Then you would pay ſomewhat, I perceive, by way of price.—But give me leave to aſk, What price did you pay to GOD your MAKER, for faſhioning you in your mother's womb? what price have you paid to GOD your PRESERVER, for upholding you ever ſince you was born? Or what price do you think of paying to GOD the ſupreme PROPRIETOR, for the ground on which you tread, for the air in which you breathe, for the light by which you ſee? Juſt the *ſame* price muſt you advance to GOD your SAVIOUR, for all his juſtifying merits.

Both *theſe* and *thoſe* proceed from the ſame BENEFACTOR. They are all abſolutely neceſſary, either for the welfare of the body, or the happineſs of the ſoul. And they are all vouchſafed on the ſame free terms. For thus ſaith the prophet, *His going forth*, in the diſpenſation of the goſpel, *is prepared as the morning*. *CHRIST*, with all his precious privileges, *ſhall come unto us as the rain; as the latter and former rain unto the earth* †.——However, if you are acquainted with a different, or a better way, be ſo good as to communicate your knowledge.

Ther. Some, you may obſerve, depend upon their *inoffenſive* behaviour. They live peaceably. They do no harm to their neighbours. They are guilty of no groſs offence againſt GOD. And why ſhould they not hope to obtain his favour?—They apprehend, the prophet *Samuel* eſtabliſhes their hope, when he makes this ſolemn appeal; *Whoſe aſs have I taken? whoſe ox have I taken? or whom have I defrauded* ‡?—Nay, they imagine, that our *LORD* himſelf has authoriſed their expectation, by giving this character of *Nathanael*; *An Iſraelite indeed, in whom is no guile* ‖.—A freedom from outward injuſtice and inward hypocriſy, is all the qualification, applauded in the one caſe, avowed in the other.

Aſp. This negative goodneſs (if it deſerves to be called goodneſs) was a plea for the empty *Phariſee*. But none, I preſume, would chuſe to be aſſociated with *ſuch* a companion, either in character here, or in condition hereafter.

Samuel, in the place you mention, is vindicating himſelf only to his *fellow-creatures*, and only in the capacity of a *magiſtrate*. He ſpeaks not of his juſtification before the JUDGE of quick and dead. This, he well knew, muſt be derived from another ſource, and muſt reſt upon a firmer bottom.

The Iſraelite without guile, was a perſon, who not only abſtained from every ſin, but performed every duty; and without any *wilful neglect* of the one, or any *allowed indulgence* of the other. This inſtance, therefore, will by no means prove the ſufficiency of your negative righteouſneſs. Which ſeems to have juſt the ſame degree of excellency, as a fountain that never iſſues in water, or as a cloud that never deſcends in rain §.

* *Majeſtic* and *enobling*.—This, I think, is the true character, and expreſſes the real tendency, of the *oratorio*. Nevertheleſs, it may not be improper to obſerve, that if we carry a trifling or irreligious ſpirit to the entertainment; if we attend to the muſical airs, but diſregard thoſe ſacred truths, which enter into the compoſition; ſuch a behaviour will be little better than a *profanation* of holy things. I fear, it will be a ſpecies of *taking* GOD's adorable and glorious name *in vain*.

† Gen. iv. 21.

‡ Iſ. lv. 1. † Hoſ. vi. 3. ‡ 1 Sam. xii. 3. ‖ John i. 47.

§ *Vultus quæ tetricæ, ſit qui non ſtudium arcum.* CLAUDIAN.

Ther.

Ther. In this particular, *Aſpaſio*, your ſentiments are mine.——But I would add *morality* to civility; the virtuous to the inoffenſive converſation. And if we not only ceaſe to do evil, but learn to do well; if we uſe temperance, exerciſe charity, and keep all the commandments to the *beſt of our power*, is not this a ſufficient foundation for our hope?

Aſp. Yes, *Theron*; if, as you add morality to your civility, you add *perfection* to both. Otherwiſe you muſt be ranked, not among the claimants, but among the delinquents. You have no title to a reward, but ſtand in need of pardon.

It is a principle of juſtice, founded on the unalterable conſtitution of things, That the debtor be acquitted, when he has paid the debt. But ſuppoſing him, inſtead of gold to bring iron, inſtead of talents to return pence, inſtead of defraying, to increaſe the ſcore daily; can he *then* reaſonably expect, or legally claim a diſcharge?

With reſpect to ſuch an obedience, we may paſs our verdict in the figurative, but very expreſs language of *Iſaiah*: *The bed is ſhorter, than that a man can ſtretch himſelf on it; and the covering narrower, than that he can wrap himſelf in it* *. It can neither give reſt to the alarmed conſcience, nor afford protection to the guilty ſoul. If we have nothing better to plead, we ſhall not be able to lift up our heads, in the laſt deciſive judgment; but *muſt enter into the rock, and hide ourſelves in the duſt, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majeſty* †.

Ther. We will go a ſtep farther, and take in the exerciſe of *devotion*. We will read GOD's word; pray to his divine MAJESTY; and regularly attend on his public worſhip.——Here now are ſocial accompliſhments and moral virtues, completed by the performance of religious duties.

Aſp. Completed!—I fear that expreſſion will ſcarcely abide the teſt of a ſingle query. Have you then performed all your duties, with that ardent love of GOD, and undivided view to his glory; with that adoring gratitude to the bleſſed JESUS, and that child-like dependence on his SPIRIT; which the nature of things requires, and the ſcriptures of truth enjoin?—If not, your duties, be they moral, or religious, or both, are far from being complete. Nay, they are utterly defective; and, for that reaſon, abſolutely inſufficient for your juſtification. They are clipped or ſophiſticated coin. And will that be *current* in the world of glory?

Ther. Allowing them to be defective, they are at leaſt *ſincere*. And though not free from all alloy, yet if they bear the image and ſuperſcription of integrity, why ſhould they be rejected, as "reprobate ſilver ‡? Why ſhould they not obtain the currency you mention?

Aſp. "Alas!"——ſays a judicious and admired writer,—"the imperfections of our beſt ſervices daily *forfeit* "the bleſſings of *time*. How impoſſible then is it, that "the ſincerity of them, amidſt ſo many frailties and de-"fects, ſhould *purchaſe* the glories of *eternity*!"

Ther. Be your writer ever ſo judicious, I can confront him with others, equally capable of judging, and diametrically oppoſite in opinion.——What ſays that wiſe and brave man, the ſucceſſor of *Moſes*, and generaliſſimo of the armies of *Iſrael*? *Joſhua*, I am ſure, declares himſelf on my ſide: *Fear the LORD, and ſerve him in ſincerity* ‖, is his laſt ſolemn charge to the people.——Even the great apoſtle, on a review of his miniſtry, makes it matter of ſelf-gratulation, that he *had his converſation in godly ſincerity* §.

Aſp. You have quoted the charge delivered by the ſervant, be pleaſed to recollect the proteſtation, made by the maſter: *Not for thy righteouſneſs*, ſays *Moſes*, *or for the uprightneſs of thy heart, doſt thou go to poſſeſs their land* ¶. Even an earthly *Canaan* was not given to the *Iſraelites*, as the reward of their own, either outward obedience, or inward ſincerity. Much leſs can we expect the kingdom of immortality, on account of any uprightneſs of our intentions, or piety of our actions.

However, as the doctrine of ſincerity is the favourite and the faſhionable tenet, I will conform a little to the taſte in vogue. You ſhall have no reaſon to complain, that I am either a *Cynic* or a *Stoic* *.—Let it ſuffice us to be ſincere. Only let us refer ourſelves to the apoſtle, for a deſcription of this darling qualification. *That ye may be ſincere, being filled with the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are by JESUS CHRIST unto the praiſe and glory of GOD* †.

Here are three properties of acceptable ſincerity.—It muſt bear fruits, *the fruits of righteouſneſs*; and bear them abundantly, ſo that we may be filled with them.—The branch and the fruits muſt derive, *that* its vigour, *theſe* their flavour, and both of them their very being, from the all-ſupporting, all-ſupplying root *CHRIST JESUS*.——Then, inſtead of terminating in ſelf-juſtification, they muſt redound to the honour of GOD. It is not ſaid, theſe ſhall *juſtify* you, but theſe ſhall *glorify* your *FATHER* which is in heaven.

This kind of ſincerity can never be too highly eſteemed, nor too zealouſly encouraged. But this, you will obſerve, flows from the grace of *CHRIST*, and iſſues in the glory of *GOD*; therefore does but very poorly aſſert either the ſufficiency of *human ability* to perform good works, or the ſufficiency of *human works* to win the prize of our high calling.

Ther. Do you then exclude all works? Will you make a mere nothing, both of our *moral* endowments, and of *your* evangelical obedience?

Aſp. They are excluded, both the one and the other, from all ſhare in juſtifying us; yet not by me, but by an authority, to which there can be no objection, and from which there lies no appeal. Speaking of ſalvation, thus ſaith the wiſdom of *GOD*, *Not of works*.——

Ther. Works of the *ceremonial* law, I ſuppoſe. Theſe, we all acknowledge, are, under the Chriſtian diſpenſation as a bond cancelled, or an act repealed. But ſure you will allow a better office, and a nobler character, to that courſe of obedience, which is regulated by the commands of *CHRIST*.

Aſp. St *Paul* will allow it no ſuch office, as that for which my *Theron* is pleading. *Ye are ſaved*, ſays the apoſtle. Ye are delivered from wrath, reconciled to *GOD*, and made heirs of his kingdom.—How? *By grace, through faith* ‡. *Grace*, like a magnificent ſovereign, from the riches of his own bounty, and without any reſpect to human worthineſs, confers the glorious gift. *Faith*, like an indigent petitioner, with an empty hand, and without any pretence to perſonal deſert, receives the heavenly bleſſing.

Both grace and faith ſtand in direct oppoſition to works; *all* works whatever. Whether they be works of the law, or works of the goſpel; exerciſes of the heart, or actions of the life; done in a ſtate of nature, or done under the influences of grace; they are, all and every of them, *equally* ſet aſide in this great affair.

That the bill of excluſion is thus extenſive, or rather quite *unlimited*, appears from the reaſon aſſigned: *Leſt any man ſhould boaſt* ‖: that all pretence of glorying may be cut off from fallen creatures; that the whole honour of obtaining ſalvation, may be appropriated to HIM, who *hid not his face from ſhame and ſpitting*.——And is he not worthy, unſpeakably and infinitely worthy, to receive this unrivalled honour, as a recompence for his unparallelled humiliation?

Ther. All our good works, we allow, are recom-

* If. xxviii. 20. † If. ii. 10. ‡ Jer. vi. 30.
‖ Joſh. xxiv. 14. § 2 Cor. i. 12. ¶ Deut. ix. 5.

* The *Cynic* had not complaiſance, the *Stoic* was quite inflexible.

† Phil. i. 10, 11. ‡ Eph. ii. 8. ‖ Eph. ii. 9.

mended

mended by CHRIST. They prevail for our justification, only through his merits. So that we still depend upon the REDEEMER; and, by this means, pay him the highest honour.

Asp. Depend upon the REDEEMER! No, my dear friend. You rely upon your own pious acts, and moral qualifications. They, *they* are your grand recommendation. The office consigned over to the divine JESUS, is nothing more than to be (as it were) *master of the ceremonies*. He may have the credit of introducing your fine accomplishments, with a kind of graceful air.—But is *this* an office suited to his incomparable dignity? Was it for *this* that he bowed the heavens, and partook of our nature? Was it for *this* that he became subject to the law, and obedient unto death? *Only* for *this*, that he might usher in our own endowments, with a plume and a leaf?—Surely, *Theron*, you can never entertain such low thoughts of the incarnate GOD, and of CHRIST's mediatorial undertaking.

Ther. Neither can I entertain such *low* and *vilifying* thoughts of our own virtuous attainments. They distinguish persons of eminence and worth, from the sordid wretch and execrable villain; just as the noble faculty of reason distinguishes the man from the brute.

Asp. To deny good works the merit of justifying us, is very different from vilifying them.——You are going to build a new house, *Theron*. Pray, do you intend to hew your timber from the flimsy tendrils of the vine?

Ther. No, certainly *.

Asp. Because you don't think its feeble shoots proper, to form the beams, and support the roof, of your intended edifice; do you, therefore, affront them, depreciate them, or disallow their usefulness?—By no means. They may *beautify* your walls with their ornamental spread, and *enrich* the desert with their delicious fruit. This is an office suitable to the nature of the plant; and from this it receives sufficient estimation, without pretending to the honours of the oak.

Virtuous attainments, I own, are a considerable distinction, in the present state of things. And, what is a higher encomium, (I shall now outshoot you in your own bow) they will distinguish the true believer from the hypocritical professor, even at the great tribunal.—— But let them be content with their province, and not intrude upon the SAVIOUR's prerogative. To *effect* justification, be *his*; to *discriminate* the justified, *theirs*. —Neither let them elate their possessors with a vain conceit of themselves; who, though they were meek as *Moses*, holy as *Samuel*, and wise as *Daniel*, must confide in nothing, but the boundless mercies of the LORD; must plead nothing, but the infinite merits of his CHRIST.

This is the theology, both of the *Psalmist*, and of St *Paul*. They derive the blessedness promised in scripture, not from the shallow stream of human accomplishments, but from the inexhaustible ocean of divine grace. *Blessed is he, whose unrighteousnesses are forgiven, and whose sins are covered* †.

Ther. Will *Aspasio* then, like many of our modern disputants, *mutilate* the holy word? industriously display what seems to strengthen his argument, but artfully secrete what tends to overthrow his scheme? How could you forget, or why should you suppress, the following clause? *and in whose spirit there is no guile.*—Was you afraid it would demolish your opinion; and point out an *upright, honest* mind, as the cause of this blessedness?

Asp. Far was I, my dear *Theron*, from any such groundless apprehensions; and equally far from all such delusory designs. *Shall I talk deceitfully for* GOD *‡? His sacred cause does not need it, and his excellent Majesty would disdain it. No; I would condemn my tongue to eternal silence, rather than speak a syllable, either to conceal, or disguise the truth.

Most readily we will admit the sentence you mention: *In whose spirit there is no guile.* It is evident from the context, that these words are not descriptive of a person, in whose heart and conversation there *is* no iniquity; but of a penitent sinner, whose mouth freely *confesses* the iniquity of them both; confesses without any reserve, or the least attempt to palliate.——Which, instead of invalidating, corroborates my argument: since, according to your own allegation, the highest merit consists in a free acknowledgement of sin, or a total renunciation of all worthiness.

Ther. When, therefore, we join *repentance* to all our other works; lament our deficiencies, and implore forgiveness; surely this must be available with a merciful GOD, and cannot but entitle us to the happiness of heaven.

Asp. How strange does it sound, at least in my ears, for poor, miserable, guilty creatures, to talk of entitling themselves to the happiness of heaven, by any deeds of their own! when it is owing wholly to GOD's rich *forbearing mercy*, that they are transmitted to hell; owing wholly to GOD's free *preventing grace*, that they are enabled to think a good thought.

But not to enlarge upon this consideration;—I would ask, whether those penetential exercises were attended with a hearty detestation of sin, and an utter abhorrence of the sinner †?—If they *were*, you would then renounce yourself universally. You would never think of placing the least dependance on any thing of your own; nay, you would even loath yourself.—If they *were not*, then your very repentance falls short, and is to be repented of. It is as if *one came to the press-fat for to draw out fifty vessels, and there were but twenty* ‖. It is, if I may continue the prophet's metaphor and the prophet's language, *the scant measure; which*, in this your spiritual traffic, as well as in the affairs of secular commerce, *is abominable* §.

Or, should your repentance be without a failure, and without a flaw; I must still say to my friend, as our LORD replied to the young ruler, *One thing thou lackest*. In all these acts of humiliation, you have only taken shame to yourself; whereas a righteousness is wanting, which may magnify the law, and make it honourable. —Should GOD, without insisting upon this, pardon and reward, he would not act according to his glorious character; nor be, at once, *a just GOD, and a SAVIOUR* ¶. —And if you can find this righteousness, *either in the depth, or in the height above*; in any person or any object, save only in the imputed obedience of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*; I retract whatever I have advanced.

Ther. A preacher and an author has lately assured us, that we are to be "accepted of GOD, and saved by our "own obedience." If so, I need not scruple to repeat my assertion, that our own duties, especially when accompanied with repentance, are a *real* and *proper* foundation for life eternal.

Asp. Then the apostle was under a great mistake, when, treating of CHRIST and his merits, he ventured to assert, *Other foundation can no man lay, save that which is laid, even* JESUS CHRIST ‡.

Ther. If you will not credit a modern preacher, I can produce a decision, made by one of the most ancient and authoritative *synods*; *Then hath GOD also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life* ‡.——*Repentance unto life*, is *their* unanimous voice, and *my* unexceptionable voucher.

* *No, certainly.*—Perhaps it may be worth our while to observe, that this is the meaning of a very *obsolete* expression, which occurs in our translation of (ουκ οιδα), *Luke* xvii. 9. *I trow not.*

† Psal. xxxii. 1. Rom. iv. 7.

* Job xiii. 7. † Ezek. xxxvi. 31.

‡ Hag. ii. 16. ‖ Mic. vi. 10. § Is. xlv. 21.

¶ 1 Cor. iii. 11. ‡ Acts xi. 18.

Asp. I can eaſily gueſs the aſſembly, to which you refer. But I can hardly grant it the venerable name of a *ſynod*. It conſiſted of ſome *Judaizing* converts; who adhered, with a tenacious and bigotted zeal, to the *Moſaic* rites.—However, though I might ſcruple my *Theron*'s appellation, I readily acquieſce in *their* determination.

It is not ſaid, thoſe *Gentiles* were penitent, and *therefore* GOD granted them life. This ſhould have been the language of the aſſembly, in order to eſtabliſh my friend's way of thinking.—On the contrary, they were dead in ſin. GOD, of his free goodneſs, granted them repentance: which is both the beginning and a ſubſtantial part of *true* life; even of that life, which is founded on juſtification, is carried on by ſanctification, and completed in glory.

I would farther obſerve, that repentance is a *turning of the heart*. And when it is repentance unto life, it is a turning of the heart from every other object, to the great and ſole fountain of good, CHRIST JESUS *.—Were men ſlaves to ſenſuality? When they repent, they are turned to CHRIST, for refined and heavenly affections. Were they wont to confide in themſelves, and their own works? As ſoon as they truly repent, they turn to CHRIST for a better righteouſneſs; and, thereby, for everlaſting acceptance with GOD.——In ſhort, they turn from every falſe ſtay, and fly only to CHRIST; depend only on CHRIST; looking, not to their own tears or humiliation, not to their own duties or graces; but *looking for the mercy of our LORD JESUS CHRIST unto eternal life* †.

Ther. Suppoſe it ſhould be wrong, to expect ſuch a vaſt reward, as the inconceivable glories of heaven, on account of our own duties; yet to ſet them *wholly* aſide, to allow them *no* influence at all, not ſo much as the leaſt co-operation, in turning the ſcale; this is an exceſs on the other hand. If the former is *preſumption*, the latter is *fanaticiſm*.

Aſp. I muſt confeſs, I do not thoroughly underſtand what you mean by fanaticiſm. Neither is it of much ſignificancy, to enter upon the diſquiſition of an obnoxious term. I would only maintain, that on us unworthy ſinners whatever is beſtowed by the righteous GOD, is beſtowed, not as a debt ‡ to our works, but as the donation of pure *grace*.

Ther. I think, it is ſufficiently of grace, if we acknowledge good works to be wrought by the aſſiſtance of the divine *SPIRIT*, and then admitted, together with our SAVIOUR's merits, as a recommendation to the divine favour.

Aſp. The *Phariſee* could make his acknowledgments for the aſſiſtance of grace: *GOD, I thank thee*, was his language. Yet this did not exempt him from the charge of *pride*, nor ſecure him from the ſin of *boaſting*. Beſides, if good works are wrought by the operation of the divine *SPIRIT*, they draw a bill upon our gratitude, not upon the bank of heaven; they render us the *obliged*, not the *deſerving* party. To think or teach otherwiſe, is errant *Popery* ‖, however it may lurk under a veil of *Proteſtantiſm*.

You bring to my mind a memorable ſtory.——Two perſons were travelling through the deſerts of *Arabia*. The one utterly unarmed; the other wore a ſword, and carried a muſket. As the place was exceedingly dangerous, the latter, ſolicitous for the ſafety of his companion, makes him a preſent of his fire-arms.—Which was no ſooner done, than a lion eſpies them, and advances fiercely towards them. The foremoſt diſcharges his piece, and wounds their horrid aggreſſor. The wound, neither killing, nor diſabling, only enrages the monſter. He ſeizes the unfortunate markſman, and is upon the point to tear him limb from limb. His fellow-traveller flies to his ſuccour; ſnatches up the carbine, which dropt from the other's hand; and fells the ravenous beaſt to the ground. Then, drawing his ſword, ſtabs him to the heart, and reſcues his friend.

The lion thus ſlain, they take off the ſkin: which, he who flew the lordly ſavage, claims as his own. "No," ſays his *grateful* friend, "as you did part of the execution "with *my* weapon, I inſiſt upon half of the ſhaggy ſpoil. "I expect ſatisfaction likewiſe for the loſs of my piece, which you broke in the encounter."—To obtain both, he commences a law-ſuit againſt that generous aſſociate, who not only *gave* him the weapon, but *ſaved* the proſecutor from the very jaws of deſtruction.

Ther. If I had been judge, I ſhould without much heſitation, have determined ſuch a cauſe. Inſtead of *coſts* and *damages* for my plaintiff, I ſhould have tranſmitted the wretch to the pillory.

Aſp. I believe, all the world would applaud your ſentence.——Only be pleaſed to remember, that the proceedure, on which you ſo juſtly animadvert, is the *very picture* of our exceſſive unreaſonableneſs, if we preſume to write ourſelves creditors, and the divine BEING debtor; becauſe he has delivered us from the bondage of corruption, and enabled us to perform the duties of godlineſs.

Theron pauſed, as ſomewhat ſtruck by the repreſentation. After a ſhort interval, *Aſpaſio* reſumed the diſcourſe.

Believe me, my dear friend, ſalvation, both in the root, and all its branches, is *entirely* of grace. Or elſe believe me, for the many cogent teſtimonies of ſcripture, which moſt circumſtantially aſcertain this great truth. *Election* is of grace: *Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children*, not on account of human worthineſs, but *according to the good pleaſure of his will* *.——Equally gratuitous is our effectual *vocation*: *GOD hath called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpoſe and grace* †.——*Faith*, with all its precious fruits, is owing to the ſame cauſe: *By grace ye are ſaved through faith* ‡.——From hence ſprings *juſtification*, together with all its attendant privileges: *Being juſtified freely by his grace* ‖.——This is the origin of *regeneration*, and every living principle of godlineſs: *Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth* §.——The *conſummation* of bliſs flows from the ſame all-ſupplying ſource: *The gift of GOD is eternal life* ¶: It is, in every reſpect, a gift; not only without, but contrary to, all deſert of ours.——So that the foundation is laid in the riches of grace; the ſuperſtructure is reared by the hand of grace; and when the top-ſtone is brought forth, when our felicity is

* Acts xix. 4. † Jude 21.

‡ *Beſtowed as a debt*, is, I muſt allow, ſomewhat like jargon. But, perhaps, *jargon* and *inconſiſtency* may not be without their *propriety* in this place; as they tend to ſhew the genius of *that* doctrine, which would connect ſuch contradictory ideas.

‖ *Good works*, ſays a champion for the church of *Rome*, *are* mercatura regni cœleſtis, *the price we pay* or *the commodity we barter, for the kingdom of heaven*.—Another zealot of that communion declares, Cœlum gratis non accipiam, *It ſhall never be ſaid, that I receive heaven merely as a matter of alms*.—So ſpeaks he! but, bleſſed be GOD, we have not ſo learned CHRIST.

* Eph. i. 5. † 2 Tim. i. 9. ‡ Eph. ii. 8.

‖ *Rom.* iii. 24. Δωρεαν τη αυτε χαριτι. One of theſe words might have ſerved to convey the apoſtle's meaning. But he *doubles* his aſſertion, in order to give us the fulleſt conviction of the truth, and to impreſs us with a ſenſe of its *peculiar importance*: FREELY BY HIS GRACE.—Is it poſſible to find out a form of ſpeech, that ſhould more *abſolutely* exclude all conſideration of our own works and obedience? or that ſhould more *emphatically* aſcribe the whole of our juſtification to free, uninfluenced ſovereign goodneſs?—To find an expreſſion *more* forcible for the purpoſe, will puzzle invention itſelf. But *this* expreſſion we find uſed, again and again, by the ſacred writer; Η δωρεα εν χαριτι, Rom. v. 15. Της χαριτος και της δωρεας, Rom. v. 17.

§ Jam. i. 18.

¶ *Rom.* vi. 23. Χαρισμα, which is a more expreſſive word than δωρημα, and conveys the idea of *freeſt* favour.

completed

completed in the kingdom of heaven, the everlasting acclamation will be, *Grace, grace unto it!*

Ther. This is that glorious gospel, which human learning could never have discovered; which carnal reason cannot understand; which the wisdom of this world accounteth foolishness; which the envy of the devil and the pride of man, will always oppose.

Eleer. What say you to the opinion, which *Ouranius* so strenuously maintains, That we are justified, not by the merits of CHRIST *imputed* to us, but by CHRIST himself *formed* in our hearts? And *Ouranius* is none of your proud or carnal people. His writings are remarkable for their strict piety, and his life is as exemplary as his principles.

Asp. You know, *Theron*, I have nothing to do with the persons of men, but with the truths of the gospel. *Ouranius*, though eminently devout, may be mistaken. And, if this is his way of thinking, he quite misapprehends the doctrine of grace.

What is written in the oracles of scripture? *The LORD justifieth the ungodly* †. What is implied in the maxim of *Ouranius*? HE justifieth the holy, the heavenly, the Christ-like.——*A man is justified by faith* ‡, says the secretary of heaven. He is justified by works, says the pen of *Ouranius*: only let them be works of a superior order; such as are internal, spiritual, and wrought by the operation of CHRIST on the soul.——According to this notion, every one is justified by his own love, his own purity, his own zeal. Whereas, an unerring writer has most solemnly declared, that *by* ONE *man's obedience many*, many myriads of sinners, even all the redeemed worlds, *shall be made righteous* ||.

This notion, I think, is *legalism* in its greatest subtilty, or highest refinement. It disannuls the *merit* of CHRIST; it vacates all *imputation*; and makes our salvation to consist *wholly* in the work of sanctification. Against which, if you remember, I entered my protest, in one of our first § conferences. And now having ventured to animadvert on the tenets of others, it may reasonably be expected, that I should give an account of my own faith.——"I am justified; my soul is accepted; "not because CHRIST has put his laws in my mind, "but shed his blood for my sins; not because I *myself* am "enabled to walk in all godly conversation, but because "the LORD JESUS has fulfilled all righteousness as my "*Surety*."

Ther. I am for neither of the extremes. The middle way is most eligible. This is what sound sense approves, and the sacred system authorises. *Whoso believeth on me*, says our LORD, *shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life* ¶. *Blessed*, adds the beloved disciple, *are they who do his commandments; that they may have a right to the tree of life; and may enter in, through the gates, into the city* ‡.

Conformably to these texts of scripture, I would neither reject our REDEEMER's merits, nor repudiate good works. As this shady tree, and these cooling breezes, unite their properties, to render our situation agreeable; so those two causes, acting in conjunction, exalt us to the favour of GOD, and constitute us heirs of heaven.—GOD himself has joined them. And I must urge my remonstrance in our LORD's own words, *What GOD hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

Asp. Would you then make impotence itself a *coadjutor* with omnipotence?—Does this humble the sinner? does this exalt the SAVIOUR?—No: it is a most injurious infringement of his mediatorial dignity. Instead of excluding, it evidently introduces boasting. In consequence of such a scheme, it would be said by the inhabitants of the heavenly world, "Thanks to our "blessed REDEEMER for this happiness! yet not to "him *only*, but to our own righteousness also."

Can you imagine, that the obedience of CHRIST is *insufficient* to accomplish our justification? Must its efficacy be reinforced by the accession of our works?——And what are these works of ours, that *they* should inhance the value, the immense value, of our REDEEMER's!——*Maimed, tarnished, worm-eaten* things; eaten by the worms of self-seeking, self-admiring, self-love; tarnished by a thousand vanities; maimed by ten thousand negligencies.——To join *these* in commission with our divine *MASTER*'s righteousness, would be infinitely more *disgraceful*, than to tack the beggar's rag on the monarch's robe; would be altogether as *needless*, as to dream of augmenting the sea, by the drops of our bucket.

Ther. Worm-eaten! What reason have you to represent our acts of obedience under this sordid and shameful image?

Asp. I thought, you could hardly brook this disparaging expression. It is somewhat like *petty treason* against the dignity of man. My reasons I would postpone to some other opportunity; when, if you please, we will give the cause a full hearing.

At present, to make amends for this vile slander, I will suppose your works to have *no* defect; nay, to have *all* the perfection which you yourself could wish.——Will you *glory* on this account?—You are too modest, I am sure, to avow or patronize such a practice. Yet, if we say or think, concerning any attainments of our own, "This is the ground on which I expect to escape con-"demnation, and inherit life;" we do, in the most *offensive*, though not in the most *explicit* manner, glory *.

Or, will you reckon, that these services, because faultless, are, in any degree, meritorious? Let us hear our *LORD*'s decision in the case. *When ye have done* not only some, but *all those things which are commanded you*.——And where is the man, or what is his name, who, in any nation or in any age, has done all that is commanded?

Where shall I find him? Angels, tell me where?
Shall I see glories beaming from his brow?
Or trace his footsteps by the rising flow'rs?

Yet even in such a case, if all this were performed, what shall we *say? We are* no better than *unprofitable servants: we have done* nothing more, than *what was our* indispensable *duty to do* †; and have, on this footing, just the same claim to honours and rewards, as the *negro* slave, after the dispatch of his daily business, has upon the estate or the wealth of an *American* planter.

Ther. But what say you to those passages of scripture which I have quoted? You have given them a hearing, but no answer. They, I do insist upon it, expressly *assert*, therefore incontestably *prove*, an union of CHRIST's merit and our own works, in the business of salvation.

Asp. It is written in the book of *Revelation*, *Blessed are they that do his commandments.* And wherefore? Because the obedience of faith is attended with a real blessedness on earth, and demonstrates our title to eternal blessedness in heaven. It is, though not the *purchase*, yet the *evidence* of our right to the tree of life,

* Zech. iv. 7. † Rom. iv. 5.

‡ Rom. v. 1. || Rom. v. 19.

§ *See* Dialogue II, *pag.* 67.

¶ John iii. 15. ‡ Rev. xxii. 14.

* *Omnis causa justitiæ et salutis est materia et objectum καυχήσεως. Unde apostolus: Nam si Abraham ex operibus justificatus est, ἔχει καύχημα*, i. e. Whatever is the cause of righteousness and salvation, is a real and proper foundation for glorying. Therefore the apostle acknowledges, *If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory*, Rom. iv. 2.

VITRINGA.

† Luke xvii. 10.

All

All this I acknowledge. But where, I beſeech you, does the ſcripture join the obedience of CHRIST and the obedience of man, as mutually conducive to the juſtification of a ſinner?—The ſcripture utterly *diſavows* ſuch a copartnerſhip, and aſſerts what our homily expreſſes; "Surely, there can be no work of any mortal "man (be he never ſo holy) that ſhall be coupled in me-"rit with CHRIST's moſt holy act *."—The ſcripture ſteadily declares, that, in this greateſt of tranſactions, CHRIST is not an acceſſary, but the principal; nay, that he is ALL. *Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that, through this* illuſtrious and exalted PERSON †, *is preached unto you the forgiveneſs of ſins; and by him all that believe are juſtified from all things.*—*Through this PERSON*, without any partner or coadjutor. *By him*; not by him and our works jointly, but by him ſolely; without the concurrence of any other action, or any other agent. This was typified by the high prieſt, when, on the ſolemn day of expiation, he went into the tabernacle *alone*, and made the figurative atonement without any aſſociate ‡.——*From all things*; by HIM they are *wholly*, as well as *ſolely* juſtified: freed from every charge, whether of omiſſion or commiſſion; and rendered, not in part only, but completely acceptable.

I hope, therefore, you will no longer conſider the ſupremely-excellent JESUS, as a *partial* cauſe of our juſtification.—What would be the conſequence, if a perſon ſhould fix one foot on the bank of yonder river, and reſt another on the fluid ſtream?

Ther. He muſt unavoidably fall.

Aſp. And what ſays our divine INSTRUCTOR to thoſe double-minded *Galatians*, who could not believe themſelves ſafe and complete in the merits of CHRIST alone; but muſt be ſeeking ſome other foundation, on which to repoſe *a ſhare* at leaſt of their confidence? He ſays; and they are awful words; they call for my *Theron*'s moſt ſerious regard; *Ye are fallen from grace* ‖.

Let me entreat my friend to beware of this error. I think, it is the prevailing error of our times; and ſo much the more *dangerous*, becauſe it is ſomewhat ſpecious.—To pour contempt upon the bleſſed JESUS, with the *Libertines* and *Deiſts*, would be ſhocking to a mind that retains the leaſt reverence for ſacred things. Entirely to ſet aſide the meritorious efficacy of his undertaking, with the *Arians* and *Socinians*, would be afflictive to a conſcience that is impreſſed with the leaſt ſenſe of ſin. Whereas to erect our merits on the foundation of CHRIST's; to be found in *his*, yet not renounce *our own* righteouſneſs; this is both plauſible to our reaſon, and pleaſing to our vanity. This ſeems to honour the divine SAVIOUR, even while it gratifies human pride.—But this is an egregious falſehood, and cannot ſtand. This is an abominable idol, and muſt be laid in the duſt. CHRIST, like the *real* mother of the child, will have the whole, or none §; the whole—*unſhared*—*unrivalled*—*undiminiſhed* glory of our ſalvation.

Let me once again entreat my dear *Theron*, to beware of this error. It is the main pillar in the *Roman* hereſy, and the maſter-policy of the *Popiſh* Machiavilians. "CHRIST hath merited, that we may merit," is their grand maxim, and their grand deluſion. Hence come their penances and their pilgrimages; hence the hypocritical mortifications of ſome, and the extravagant auſterities of others: this enriches their ſhrines, and fills their cloyſters. And to thoſe ſeminaries of ſuperſtition, let it be baniſhed, let it be confined.——*There* let them raiſe their ſcaffolding, and try to enlarge the dimenſions of the ſky. *There* let them kindle their flambeaus, and attempt to increaſe the luſtre of the ſun. And when they have effected this *eaſier* taſk, then will we *Proteſtants* follow their example, and adopt their ſyſtem. Then will we alſo think of adding our own righteouſneſs, by way of ſupplement to the dignity and efficacy of our *LORD*'s.

Ther. If we are juſtified wholly by our *LORD*'s righteouſneſs; if nothing *need* be added, if nothing *can* be added to its all-comprehending fulneſs; what becomes of the generally-received opinion, That *CHRIST* obtained for us only a *poſſibility* of being ſaved; or put us into a *capacity* of acquiring ſalvation?

Aſp. It will be diſcountenanced and overthrown, as extremely diſhonourable to the REDEEMER, and no leſs uncomfortable to the redeemed. When *CHRIST* procured our pardon, and recovered our title to life, it was all his own doing. *Of the people there was none with him* *. In both caſes his work was perfect.——Hear his own teſtimony: *I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do* †. Should you want an explication of theſe words, I refer you to the comment of an apoſtle: *He*, that is, JESUS CHRIST, *has obtained eternal redemption for us* ‡. This was his work, and it is fully executed. *He has*, HE HAS, obtained eternal redemption; and left nothing for his people, but to accept the glorious purchaſe, and live as becomes the redeemed of the LORD.

This truth is written, as with a ſun-beam, in the pages of the goſpel; and ſounds, as with a voice of thunder, in the ſongs of heaven. *Salvation to our GOD*, they cry, *that ſitteth upon the throne, and to the LAMB* ‖. Thoſe ſaints in glory aſcribe the whole,—*the whole* of their ſalvation they aſcribe, to the grace of GOD, and to the blood of the LAMB.

Ther. Have not many of our ableſt divines repreſented faith, obedience, and repentance, as the *terms of acceptance?* CHRIST, according to this account, procured not the bleſſing itſelf, but only the grant of *eaſier conditions*, on which it may be enjoyed.

Aſp. What ſays that ſublime BEING, who gives the ableſt divines all their wiſdom? *My righteous ſervant ſhall juſtify many* §; not pave the way, or adjuſt the preliminaries, but diſpatch *the very* buſineſs;—*ſhall juſtify.*—The terms of acceptance, for fallen and rebellious man, were, a full ſatisfaction to the divine juſtice, and a complete conformity to the divine law. Theſe, impracticable by us, were conſigned over to CHRIST. By him they were thoroughly accompliſhed; and by his accompliſhment of them, he purchaſed for us all bleſſings.—Among others, he purchaſed the gift of faith, the grace of repentance, and ability to yield thankful, dutiful, evangelical obedience. Theſe therefore are very improperly called the *terms*, which are really conſtituent *parts* of our ſalvation.

To ſum up all in a word—the whole tenor of revelation ſhews, that there are but two methods, whereby any of the human race can be juſtified.—Either by a perfect obedience to the law, in *their own* perſons; and then the reward is of debt ¶:—Or elſe, becauſe the *Surety* of a better covenant has ſatisfied all demands in their ſtead; and then the reward is of grace.—There is no trimming or reconciling expedient.—You may chuſe either of the two; but no third is propoſed or allowed.

Ther. Was there not a different method for the *ancient* people of GOD?

Aſp. None, *Theron.* In the ſtate of primitive innocency, a *perfect* and *perſevering* obſervance of the divine command, was the condition of life and immortality.——When, by the firſt grand apoſtaſy, this became

* Homily on *Good-Friday*.

† *Acts* xiii. 38. Δια τουτου, the word *man* is not in the original. So that I think, *this* illuſtrious and exalted PERSON, is the fulleſt and moſt exact tranſlation.

‡ Lev. xvi. 17.

‖ Gal. v. 4. § 1 Kings iii. 26.

* Iſ. lxiii. 6. † John xvii. 4. ‡ Heb. ix. 12.

‖ Rev. vii. 10. § Iſ. liii. 11.

¶ *Rom.* iv. 4. *Poſitional* debt; founded on the promiſe of the covenant, not ſpringing from any worth in the obedience,

came impoſſible; a *free* pardon, and *gracious* acceptance, through the bleſſed JESUS, were ſubſtituted in its ſtead. Which œconomy, like a fountain of life, was opened, when GOD promiſed *the ſeed of the woman, to bruiſe the ſerpent's head* *.——It ran, like a ſalutary rivulet, thro' the *antediluvian* world;—continued its progreſs along the *patriarchal* age;—flowed, in broader ſtreams, under the *Moſaic* diſpenſation;—is derived down to us, abundantly enlarged by the coming of *CHRIST*, and the miniſtry of his *apoſtles*;—will be tranſmitted, with an increaſing ſpread to the lateſt poſterity;—nor ever ceaſe to amplify and extend its influence, till, as the fountain is become a river, the river is augmented into an ocean; and *the knowledge of the* LORD our righteouſneſs *fill the earth, as the waters cover the* abyſſes of the *ſea* †.

There was, I confeſs, a diverſity in the adminiſtration, but no difference in the nature, of the bleſſing. JESUS CHRIST, however variouſly manifeſted, was the *ſame yeſterday*, is the ſame *to-day*, will be the ſame *for ever* ‡. As it is the very ſame ſun, which *gleams* at early dawn, which *ſhines* in the advancing day, and *glows* at height of noon.

My ſimile reminds us of the time, and leaves a moſt important doctrine upon our memories. Suppoſe we take the admonition, and begin to move homeward.

Ther. We need be in no hurry, *Aſpaſio*. My watch tells me, that we have half an hour good. Beſides, I have ſomething farther to allege, and from a very great authority, which ſeems directly contrary to your notion.

Aſp. Juſt as you pleaſe, *Theron*. If you chuſe to ſtay, I am all compliance with your inclination; and, would truth permit, I ſhould be all conformity to your opinion.

Ther. You know, who it is that aſks, *What doth the* LORD *require of thee?* And neither of us need be informed, what it is that the prophet replies; *Do juſtice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy* GOD ‖. But I want to know, what *you think* of this paſſage?

Aſp. I think, it is abſolutely inconſiſtent with *your* ſcheme. This paſſage inculcates *humility*. But your ſcheme is the very reverſe of that amiable virtue. A ſelf-juſticiary walking humbly with GOD, is little better than a contradiction in terms.

The LORD has ſaid, "ye ſhall be ſaved by grace §." Your ſyſtem replies, "No, but by our own works."—It is declared in ſcripture, "that the gift of GOD is eter-"nal life." It is implied in my friend's doctrine, that his happineſs is the wages of our own deeds.——"My "SON ſhall have all the glory of a ſinner's ſalvation," is the unalterable decree of the MOST HIGH. "*We* "will have a ſhare in the honour," is the language of your opinion.——Look, how wide therefore the eaſt is from the weſt! ſo remote is ſuch a ſtrain of teaching from the practice of walking humbly with our GOD.

Ther. But conſider, good *Aſpaſio*; have I not the prophet's authority for my opinion? Are not his words expreſsly on my ſide? Does he not mention thoſe duties of morality and piety, as the appointed method of obtaining the divine favour?

Aſp. He mentions, I apprehend, a ſolicitous *inquiry*, to which he gives a ſatisfactory *anſwer*; then ſubjoins a practical *improvement* of the whole.——The inquiry is expreſſed in theſe words; *Wherewithal ſhall I come before the* LORD, *and bow myſelf before the high* GOD? *Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the* LORD *be pleaſed with thouſands of rams; with ten thouſands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul* *?—To which it is replied, *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good* for this important purpoſe; namely, the *MESSIAH*; pointed out by all thy ſacrifices, and deſcribed in the preceding chapter. Atonement for ſin, and peace with *GOD*, are to be made by a better hand, and in a better way, than thou propoſeſt. HE, *whoſe outgoings have been from of old, from everlaſting* †; HE, who is the *SON* of the *HIGHEST*, and yet the ſeed of *her that travaileth* ‡; HE has undertaken, and will fully execute, this great office.

And what doth the LORD *thy* GOD *require of thee?* What temper, what conduct, what expreſſions of gratitude, from his people? who are reconciled through the blood of CHRIST, and admitted to the bleſſings of the new covenant ‖.——They are to teſtify their thankfulneſs, by the alacrity, uniformity, and conſtancy of their obedience; or by the conſcientious diſcharge of every *moral*, *ſocial*, and *religious* duty.

If this be a true interpretation of the text, inſtead of eſtabliſhing, it overturns your cauſe.—But I have another objection to your method, perhaps, more weighty than the foregoing.

Ther. Pray, let me hear it.—I am not ſo enamoured with my notions, but I can bear to have them cenſured; nor ſo attached to my ſcheme, but I can relinquiſh it for a better.

Aſp. I would illuſtrate my meaning, by a common experiment in optics. When objects are viewed in a *concave ſpeculum*, or in the hollow of a poliſhed ſpoon, how do they appear?

Ther. *Inverted.*

Aſp. Such is my friend's ſyſtem of religion. He inverts the order of the goſpel. He turns the beautiful building upſide down; and lays that for the *foundation*, which ſhould only be part of the *ſuperſtructure*.——Not ſo the apoſtle *Paul*. He, like a wiſe maſter-builder, places CHRIST as the foundation ſtone; and rears his edifice of practical godlineſs on that all-ſupporting baſis.—Examine his epiſtle to the *Romans*; which is unqueſtionably the completeſt model of doctrine, and the nobleſt body of divinity, extant in the world.

He firſt diſcovers the *depravity* of our nature, and the miſery of our condition.——He, then, diſplays the method of our *recovery* by CHRIST, and the bleſſings freely vouchſafed in his goſpel.——After which, he deſineates the offices of *morality*, and enforces them by the moſt engaging motives; motives, drawn from the free unbounded loving-kindneſs of GOD our SAVIOUR, and from the rich invaluable benefits of his grace §.——Privilege he plants as the root; from which, duty blooms, as the flower; godlineſs grows, as the fruit.

* Gen. iii. 15. † Iſ. xi. 9. ‡ Heb. xiii. 8. ‖ Mic. vi. 8.

§ *Eph.* ii. 5. This text lays the axe to the *very root* of ſpiritual pride, and all ſelf-glorying whatever. Therefore the inſpired writer, foreſeeing the backwardneſs of mankind to receive it, yet knowing the abſolute neceſſity of its reception, again aſſerts (*ver.* 8.) the very ſame truth, in the very ſame words.

† Mic. v. 2. ‡ Mic. v. 3.

‖ *Thy* GOD, is the phraſe. Which denotes an intereſt; implies an appropriation; and is the peculiar language of the covenant.—Thy GOD; not made ſo by thy humbly walking, but by an act of *his own* grace, previous to any obedience of thine.—— According to *Theron*'s principles, the prophet ſhould rather have ſaid, Walk humbly (not *with thy* GOD, but, that he *may be* thy GOD.

§ This, I think, is the beſt platform for an *evangelical* catechiſm. The *ruin* of man, occaſioned by ſin—his *recovery*, effected by CHRIST—his *gratitude*, to be expreſſed by way of obedience.—This plan is carried into execution by the *Palatinate* divines; who have formed upon it, a ſummary of catechetical inſtruction, than which I have met with nothing of the kind, more clear and ſatisfactory; more edifying and animating; more exactly conſonant to the benign ſpirit of the goſpel, or better calculated to make mankind both holy and happy.—This piece the reader may ſee, together with a judicious, and very valuable expoſition of it, in the *Latin* works of *Henricus Altingius*, 1 vol. Quarto. Which, I believe, may be bought for a trifle, yet are more precious than gold.

The ſame order is obſerved by St. *Peter*, in his very conciſe, but very accurate map, of the way to heaven: *Elect according to the foreknowledge of GOD the FATHER, through ſanctification of the* SPIRIT, *unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the blood of* CHRIST *. —Firſt, the everlaſting and electing love of the FATHER.—Then, the enlightening and renewing agency of the SPIRIT; who teſtifies of CHRIST, and applies his death to the ſoul, purifying the heart by faith.—From whence, as from a fountain of living water, flows true *ſanctification*, and every act of filial *obedience*, every ſpecies of real holineſs. —All which, being partly defective, and partly polluted, muſt be ſprinkled with the blood of JESUS, and made acceptable by his dying oblation.

Ther. Is this the conſtant method, in which the ſacred writers repreſent the goſpel-ſalvation? Do they always obſerve this particular order, in arranging its doctrines and its duties? Or, is it not an inſignificant circumſtance, which goes *firſt*, provided we take in *both*?

Aſp. To obſerve this order, I am perſuaded, is no inſignificant circumſtance. It is of great conſequence, both to our eſtabliſhment and to our growth in grace. Is it a matter of indifference to the archer, whether he ſend the point, or the feather of his arrow foremoſt? Can he, in either caſe, hit the mark with equal eaſe, and equal certainty?

I believe, you will find, that the ſacred writers, in all their *evangelical* diſcourſes, invariably adhere to this order. Nay, it took place even under the *legal* diſpenſation.—When the LORD GOD publiſhed his law from mount *Sinai*; when he wrote it, with his own finger, on tables of ſtone; how did he introduce the precepts? how enforce their obſervance?—Let us attend to the preamble; which is the language of love, and the very ſpirit of the goſpel: *I am the LORD thy GOD, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the houſe of bondage* †. "I have already delivered thee with a mighty "hand, from the moſt ſordid and inſupportable ſlavery. "I have promiſed thee, for thy poſſeſſion, the delightful country of *Canaan; a goodly heritage of the hoſts of "nations* ‡. Nay, I *myſelf* am thy portion; a GOD in "covenant with thee; engaged, by an inviolable contract, and with the exertion of all my attributes, to do "thee good. *Therefore* keep the ſtatutes, the judgments, "and ordinances, which I am now going to eſtabliſh." —Could there be a more winning inducement, or a more endearing obligation, to obedience?

I might point out the ſame ſtrain, running through the exhortations of *Moſes*, and the ſongs of *David*; the ſermons of the prophets, and the writings of the apoſtles. But this I wave, not through an apprehenſion of its difficulty, only from a fear of prolixity.—However, you will not think me tedious, if I produce one more inſtance, from the great maſter of our ſchools. *For we ourſelves were ſome time fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another* ‖. Here he ſets before us a diſmal, but exact picture, of our depraved and undone condition.——Then he preſents us with a delightful view of our redemption, both in its gracious cauſe, and precious effects. *But after that the kindneſs and love of GOD our SAVIOUR toward man appeared; not by works of righteouſneſs, which we have done, but according to his mercy, he ſaved us, by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST; which he hath ſhed on us abundantly, through* JESUS CHRIST *our* SAVIOUR; *that, being juſtified by his grace, we ſhould be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*——Having thus provided for our happineſs, he then promotes our holineſs. *This is a faithful ſaying, and theſe things I will that thou affirm conſtantly, that they who have believed in GOD, might be careful to maintain good works: theſe things are good and profitable unto men.*

I make no comment * upon the paſſage; becauſe, I hope, you will commit it, as a noble depoſitum, to your memory. Your own diligent meditation, accompanied with humble prayer, will furniſh out the beſt expoſition. Only I would juſt remark, that the apoſtle, always conſiſtent, always uniform, marſhals his thoughts with his uſual exactneſs. Good works are not *diſbanded*; nor yet ſuffered to lead the *van*; but made to bring up the *rear* †. When he mentions theſe fruits of the *SPIRIT*, he mentions them, not ſlightly, as matters of ſmall moment; but earneſtly, as affairs of great importance. It is his deſire, and his charge, that all believers ſhould be *careful* ‡; have their hearts upon the buſineſs; ſhould uſe their beſt contrivance, and exert their utmoſt endeavours,—not barely to practice, but to *maintain* ‖; to be exemplary, diſtinguiſhed, and pre-eminent in the exerciſe of every virtue.——Becauſe this virtue, and thoſe works, though not the ground of a reconciliation with GOD, are amiable in the eyes of all, and *honourable* § to the Chriſtian profeſſion. They are alſo a neceſſary ingredient in perſonal happineſs, and the apparent means of ſocial *uſefulneſs* ¶.

Ther. This view of the evangelical plan is, I muſt confeſs, new to me; and particularly your ordonnance of the epiſtle to the *Romans*.

Aſp. If this be new, perhaps, what I am going to advance, may be ſtrange.—We have been talking about acceptance with GOD; and debating, whether our own good works are the cauſe of this ineſtimable bleſſing. What will you ſay, if we can perform *no* good work, *till* we are intereſted in *CHRIST*, and accepted by *GOD*.

Ther. Say!—That this is razing foundations.

Aſp. It is razing the wrong, the foundation falſely

* Perhaps, the reader will give me leave, though *Aſpaſio* has declined his office, to add a ſhort *expoſitory* ſtricture, upon the moſt diſtinguiſhed parts of this very important paragraph.—I. We have the *cauſe* of our redemption; *not works of righteouſneſs, which we have done*, but the *kindneſs*, the *love*, the *mercy* of GOD our SAVIOUR.—II. The *effects*: which are,—1. *Juſtification; being juſtified*, having our ſins forgiven, and *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs imputed: all this, without any the leaſt deſerving quality in us; ſolely *by his grace*, and moſt unmerited goodneſs—2. *Sanctification*; expreſſed by *the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST*: whoſe influences purify the ſoul, as the waſhing of water cleanſes the body; and introduce an improvement into all the faculties of the mind, ſomewhat like that annual renovation and general ſmile of nature, which the return of ſpring diffuſes over the face of the earth.—III. The *end* and *conſummation* of all; that we ſhould be made *heirs* of the heavenly kingdom; and live now in the aſſured hope, hereafter in the full enjoyment, of *eternal life*.

† The ſame order is obſerved by St *John*. Rev. xiv. 13. *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the LORD; for they reſt from their labours, and their works do follow them.* Not *go before* to open the everlaſting doors, and give them admittance into the manſions of joy. But they *follow* them, when admitted. As the robe, which on a king's coronation day, flows from his ſhoulders, cannot but accompany him, whereſoever he goes.—It may be pertinent, on the mention of this illuſtration, juſt to hint, that as it is not the robe of ſtate which *makes* the king; ſo neither is it the external practice of holineſs which *makes* the Chriſtian. An union with *CHRIST*, an intereſt in his merits, and the indwelling preſence of his SPIRIT; *theſe*, and nothing ſhort of theſe, conſtitute the true Chriſtian. Yet, as the royal robe is an attendant on majeſty, and diſtinguiſhes the monarch; ſo practical godlineſs is inſeparable from faith, and adorns the believer.

‡ Φροντιζωσι. This is ſomewhat like that emphatical expreſſion which ſo often occurs in the Old Teſtament, לעשות לשמר *Ye ſhall obſerve to do*: ye ſhall be very *diligent* to fulfil; ye ſhall be very *exact* in performing.

‖ Προισασθαι. The reader may ſee this word more *critically* explained, *pag.* 190. in the note.

§ Καλα. ¶ Ωφιλιμα.

* 1 Pet. i. 2. † Exod. xx. 2. ‡ Jer. iii. 19.

‖ Tit. iii. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.

so called; which will certainly deceive as many as make it their truſt.——And is it not *prudent*, when we are building for eternity, carefully to examine the ground? Is it not *friendly*, to divert a man from the treacherous ſand, and lead him to the unſhaken rock?—For this cauſe I ſaid it once, and for this cauſe I ſay it again, That we can perform *no* good work *till* we are intereſted in *CHRIST*, and accepted of GOD.

Ther. Produce your reaſons, *Aſpaſio*. And ſtrong reaſons they muſt be, which are forcible enough to ſupport ſuch an opinion.

Aſp. The caſe ſeems to ſpeak for itſelf. How *can* a man that is evil, do works that are good? Would you expect to *gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles?*—But let us hear what our *unerring TEACHER* ſays: *As the branch cannot bear fruit of itſelf, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me* *. Nothing can be more expreſs and full to our purpoſe. But that which follows, is far more awful and alarming to our conſciences. *If a man abide not in me, he is caſt forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and caſt them into the fire and they are burned* †.——From which it appears, that the human heart is never actuated by *good tempers*, that the human life can never be productive of *good works*, until a man is ingrafted into *CHRIST*. No more than a branch can bear valuable fruit, while it continues in a ſtate of ſeparation from the tree ‡.——It appears alſo, that perſons alienated from *CHRIST*, are, and all their performances too, like *broken, withered, rotten* boughs; fit for nothing, but to be committed to the flames, and conſumed from the earth. Both they and their ſervices, far from being meritorious, are in the eſtimate of heaven, worthleſs and deſpicably mean.

Ther. What! Are all the noble deeds, performed by the advocates for morality, and lovers of virtue, worthleſs, in themſelves, and deſpicable before the SUPREME BEING? Worthleſs and deſpicable (grating words!) *only* becauſe they are not attended with the peculiarities of your faith? Can the want of this *little* circumſtance change their nature, and turn their gold into droſs?

Aſp. My dear *Theron*, call not the circumſtance little. It is ſufficient, were your works more precious than gold, to debaſe them into tin, into lead, into droſs.——When the poor ſhepherd brought you, yeſterday morning, a preſent of ſome wood-ſtrawberries; bringing them, as an humble expreſſion of his *gratitude*, they were kindly received. But if he had offered them, as a *price* for your houſe, or as the *purchaſe* of your eſtate; how ſhould you have regarded them in ſuch a connection? No words can expreſs the diſdain you would have conceived.——When *Barnabas* preſented a ſum of money to the apoſtles, for the ſupply of their neceſſities, and the relief of indigent believers ‖; it was welcome to them, and pleaſing to their GOD. But, when *Simon* the ſorcerer offered his gold to *Peter* and *John*; offering it, not from a principle of faith, but as an equivalent for the HOLY SPIRIT; not in order to teſtify his thankfulneſs, but rather to play the huckſter with heaven; it was rejected with the utmoſt indignation §.

I leave my friend to apply the preceding inſtances.—Only let me beg of him to believe, that if my words are *grating*, they are extorted by the force of truth.——If I am obliged to blame what he calls good works: it is, as a great critic blames eloquence, "with the tender-"neſs of a lover."——But my cenſure falls only on their faulty *origin*, and unbecoming *aim*. Let them ſpring from the grace of CHRIST, as their ſource; let them propoſe the glory of CHRIST, as their end; then, inſtead of putting a ſlight upon them, or giving them a bill of divorce, I would court, careſs, and wed them.—Whereas, if neither *this* end be kept in the view, nor *that* principle operate in the heart; I muſt perſiſt, in queſtioning the genuineneſs of their character; nay, in denying the very poſſibility of their exiſtence. There may be a *mimickry* of holy actions. But it is mimickry only: as empty, as the combs * made by thoſe waſps; and no better than a flame that is painted.

I have an authority for this doctrine, which I think you will not offer to controvert.

Ther. What authority?

Aſp. That of our church; who declares, in her XIIIth article; "Works done before the grace of CHRIST, "and inſpiration of his SPIRIT, are not pleaſing to "GOD; foraſmuch as they ſpring not out of faith in "CHRIST."——Faith in JESUS CHRIST purifies the heart. Till this be done, we have neither diſpoſition nor capacity for holy obedience. Nay, without faith in CHRIST, our perſons are abominable †; our ſtate is damnable; and how can any of our works be acceptable?

Such a one, you ſay, is honeſt in his dealings, temperate in his enjoyments, charitable to the poor. I allow it all. But, unleſs theſe ſeeming virtues are preferred to the *glory* of the ſupreme JEHOVAH; unleſs they flow from *faith* in the crucified JESUS; they may be acts of worldly policy, of ſelfiſh prudence, or *Phariſaical* pride. They are by no means a pleaſing oblation to the LORD almighty ‡.——Nay, inſtead of being acts of duty, and objects of approbation, they ſtand condemned in the ſcripture, and are breaches of the commandment. They ſtand condemned in that ſcripture, which declares, *Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe GOD* ‖. They are breaches of that commandment, which requires, *Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of GOD* §.

Upon the whole; if we will ſubmit to the determination of our eſtabliſhed church, or acquieſce in the deciſion of our divine MASTER; we muſt acknowledge, that there is no ſuch thing as a good work, till we are reconciled to GOD, and our perſons accepted in his ſight.—Therefore to repreſent our own works as the means of reconciliation and acceptance, is both chimerical and abſurd. *Chimerical*, becauſe it builds upon a phantom, and takes for a reality, what has no exiſtence. *Abſurd*, becauſe it inverts the natural order of things, and would make the effect antecedent to the cauſe.

* John xv. 4. † John xv. 6.

‡ This diſcovers an error, which is often committed, in our attempts to inſtruct little children. What is more common, than to tell them! "If they will be good, GOD almighty will love and "bleſs them."—Whereas they ſhould rather be informed, "that "they are ſinners; but that GOD almighty has given his SON to "die for ſinners; and, if they pray to him, he will forgive their "ſins, will make them holy, make them happy, and bleſs them "with all ſpiritual bleſſings in CHRIST."

‖ Acts iv. 37. § Acts viii. 20.

* *Faciunt et veſpa favos.*

† *To the defiled and unbelieving is nothing clean.* Tit. i. 15. The apoſtle joins *defiled* and *unbelieving*, to intimate, that without a true belief nothing is clean. The underſtanding and the conſcience are polluted. Both the man and his doings are impure.

‡ Might not this obſervation be made, with great propriety, in our *infirmary* and other *charitable* ſermons? Should not the audience be exhorted to abound in acts of benevolence, from a *grateful regard* to the infinitely-merciful and condeſcending JESUS? 2 Cor. viii. 9.—Should they not, before all things, be directed to *make ſure* their intereſt in the REDEEMER's merits? that their perſons may find favour, and their alms acceptance, *Eph.* i. 6.—Should they not be admoniſhed, that without this *believing application* to CHRIST, whatever they do, whatever they give, is worthleſs in the eye of their MAKER, and will be fruitleſs to their own ſouls. *Heb.* xi. 6.—In this reſpect our SAVIOUR was eminently typified by the *Jewiſh* altar: on which *every* ſacrifice, by whomſoever brought, was to be offered, and ſeparate from which *no* ſacrifice, however coſtly, could be accepted, *Exod.* xx. 24. *Levit.* xvii 3. 4.

‖ Heb. xi. 6. § 1 Cor. x. 31.

Ther.

Ther. Before we quit this agreeable retreat, let me aſk my *Aſpaſio*, What he propoſes, by running down all thoſe works, which are the produce of inward religion, and eſſential to true holineſs; whoſe excellency is diſplayed in the *cleareſt*, and whoſe neceſſity is urged in the *ſtrongeſt* terms, throughout the whole Bible?

Aſp. I am far from running down works, which are the produce of inward religion; and therefore may be juſtly ſtyled, *works of faith and labours of love* *.—But I would caution my *Theron* and myſelf to take care, that our works be accompanied with thoſe circumſtances, which alone can render them *truly* good. Let them ariſe from *faith*, and bear witneſs to *love*; or elſe we ſhall have *thiſtles, inſtead of wheat, and cockle inſtead of barley* †.

I would alſo perſuade my friend, and I would habituate myſelf, not to repoſe our *confidence* in any works whatſoever; leſt they prove a bruiſed reed, that breaks under our weight; or a pointed ſpear, that pierces us to the heart.——We ſhall never be like the church, *who comes up out of the wilderneſs, leaning upon her Beloved* ‡, ſo long as we bolſter up ourſelves with a conceit of perſonal righteouſneſs. This was the error, the fatal error of the *Phariſees*; this the film which blinded the eyes of their mind, and ſealed them up under the darkneſs of final unbelief.

Beſides, my dear *Theron*, if you expect to be ſaved by your own duties, you will be loath to ſee the worſt of your condition. To ſee the worſt of your condition, will be a dagger to your hopes, and as death to your ſoul. You will therefore be inclined to *daub with untempered mortar* *. Inſtead of acknowledging the deep depravity of your nature, and the numberleſs iniquities of your life, you will invent a thouſand excuſes to palliate your guilt; and, by this means, erect a *wall* of *partition* between your ſoul and the merits of your *REDEEMER*; which will be a greater inconvenience, a more deſtructive evil, than to cut off all ſupply of proviſion from an army, or even to intercept the ſun-beams from viſiting the earth.

Ther. Now you talk of armies, I muſt obſerve, that, though I have ſcarce been able to keep my ground, in this argumentative action, I cannot allow you the honour of a victory; as a *retreat* is very different from a *rout*.

Aſp. I would alſo remark, that my friend has changed the intended plan of our operations; has almoſt continually acted upon the *offenſive*. While my part has been only to ſuſtain the ſhock. At our next encounter, you may expect to have the order of battle reverſed. I ſhall direct my forces to begin the charge. Put yourſelf therefore in readineſs for a *briſk attack*.

Ther. You act the fair enemy, *Aſpaſio*, I muſt confeſs, in thus giving the alarm, before you make the aſſault.

Aſp. This hoſtility may appear *fairer ſtill*, when I aſſure you, that my weapons aim not at the deſtruction of your comfort, or the demolition of any valuable intereſt. Only they would be *mighty through GOD to pull down the ſtrong-holds* of unbelief; and *bring every* ſelf-exalting, every rebellious *thought, captive unto* CHRIST †; captive, in a profeſſed ſubmiſſion to his righteouſneſs, as well as a dutiful ſubjection to his commands.——And, when *ſuch* is the tendency of the campaign, it will be your greateſt advantage, to loſe the victory. It will be better than a triumph, to acknowledge yourſelf vanquiſhed.

* *Works of faith, and labours of love*, 1 Theſſ. i. 3. How finely are good works characterized in this place! though it be only *en paſſant*, tranſiently, or by the bye. And how judiciouſly are the *true* diſtinguiſhed from the *counterfeit*! Works which are done in faith, works which proceed from love; theſe, and theſe only, the apoſtle ſignifies, are *really* good.—As ſome noble river, though preſſing forward to the ocean, nouriſhes many a fair plant; and ſuckles many a ſweet flower by the way; ſo the ſacred writers, though principally intent (as here) upon ſome different point, yet drop *incidentally* ſuch valuable truths, as chear the believer's heart, and make glad the city of our GOD.

† Job xxxi. 40. ‡ Cant. viii. 5.

* Ezek. xiii. 10. † 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

DIALOGUE VIII.

Ther. OUR laſt converſation ended with a *challenge*. To decline or delay the acceptance of it, would look like cowardice in me, and be a piece of injuſtice to you, *Aſpaſio*. Therefore I am now ready to give you all the ſatisfaction, which a gentleman can demand.——Only, as the weather continues hazy, I believe, my *ſtudy* muſt be the place of action.

Aſp. A challenge! *Theron*—

Ther. What, Sir! do you boggle? would you eat your words, and play the poltroon?

Aſp. Perhaps, I may have an inclination to follow the example of a *brother-hero*, who ran away from the field of battle, juſt as his comrades were advancing to charge the enemy; and when called to an account for his behaviour, right worthily alleged, that his retreat proceeded, not from any timidity of mind; no, but from a concern for the public good. "For," quoth he, "if I had been "knocked on the head to-day, how ſhould I have been "able to fight for my country to-morrow?

You ſmile, *Theron*, at my doughty warrior, and his ſage maxim.——But, ſince you have glanced at a certain *modiſh* cuſtom, give me leave very ſeriouſly to aſſure you, that, if the affair was to be determined by ſword and piſtol, I ſhould reckon ſuch a conduct, a reſolute refuſal at leaſt, not at all unmanly, but the *truly* wiſe and gallant behaviour.——For ſurely it can never be an inſtance of wiſdom, to hazard my life, at the mere caprice of a turbulent ruffian, who is a ſtranger to all the principles of humanity and generoſity, but a ſlave, an abandoned ſlave, to his own ungovernable paſſions. Surely it can never be an act of real bravery, to expoſe *my* perſon; becauſe ſome fool-hardy practitioner in the fencing-ſchool, is deſperate enough to riſk *his*.——The gentleman, the true gentleman, ſhould exert a becoming dignity of ſpirit; and ſcorn to ſet his welfare on a level, with that of an inconſiderate and barbarous bully *.

Ther. But honour, my *Aſpaſio*, honour is at ſtake.—Better to loſe our life, than forfeit our reputation. Better to be in a grave than to be the jeſt of every coffee-houſe; and perhaps pointed at, as we paſs the ſtreets, for mean-ſpirited, ſneaking, or, as the gentlemen of the ſword ſo *elegantly* ſpeak, white-livered animals.

Aſp. Forfeit our reputation! Amongſt whom, I beſeech you?—A few raſh and precipitate creatures; the pupils of *La Mancha*'s knight; the ſons of *Chimera* † and cruelty: whoſe applauſe is infamy; and their de-

* *Aſpaſio* calls the perſon who gives the challenge, a *bully*. And ſuch, notwithſtanding all the maxims of fantaſtical and falſe honour, he will certainly be found, when tried at the bar of reaſon or juſtice. For, if the moſt impetuous, irrational, and brutal barbarity is allowed to conſtitute a bully, *he* has an indiſputable title to the character, who, on account of a mere punctilio, or ſome ſlight affront, would deſtroy a life, that might be of ſervice to *ſociety*,—might be a bleſſing to various *relatives*,—and is intimately connected with a bliſsful or miſerable *immortality*.

† This kind of gentry are ſtyled—in a BOOK, with which they have little or no acquaintance; but whoſe maxims will be had in reverence, when their names are loſt in oblivion—בני שאון *the ſons of bluſter*, or *the children of noiſe*, Jer. xlviii. 45.

traction

traction the higheſt praiſe they can beſtow. From every judicious and worthy perſon, your conduct will be ſure to gain approbation, and your character eſteem. When *Ceſar* received a challenge from *Anthony*, to engage him in ſingle combat, he very calmly anſwered the bearer of the meſſage; *If* Anthony *is weary of life*, tell him, *there are other ways to death, beſides the point of my ſword.*—Who ever deemed this an inſtance of cowardice! All ages have admired it, as the act of a *diſcreet* and *gallant* man; who was ſenſible of his own importance, and knew how to treat the petulant and revengeful humour of a diſcontented adverſary with its deſerved contempt.

Barely to loſe our life, is the ſmalleſt of thoſe evils which attend this miſchievous practice.—It is pregnant with a long, an almoſt endleſs train of diſaſtrous conſequences to parents, wives, children, friends, aſſociates, and the community.——It is an *infallible* expedient, to be deprived of the favour of the infinite GOD, and to be excluded from the joys of his eternal kingdom.——It is the *ſure* way, to become an object of abhorrence to the angels of light; and be made the laughing-ſtock of devils, in their dungeons of darkneſs *. *Shame*, everlaſting ſhame, *ſhall be* the reward of ſuch gallantry, *the promotion of* ſuch *fools* †.

Ther. With regard to this point, I am entirely of your opinion, *Aſpaſio*, however I may differ in other particulars.

Aſp. Say you ſo, *Theron!* Would *you* then tamely ſubmit to affronts, inſults, and injuries?

Ther. As to the trifling affronts of a peeviſh incontinent tongue, I would treat them with a ſuperior ſcorn. And when thus treated, they are ſure to recoil, with the keeneſt edge, and ſevereſt weight, upon the impotent malice which offers them. The wretch ſhould ſee, that I could pity his miſery, and ſmile at his folly.—But as to *injuries*, the caſe is otherwiſe. Should any one aſſault my perſon, 'tis at his peril. He would find, and perhaps to his ſmart,

Et nos tela manu, ferrumque haud debile dextra
Spargimus, et noſtro ſequitur de vulnere ſanguis ‡.

Here, the fundamental and everlaſting law of *ſelf-preſervation* calls upon us to play the man. And I am ſure, *Chriſtianity* does not require us, to yield our throats to the knife, or open our breaſts to the dagger.

But to retire,—to deliberate,—to ſit down,—and indite a *formal* challenge,—ſeems to me altogether as ſavage and iniquitous, as to aſſault on the highway.——He that demands my money on the road, or extorts it by an incendiary letter, or decoys me into the ſnare by a forged and counterfeit note, is ſtigmatized for a villain; is abhorred by every perſon of integrity; and, when detected, is rewarded with a halter. Why ſhould we reckon the headſtrong bravo *leſs injurious?* who makes his attempt upon my life; and thirſts, with inſatiable fury, for my blood?

Aſp. He allows you a fair *chance*, it is ſaid.

Ther. A chance! Of what?—Either of falling a ſacrifice to his rage, or of embruing my hands in his blood. Which is neither more nor leſs, than reducing me to a neceſſity of launching into damnation myſelf, or of tranſmitting a fellow-creature to eternal vengeance.—And is *this* an extenuation? *this* a mitigating circumſtance? It really proves the practice ſo inexcuſeably wicked, that nothing can be pleaded in its defence. The very argument, uſed to juſtify the horrid deed, inflames its guilt, and aggravates its malignity.

'Tis pity, but the legiſlative authority would interpoſe, for the ſuppreſſion of ſuch a flagrant wrong to ſociety, and ſuch a notorious violation of our benign religion. Why ſhould not the laws declare it *felony*, to make the firſt overture for a duel? Since it is always more heinous, and frequently more pernicious; is always murder in the intention, and frequently iſſues in *double* deſtruction; the one inflicted by the ſtab of violence, the other executed by the ſword of juſtice.

Might it not, at leaſt, be branded with ſome mark of public infamy, or ſubjected to a ſevere *pecuniary mulct?* ſo that a gentleman of ſpirit and temper might have it in his power, to return the compliment of a challenging letter with ſome ſuch anſwer;

SIR,

"However meanly you may think of your life, I ſet "too high a value upon mine to expoſe it as a mark for "*undiſciplined* and *outrageous* paſſions.---Neither have I ſo "totally renounced all that is humane, benevolent, or "amiable, as to draw my ſword for your deſtruction, "becauſe you have firſt been overcome by *precipitate* and "*unreaſonable* reſentment.---You have given me an op-"portunity of acting the gentleman and the Chriſtian. "And this challenge I accept, as a note under your "hand for five hundred pounds *; which will very ſoon "be demanded, according to law, by,

SIR,

Yours, &c."

Aſp. But to reſume the proper ſubject—the nature of *our* engagement: which I now recollect, and which was explained, when I ventured to give, what you call the challenge.---As it is not my *Theron*, but the obſtacles of his faith, and the enemies of his felicity, that I am to encounter, perhaps I ſhall have courage to ſtand my ground. And, inſtead of violating all the obligations of equity, honour and conſcience, I ſhall certainly evidence my love to my friend; may poſſibly promote his trueſt good.

Ther. I don't ſee, how this can be effected by your late attempt. You undertook to *run down* all works of righteouſneſs, as abſolutely unable to find acceptance with GOD, and equally inſufficient to recommend us to his favour. It is for the credit of theſe, which *Aſpaſio* has depretiated, that I enter the-liſts.

Aſp. Pray, what is the ſtandard, to which theſe works of righteouſneſs muſt be conformed, and by which their ſufficiency may be determined?

Ther. The *moral law*, doubtleſs: I know no other ſtandard of righteouſneſs, nor any other way of becoming righteous.

Aſp. You will, I hope, ere long be acquainted with another way.——At preſent, I agree to your propoſal. We will join iſſue on this footing; and try the merits of our cauſe, before *this tribunal*. Yourſelf ſhall be

* "Let me tell you with confidence," (ſays an excellent perſon, addreſſing himſelf to one of theſe unhappy *deſperadoes*), "that all "duels, or ſingle combats, are murderous; blanch them over "(how you liſt) with names of honour, and honeſt pretences, "their uſe is ſinful, and their nature deviliſh." See the ſelect works of Biſhop *Hall*, in one volume fol. pag. 526. Where the reader will find a happy mixture of true *oratory*, and ſound *divinity*; a rich vein of *fancy*, and a ſweet ſpirit of *piety*; contemplations upon the hiſtories of ſcripture (which, I think, are our prelate's maſterpiece) almoſt as *entertaining* and *inſtructive*, as the ſubjects illuſtrated are important and wonderful.—Notwithſtanding a few ſtiff or antique phraſes, I cannot but eſteem the works of this author, among the moſt valuable compoſitions extant in our language.

† Prov. iii. 35.

‡ VIRG.

* Might not the refuſer of a challenge be dignified with ſome honorary diſtinction, reſembling the *civic crown* amongſt the ancient *Romans?* Since, by his cool and temperate bravery, he ſaves one life from the ſword, another from the halter.——Was ſome honorary diſtinction, on the one hand, united to a pecuniary forfeiture on the other, I cannot but think, they would prove an effectual method to *check* the *progreſs* of this deſtructive evil. It would break the teeth of malice with her own weapons, and turn the artillery of revenge upon herſelf. Thoſe deteſtable paſſions would be loath to indulge themſelves in this horrid manner, if it was made the ſure way to *ennoble* and *enrich* the object of their rage.——N. B. The *civic crown* was an ornament aſſigned to thoſe ſoldiers, who had in battle reſcued a fellow-citizen from impending death.

the judge. I will only ask your opinion, and refer myself to your decision.——You see, I am soon weary of the military style. I had obtruded myself on a part which I was not qualified to act; and now resume a more becoming character.

Ther. If you place me on the bench, I shall allow of no such digressions; but shall keep you close to the subject.

Asp. Has your Lordship then considered the nature of the divine law, and the extent of its obligations?

Ther. It obliges *all* persons, and comprises the *whole* duty of man. It forbids all immorality, and injoins every virtue.—Are not these your sentiments?

Asp. They are, when somewhat enlarged.—The empire of the law, as *prohibitory* of evil, extends both to the outward and inward man. It takes cognizance of the actions. It judges every word. All the operations, and all the dispositions of the soul, come under its sacred jurisdiction.—It is indeed a discerner, not only of the working thoughts, but also of the dawning intentions; and arraigns them both at its awful bar. *It pierces even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit* *. Not the inmost recesses of the breast are too deep for its penetration; nor all the artifices of the deceitful heart too subtile for its detection.——Other laws forbid the unclean act; *this* condemns the wanton eye, and irregular desire. Other laws punish the injurious deed; *this* passes sentence on the unguarded sallies of passion, and the most secret emotions of resentment. So eminently true is that remark of the *psalmist*, *Thy commandments are exceeding broad* †!—Tell me now, *Theron*, has your obedience been commensurate to this extensive platform of duty?

Ther. If the law be so *very extensive*—

Asp. Nay, my friend, you cannot suspect, that I have stretched, to an undue extent, the obligations of the divine law. Since this interpretation is established by an authority *too great* to be controverted; *too clear* to be misunderstood; even by the authority of CHRIST himself: whose sermon upon the mount is a professed exposition of the commandments, and maintains, in the most explicit manner, all that I have advanced.——So that, if our LORD's exposition is just, I think, it will be neither rash, nor uncharitable to say, There is not a man upon earth, but has broke them *all*.

Ther. Are we all idolators then? all adulterers? all murderers? Shocking to imagine!

Asp. It is shocking, I confess.—But how much more so, if *such* delinquents expect justification by their own deeds?

Ther. This is no proof of your assertion, my good friend.

Asp. To be fond of gold; to be enamoured with the world; to love any creature more than the ever-blessed CREATOR; are instances of idolatry ‡, not quite so gross, but altogether as real, as to set up idols in your temples, or pay acts of adoration to senseless images. Have you always been free from this *apostasy* of the *affections*?

Our infallible TEACHER has informed us, that unreasonable anger, contemptuous language, and malevolent wishes ‖, are each a species of murder, and not many removes from the assassin's deadly stab. Have you been always meek, always benevolent, and never chargeable with this *mental homicide*?

We are farther assured, that the indulgence of inordinate desire is, in the impartial estimate of heaven, as the commission of the impure deed §. And evil concupiscence of every kind violates that sacred precept, *Thou shalt not covet* ¶. Has your will been invariably upright, and warped with no irregular inclination? Are you wholly unpolluted with this *adultery* of the *heart*?

I wait not for a reply. I have often heard you *plead guilty* to all,—yes, to all and every of these charges respectively.

Ther. Where, and when, *Aspasio*?

Asp. In the most sacred place, and on the most solemn occasion. And not you only, but a whole multitude of self-condemned criminals.—Our church, you know, has ingrafted the decalogue into her public service; and taught all her members to answer, after the repetition of each commandment; *LORD, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.* Is there any sense in these words? or have we any meaning, when we utter them? If we have, surely they must imply an acknowledgment of disobedience in every particular.—The criminal arraigned at the bar, never falls on his knees and craves forgiveness, till he either confesses or is convicted. This then must be the purport of our response. "We "are verily guilty concerning this thing. And we "humbly implore, both pardoning mercy for the past, "and strengthening grace for the future."

Give me leave to urge my question a little farther.—Is there a single day, in which you have not transgressed, some way or other, this sacred rule?

Ther. If the law of GOD will dispense with no deviation, not even in the first starts of thought, or the least wanderings of desire—But surely to affirm this, is to extend the law beyond all reasonable bounds. The motions of evil desire, *if indulged*, are undoubtedly criminal. But are they also, *when restrained*, breaches of duty? I should rather imagine, that such temptations are thrown in our way, for the trial of our obedience: which, had they no power over our affections, would not be trials; and when they are resolutely withstood, cannot be faults.

Asp. What was the judgment of our reformers? and what is the voice of our church? We may find both in the ninth article. "Although there is no con-"demnation for them that believe and are baptized, "yet the apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and "lust hath of itself the nature of sin." It is not said, concupiscence hath *then only* the nature of sin, when it is ripened into action; but *of itself*, and before it breaks out into the commission of iniquity. *Of itself*

* Heb. iv. 12. † Psal. cxix. 96.

‡ Col. iii. 5. Phil. iii. 19. ‖ Matth. v. 22. § Matth. v. 28.

¶ *Rom.* vii. 7. *Aspasio*'s observation brings to my remembrance a *remarkable incident*; which, as it is quite pertinent to our purpose, the reader will allow me to relate. It passed between a friend of mine, and a certain ingenious stranger, into whose company he happened to fall.—The gentleman was extolling, at an extravagant rate, the virtue of *honesty*: what a dignity it imparted to our nature! how it recommended us to the Supreme BEING! he confirmed all by a celebrated line from Mr *Pope*,

An honest man's the noblest work of GOD.

Sir, replied my friend, however excellent the virtue of honesty may be, I fear, there are very few men in the world, that really possess it.—You surprise me! said the stranger.—Ignorant as I am of your character, Sir, I fancy, it would be no difficult matter, to prove even *you* a dishonest man.—I defy you.—Will you give me leave, then, to ask you a question or two; and promise not to be offended?—Ask your questions, and welcome.—Have you never met with an opportunity of getting gain by some *unfair* means?—The gentleman paused.—I don't ask, whether you made *use of*, but whether you have *met* with, such opportunity? I, for my part, have, and, I believe, every body else has.—Very probably I may.—How did you feel your mind affected, on such an occasion? Had you *no* secret desire, not the *least* inclination, to seize the advantage which offered? Tell me, without any evasion, and consistently with the character you admire?—I must acknowledge, I have not always been absolutely free from every irregular *inclination*, but—Hold, Sir; none of your salvos. You have confessed enough. If you had the desire, though you never proceeded to the action, this shews you was dishonest in *heart*. This is what the scripture calls *concupiscence*. It defiles the soul. It is a breach of that law, which requireth *truth in the inner parts*; and unless you are pardoned through the blood of CHRIST, will be a just ground of your condemnation, *when GOD shall judge the secrets of men*.

it is contrary to the pure nature, and therefore cannot but be condemned by the perfect law of GOD.

Ther. This I can truly plead in my own behalf, that it has not been cuſtomary with me to offend; at leaſt, not *preſumptuouſly*, or of deliberate wickedneſs.

Aſp. My dear *Theron*, do not offer to *palliate* your guilt. Such an opiate may ſtupefy, but will not cure; or rather, like opiates ill prepared, it will intoxicate the mind, and counteract the operation of every healing medicine.——Beſides, it is not only pernicious, but falſe and unreaſonable. You know the uſe of that *ſolar microſcope*, and are able to inform me of its effects.

Ther. I ought to be pretty well acquainted with theſe experiments; ſince it has long been my favourite diverſion, to employ a few ſpare hours in ſuch agreeable ſpeculations.

Aſp. You have ſeen the body of an inſect, accommodated to the ſurpriſing inſtrument. When, in this ſituation, the animal was pricked by a very fine needle; your eye, your naked eye, juſt perceived the *puncture*; and diſcovered, perhaps, a *ſpeck* of moiſture oozing from the orifice. But in what manner were they repreſented by the magnifying inſtrument?

Ther. The puncture was widened into a frightful *gaſh*. The ſpeck of moiſture ſwelled into a copious ſtream; and flowed, like a *torrent*, from the gaping wound. An ox, under the ſacrificing knife, ſcarce looks more bulky, or bleeds more largely.

Aſp. Don't you apprehend my deſign?—If *we*, ſhort-ſighted mortals, and almoſt blinded with ſelf-love; if *we* cannot but be ſenſible of our faults; how flagrant muſt they appear, in what enormous magnitudes, and with what aggravating circumſtances, to an eye perfectly pure, and infinitely penetrating?

Inſtead of attempting to extenuate our offences, let us make ſome ſuch improving reflections.—— "If this "holy law, which prohibits the minuteſt failure, from "the indictment; if this all-diſcerning GOD, who ſifts "our conduct even to the ſmalleſt defect, be the judge; "if our perſonal goodneſs, which abounds with imper-"fections, be our plea; what can we expect at that de-"ciſive hour, when the LORD ſhall *lay judgment to the "line, and righteouſneſs to the plummet* *?—Surely, this "conſideration ſhould incline us to adopt the wiſe and "ardent wiſh of the apoſtle; *That we may* now, in this "our day, *win* CHRIST, *and*, at the laſt tremendous au-"dit, *be found in him; not having our own righteouſneſs "which is of the law*, for the foundation of our hopes, "*but the righteouſneſs which is of GOD by faith in* JESUS "CHRIST †."

Conſider the law in its nobler capacity, as *injoining* whatever is excellent.——Can you hope, *Theron*, to be juſtified by it, if you fall ſhort of its demands, not barely in a few inſtances, but in *every* action of your life, and *every* temper of your heart?

Ther. Such a hope, cheriſhed amidſt ſuch circumſtances, would be fallacious and abſurd.——But I truſt, I am not ſo very faulty, or rather ſo entirely abandoned, as your interrogatory ſuppoſes.

Aſp. Have you duly weighed the *perfection* and *ſpirituality* of the divine law?—It is a tranſcript of the unſpotted purity, and abſolute rectitude of the divine nature. It acquires an unreſerved obedience to all GOD's commands, and a moſt unfeigned ſubmiſſion to all his diſpenſations; without regretting the former, as a grievous yoke; or repining at the latter, as rigorous treatment.——It calls not only for external duty, but alſo for the moſt upright imaginations, and devout affections.—Nay, it inſiſts upon the exerciſe of *every* virtue, and that in the *higheſt* degree: love to GOD, without the leaſt lukewarmneſs; and love to all our neighbours without any unkindneſs; a ſanctity of deſire, that knows no ſtain; and an humility of mind, that is free from all elatement.—In a word, it requires us to be perfect *even as our* FATHER *which is in heaven is perfect* *.

Do any of your actions come up to this exalted ſtandard? Are any of your graces thus refined?

Ther. Am I then abſolutely *an inſolvent* before the great LORD of the univerſe? Have I no lamb in my fold without a blemiſh? nothing in my life, nothing in my heart, but what is defective and defiled?

Aſp. Indeed, my friend, this is not *your* condition alone, but the condition of the moſt irreproachable perſon on earth. There is *none* perfect, in any character, or in any work, no not one. None that obeys the divine law, uniformly, invariably, and completely.

Caſt your eye upon the names which are ſubjoined to thoſe beautiful *prints*. How elegant is the engraving! How accurate are the letters! The ſtrokes moſt delicately fine! Their ſhape moſt exactly true!—Let me aſk you to tranſcribe them with your pen; and make the copy equal to the original. Preſerve all the noble boldneſs of the *Roman* ſtamp, and all the graceful ſoftneſs of the *Italian* touch.——What? could you not execute this taſk, even in your preſent unimpaired health, and with the exertion of all your ſkill? How ſhamefully then muſt you fall ſhort, if your eyes were *dim* with age; if your hands ſhook with a *paralytic* diſorder; and your underſtanding was oppreſſed with a *lethargic* dulneſs?—Such is really the caſe with regard to all the children of men. Our nature is depraved; our moral abilities are enervated; and our intellectual faculties clouded. And can we, in ſuch a ſtate of impotence, tranſcribe that ſacred ſyſtem, which is the very image of GOD,—tranſcribe it into our tempers, and render it legible in our lives, without diminiſhing one jot or tittle of its perfect purity?

Ther. Though I fall ſhort, there are Chriſtians of a much higher claſs: Chriſtians, I don't doubt, who have theſe laws written on their hearts; all whoſe tempers are caſt into this heavenly mould. Nor am I myſelf without hopes of making *more conſiderable* advances in holineſs.

Aſp. May your hopes be quickened into vigorous endeavours! and your endeavours be crowned with abundant ſucceſs! What you ſuppoſe concerning very eminent Chriſtians, I cannot wholly admit, neither do I wholly deny. They may have all their tempers caſt into the heavenly mould: but then they are conformed to the ſacred pattern, only *in part*. There is a reſemblance; yet not ſuch as that clear and ſteady mirror (pointing to a fine glaſs over the chimney-piece) exhibits; but ſuch as ſome turbulent and muddy ſtream reflects.—If the breaſts of theſe eminent Chriſtians were formed on the model of *Druſus*'s † houſe, I verily think, you would have a lower opinion of their acquiſitions in virtue.

David, whom GOD himſelf dignifies with the moſt exalted of all characters, and *ſtyles a man after his own heart;*

* Iſ. xxviii. 17.

† Phil. iii. 8, 9.

* *Matth.* v. 48. Our LORD, having explained ſeveral commandments of the law, ſums up the whole, and gives us the ſpirit of them all, in this moſt refined precept; *Be ye perfect, even*, &c. If the reader pleaſes to take this paſſage into conſideration, he will have a more ſatisfactory anſwer to *Theron*'s objection, concerning the *firſt motions* of evil deſire; more ſatisfactory, I mean, than was ſuggeſted in the preceding pages. There the reply turned upon human teſtimony; here it reſts upon divine authority.

I hope, the candid reader will, on other occaſions, remember this obſervation. And if, at any time, the ſtrongeſt reaſons are not aſſigned, let him ſuppoſe it probable, that they are omitted in one place, only to be introduced and urged, perhaps with greater advantage, in another.

† When *Druſus*, a noble *Roman*, was deliberating upon a model for his new houſe, the architect offered to build it in ſuch taſte, that no eye ſhould overlook any of his rooms.—"You quite "miſtake my inclination," ſaid *Druſus*. "I am for the very re-"verſe of your plan. I would have my houſe ſo contrived, that "every paſſenger may ſee whatever is tranſacted within."

heart *; who, to a moſt inflamed love, added a moſt accurate knowledge, of the divine teſtimonies; was deeply ſenſible of the truth I would inculcate. After an attentive contemplation of the ſublimity, the extent, the ſanctity of thoſe heavenly inſtitutes, he breaks out into this humbling exclamation; *Who can tell how oft he offendeth* †? "Was the moſt vigilant conduct, or the moſt "purified ſoul, examined by this conſummate rule; in"numerable would be found the ſlips of the former, and "glaring would the failures of the latter appear."

Ther. I cannot ſee the reaſon for *degrading* human nature to ſuch an extravagant degree, and ranking human works among the refuſe of things.

Aſp. Do you aſk the reaſon of this remonſtrance?—It is to preſerve us from the miſchievous error of the *Phariſee*; who, meaſuring himſelf, not by the *true*, *ſublime*, and *extenſive* ſenſe of the law, but by a falſe, debaſed, and mutilated interpretation, became haughty in his own conceit, and abominable in the ſight of GOD.——Hear him trumpeting his own praiſe; *I am no extortioner, no adulterer* ‡. This, the poor vain creature fancied, was a ſufficient obedience paid to the *ſecond* table. See him ſtill ſtrutting in his own imaginary plumes ‖; *I faſt twice in the week; I give tythes of all that I poſſeſs* §. This, he fooliſhly dreamed, was a due compliance with the demands of the *firſt* table.——The young ruler ſeems to have been under the ſame deluſion, when he had the aſſurance to declare, *All theſe things*, which are preſcribed by the divine law, *have I kept from my youth up* ¶.

A more peſtilent opinion, it is ſcarce poſſible for the mind of man to entertain. And nothing can appear more egregiouſly miſtaken, if we conſider the *vaſt comprehenſive* ſcope of the ſacred precepts; and are convinced, that they require a *moſt exact* conformity, in every particular, and every punctilio.

Ther. Is there nothing valuable, then, in regularity of conduct, and integrity of heart? nothing valuable in our acts of charity, and habits of virtue? nothing whatſoever that may recommend us to our Maker?

Aſp. From our *fellow-creatures* they ſtand entitled to reſpect, imitation, and gratitude. But before *infinite* perfection, they muſt drop their claim, and lie proſtrate in the duſt; imploring forgiveneſs, not challenging a reward. We all diſcern a beauty and a twinkling luſtre in the ſtars, when viewed under the ſhades of night. But, when the magnificent ſource of day ariſes, their beauty vaniſhes, their luſtre is darkneſs. *Such* are human accompliſhments, when compared with the perfect law, or beheld by the piercing eye, of the ſupremely-glorious GOD.

Ther. Methinks, this notion confounds the difference of good and evil; and, by rendering our actions *blameable*, would render them all *alike*. This is levelling with a witneſs!

Aſp. It only ſhews, that there are blemiſhes in all.—Whereas ſome are flaw and blemiſh all over. Is there no difference between the *leopard's* ſpots, and the *raven's* foot? If I maintain, that neither of thoſe animals are perfectly white, does this imply, that both are equally black?

All we perform, however *ſpecious* it may ſeem, is very *far ſhort* of our elevated rule; therefore cannot procure the divine favour, or entitle us to the kingdom of heaven.—— Nay, if GOD ſhould enter into judgment with us, on the foot of our own performances; he would diſcover ſuch defects, even in the choiceſt inſtances of our obedience, as muſt render them matter of condemnation, not meritorious of applauſe.

Be pleaſed to obſerve this penknife—What can be more exquiſitely *keen* than the edge, or more nicely *poliſhed* than the blade? but how do they appear, when beheld through one of thoſe microſcopes?

Ther. The edge leſs ſharp than the woodman's axe, or rather more *blunt* than his iron wedge. The poliſh reſembles a maſs of *coarſe* metal, rudely hammered on the anvil.

Aſp. How very delicate is the *cambric*, which forms your ruffles; and gives ſuch an ornamental air to your whole dreſs! Nothing can be finer than the threads, or more exact than the texture. But what is their appearance in a *microſcopic* view?

Ther. You would take the fine threads for hempen *cords*; and would almoſt be poſitive, that they had been *wattled* together by the clumſy hands of the hurdle-maker, rather than curiouſly wove in the artiſt's loom.

Aſp. That lovely piece of *enamel*, which makes a part of your lady's penſile equipage, quite charms the ſpectator, with the juſtneſs of its figure, and the radiancy of its colours. But—

Ther. Under the ſcrutiny of this ſearching inſtrument, it loſes all its elegance; and inſtead of winning our admiration, provokes our contempt. It looks like a heap of mortar, *plaiſtered* on by the maſon's trowel.

Aſp. You ſee then, *Theron*, what groſs indelicacies, what bungling inequalities, this ſupplementary aid to our ſight diſcovers, even in the *moſt finiſhed* works of human art. So, and abundantly more, does the immaculate purity of GOD diſcern imperfections in our moſt upright deeds, and moſt guarded hours.

I ſaid *immaculate*; and I ought to have ſaid more.—— For GOD is not only unerringly wiſe to detect, but *infinitely* pure to abhor, all contamination. Angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, are endowed with immaculate, but the LORD is poſſeſſed of infinite purity. ——Have you conſidered this attribute of the GODHEAD, *Theron?*

Ther. I have; and not without amazement at the charming, the awful deſcriptions of it, which occur in the ſacred writings.——*GOD* is not only holy, but, as the lawgiver of the *Jews* very ſublimely expreſſes himſelf, *glorious in holineſs* †. The ſacred penmen, treating of this illuſtrious perfection, ſeem to labour the important point. They indulge the loftieſt flights of imagination; they employ the boldeſt figures of ſpeech; and add the moſt glowing colours of eloquence; not without frequent acknowledgments, that all the force of language is abundantly too *feeble* for the unutterable ſubject.

* For the propriety of this character, and its correſpondence with the perſon, let me refer the reader to a *Note* in *Dialogue* I. *p.* 42.

† Pſal. xix. 12. ‡ Luke xviii. 11.

‖ This ſeems to give the genuine ſignification of το υψηλον εν ανθρωποις, Luke xvii 15. Not *that which is highly eſteemed*, τιμιον, ενδοξον. The propoſition, taken in this ſenſe, is neither neceſſarily nor univerſally true. The meekneſs of *Moſes*, the fortitude of *Joſhua*, the wiſdom of *Solomon*, were highly eſteemed among thoſe very men, to whom our LORD addreſſed his diſcourſe. Yet none can ſuppoſe, that the endowments of thoſe illuſtrious perſonages were *an abomination in the ſight of GOD*.

Whereas, whatever is *high and lifted up*, haughty and conceited; every ſentiment of ſelf-admiration, and all the fruits which ſpring from that bitter root; theſe are *certainly* and *invariably* objects of the divine abhorrence.—This interpretation, I think, is moſt ſuitable, not only to fact in general, but to the import of this word in particular. See *Rom.* xi. 20. where it occurs in a ſimilar acceptation, μη υψηλοφρονει. *Be not high-minded.*—It ſeems alſo beſt to quadrate with the tenor of our SAVIOUR's reproof; *Ye are they that juſtify yourſelves before men*; but all ſuch arrogant attempts, and every ſuch elated air, the moſt holy GOD beholds with deteſtation.

§ Luke xviii. 12. ¶ Matth. xix. 20.

* To this aſſertion St *Cyril*, in concert with ſeveral other fathers, bears a very expreſs teſtimony; Αυτο ημων το ορθως πραττεσθαι δοκουν, μομφης και αιτιας αμοιρησειν αν ει τις αυτα περιεργαζομενος τα και βασανιζοιτο θεος. *Even thoſe of our actions, which ſeem to be performed in a right manner, could not eſcape cenſure and blame, if GOD ſhould examine, and bring them to the teſt.*

† Exod. xv. 11.

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One of the prophets, addreſſing the KING eternal, immortal, inviſible, breaks out into this ecſtatic exclamation; *O LORD, my GOD, my HOLY ONE, thou art of purer eyes, than* (to *allow*, ſhall I ſay? This is an aſcription of praiſe, unſpeakably too mean for thy ſurpaſſing excellency. Thou art of purer eyes, than) *to look upon evil, and canſt not behold iniquity* *.——Another, wrapt into a prophetic viſion, ſees the *ſeraphim* veiling their faces, in token of profound humiliation; hears thoſe ſons of ardour and love, crying in loud reſponſive ſtrains, *Holy, holy, holy is the LORD GOD of ſabaoth* †.—Nay, ſo tranſcendently holy, ſays another devout worſhipper, that all created glory is totally eclipſed in his preſence: *He looketh to the moon, and it ſhineth not; yea, the ſtars are not pure in his ſight* ‡. And *his very angels*, thoſe refined and exalted intelligencies, *he chargeth with folly* ‖.

Aſp. Very majeſtic deſcriptions!—And pray let us obſerve the impreſſions which ſuch beamings of the divine effulgence made upon the ſaints of old.——*Moſes*, drawing near the cloudy pavilion, the preſence-chamber of the HOLY ONE of *Iſrael*, ſays, with emotions of uncommon dread, *I exceedingly fear and quake* §!—— When *Job* is favoured with ſome peculiar manifeſtations of the omnipotent GOD, ſee his poſture! hear his words! *I abhor myſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes* *. How ſtrong is the language! how deep the abaſement!—— When *Iſaiah* ſaw the incomprehenſible JEHOVAH ſitting upon his throne, and the princes of heaven adoring at his footſtool, ſeized with a pang of reverential fear, he cried out, *Woe is me! I am undone! for I am a man of unclean lips* †!—When *Ezekiel* beheld an emblematical repreſentation of HIM, who dwelleth in light inacceſſible; when the ANCIENT of days, veiled under a human ſhape, appeared to *Daniel*; though one was a devout prieſt, and each was an eminent prophet; yet, overwhelmed with a mixture of veneration and terrror, they *both fell down at his feet as dead* ‡: and this, not before a full diſplay, but only before a *glimpſe* of the GODHEAD; which, though partial and tranſient, was too dazzlingly bright, for an eye of fleſh to bear.

O my friend! my *Theron!* what figure muſt *our* mean performances, *our* low attainments, make before this immenſely-glorious GOD?—Let us examine the behaviour and ſpirit of *Job*, a little more particularly. He is one of your favourite examples; and indeed very deſervedly; for in piety he had no ſuperior, and no equal; *there was none like him in the earth*: yet, when he has to do with the MAKER of all things, and the JUDGE of all men, he pours out his abaſhed ſoul in theſe very remarkable profeſſions: *If I juſtify myſelf, my own mouth ſhould condemn me: If I ſay, I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe* ‖.—He declares yet farther, *If I waſh myſelf in ſnow-water, and make my hands never ſo clean, yet ſhalt thou*, O righteous and eternal GOD, *plunge me in the ditch*; manifeſt me, notwithſtanding all this care and circumſpection, to be a guilty and a filthy creature; yea, ſo very guilty and filthy, that my *own* cloaths, were they ſenſible of the pollution, *could not but abhor me*.

This he confeſſes, not becauſe he was an habitual ſinner, or chargeable with any ſcandalous immorality; but becauſe his mind was filled with the moſt affecting ſenſe of GOD's inconceivable holineſs, and infinite glory. *For*, adds the venerable SUFFERER, *he is not a man as I am*; but a BEING of ſuch extenſive knowledge, that nothing can eſcape his diſcernment; of ſuch exalted purity, that every ſpot of defilement is loathſome in his ſight. For which reaſon, it is abſolutely impoſſible, *that I ſhould anſwer him*, with reference to my own perſonal righteouſneſs; *or that we ſhould come together in judgment*, on any ſuch footing, without confuſion to myſelf, and ruin to my cauſe.

To all this, he ſubjoins, what is ſtill more memorable and exemplary: *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my ſoul, I would deſpiſe my life.*—He ſuppoſes himſelf in a higher ſtate than your moſt advanced Chriſtian; though I were *perfect*. Yet even in ſuch a ſtate, were it attainable and attained, *I would not know my ſoul*; not dwell upon, not plead, no, nor ſo much as cheriſh a thought of, my own accompliſhments and acquirements. In the important buſineſs of juſtification, they ſhould ſtand for cyphers; they ſhould be thrown into ſhades; they ſhould entirely diſappear.—Nay more, *I would deſpiſe my life*; my life, with all its moſt ſhining actions and moſt diſtinguiſhed virtues, ſhould be reckoned inſignificant and deſpicable: juſt as *inſignificant* and *deſpicable*, with reſpect to this great tranſaction, as a wandering ſpark would be, if appointed to diffuſe day amidſt the darkneſs of night, or produce ſpring amidſt the depths of winter.

Ther. Theſe are alarming hints, *Aſpaſio*, I muſt confeſs.—A law, which requires an *exact* and *univerſal* obedience, both in heart and life!——A GOD of ſuch majeſty, purity, and glory, that men of the moſt approved integrity are overwhelmed with *confuſion*, in his preſence!——I ſhall conſider them, at my leiſure, with the attention they deſerve.——At preſent, I believe, opportunity is giving us the ſlip. Yonder coach

* Hab. i. 13.

† *If.* vi. 3. The poets, and writers of a bold imagination, are particularly fond of *machinery*; of introducing celeſtial beings, in order to give ſome peculiar dignity to their plan, or ſome additional ſtrength to their ſentiments. With inimitable propriety, and ſurpriſing emphaſis, is this ſpecies of fine writing uſed in ſcripture; eſpecially in the paſſage quoted above.

Let us only conſider—The *perſonages*. Theſe are the *ſeraphim*, pure and active ſpirits. Likened, by the pſalmiſt, to flames of fire; ſtyled, by the apoſtle, dominions and principalities of heaven. Who excel in ſtrength and wiſdom, in every high and bright accompliſhment.—Their *attitude*. They wait around the KING immortal, ſeated on his exalted throne. They *ſtand*; are in a poſture of ſervice; with their wings outſtretched, ready to fly at the firſt ſignal. They ſtand, not with their eyes reverently caſt down; but with their *faces covered*, to denote the *deepeſt* ſelf-abaſement: as creatures, that are conſcious and aſhamed of their own meanneſs; or as overcome with the inſupportable glories which beam from uncreated majeſty.—Their *action*. They celebrate, not in cold converſation, but with rapturous ſongs, not with ſingle voices, but in a grand choir, (יענו זה אל זה, ſee *Pſal.* lxxxvii. 5. 6.) the amiable yet tremendous ſanctity of the LORD almighty.—Their *manner* of *expreſſion*. Though filled and penetrated with the prodigious theme, they attempt not to deſcribe it. Impracticable that even by the tongues of angels! They expreſs themſelves, therefore, in the language of profound admiration; in repeated, in reiterated acclamations to the wonderful attribute; *Holy! holy! holy!*—The *effects* of this auguſt appearance. The poſts of the door ſhake at the voice: the ponderous and magnificent pillars of braſs (ſee 2 *Chron.* iii. 17.) tremble like a leaf. The ſpacious and beautiful houſe is filled with tokens of the divine indignation; is involved in clouds of ſmoke; and joins with the trembling columns, and adoring ſeraphs, to tell the thoughtleſs world, *What a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living GOD!* The prophet himſelf is ſtruck with aſtoniſhment; is overwhelmed with awe; and cries out, "as a woman in her pangs."—Can any thing be more enlivened, impreſſive, and alarming?

If I ſhall not treſpaſs upon the reader's patience, I would beg leave to add a remark concerning the word *ſabaoth*: which, though a *Hebrew* expreſſion, is retained in that excellent hymn, entitled *Te Deum*; and which ſome people I am inclined to believe, inadvertently confound with *ſabbath*.—The latter ſignifies the *reſt* of the ſeventh day; and, in this connection, yields a ſenſe not very appoſite, and comparatively mean. Whereas the former denotes *armies* or *hoſts*; and furniſhes us with an image truly grand and majeſtic, worthy to be admitted into the ſongs of ſeraphs.—It glorifies GOD, as the great, univerſal, uncontrollable SOVEREIGN; who exerciſes a *ſupreme dominion* over all the orders of being, from the loftieſt archangel that ſhines in heaven, to the loweſt reptile that crawls in duſt: who ſays to a legion of cherubs, *Go*; and they go;—to a ſwarm of inſects, *Come*; and they come;—to any, to every creature, *Do this*; and they do it. *See* Matth. viii. 9.

‡ Job xxv. v. ‖ Job iv. 18. § Heb. xii. 21.

* Job xlii. 6. † If. vi. 5.

‡ Ezek. i. 28. Dan. x. 8. 9. ‖ *See* Job. ix. 20. 21.—30. 31. 32.

ſeems to be moving this way, and the livery looks like *Philander's*.

Aſpaſio, deſirous to fix thoſe convictions—which are of the *laſt* conſequence to our faith and ſalvation—very deſirous to fix them on his friend's mind, replied.

Aſp. As your viſitants are at a diſtance, give me leave to obſerve, That the wiſeſt of men, attending to the *firſt* of theſe particulars, has poured contempt upon all human excellency; *There is not a juſt man upon earth, that doth good and ſinneth not* *. The apoſtle of CHRIST takes ſhame to himſelf, on the ſame account; and teaches all mankind to ſtrike the ſail of ſelf-conceit; *In many things we offend all* †.——*David*, conſidering the *latter* of theſe points, prays with the utmoſt earneſtneſs; *Enter not into judgment with thy ſervant, O LORD!* and aſſigns this humbling reaſon for his petition; *for, in thy ſight, ſhall no man living be juſtified* ‡. This induced *Nehemiah*, who had been ſo nobly zealous for the honour of his GOD, not to confide in his own valuable ſervices, but make application to forgiving goodneſs: *Spare me, O LORD, according to thy great mercy* ‖.

Had I ſet before you the example of the poor *publican*, who ſmote upon his breaſt; durſt not lift up his eyes to heaven; but cried from the bottom of a polluted heart, *GOD be merciful to me a ſinner* §! *Self-love*, might poſſibly have whiſpered; "Surely, I am not to be ranked with "that abominable wretch. I ſtand upon ſome better "footing than ſuch an infamous offender."——With reſpect to the enjoyment of eternal life, we ſtand upon no better, upon no other. And when *law* as that obnoxious deſpiſed creature, we are upon the very ſame ground with the moſt *exalted* ſaints. They all appear before the MAJESTY of HEAVEN, in the ſame attitude of unfeigned humiliation, and with the ſame acknowledments of utter unworthineſs.——For it is a certain truth, and admits of *no* exception, that to juſtify ſinners, is not the privilege of human obedience, but the *ſole* prerogative of *the LORD our righteouſneſs*.

Ther. Is not the practice of *Hezekiah* an exception to your rule? Theſe, if I recollect aright, are the words of that holy king; *I beſeech thee, O LORD, remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy ſight* ¶. You ſee, he puts the iſſue of his trial before the everlaſting GOD, upon his own integrity and his own obedience.

Aſp. Theſe are his words, but they are not uſed with *this* view. He humbly repreſents before the great SOVEREIGN of the world, how beneficial his former life *had been*, and how ſerviceable his prolonged life *might be*, to the beſt intereſts of the *Jewiſh* nation. He recurs to his obedience, not that he may eſtabliſh his hope of eternal happineſs in heaven; but that he may obtain a reprieve from the grave, and a lengthening of his tranquillity on earth.——Neither is this obedience gloried in by way of merit; but only pleaded by way of argument: As though he had ſaid; "*Remember*, gracious "GOD, how I have exerted my royal authority, to "ſuppreſs idolatry, to extirpate vice, and to promote "thy true religion. *Conſider* how greatly thy people "ſtand in need of ſuch a vigilant and zealous governor; "and to what a miſerable condition both church and "ſtate may be reduced, if thou takeſt away thy ſervant "by this threatened but untimely ſtroke. And, for the "welfare of *Judah*, for the honour of thy name, for the "ſupport of thy own worſhip, *O ſpare me a little!*"

Aſpaſio pauſed, expecting a reply.——As *Theron* continued ſilent and muſing, *Aſpaſio*, with a ſmile of benevolence, proceeded.——Come, my *Theron*; why ſo deep in thought? Have you any objection to the evidences I have produced?—They are ſome of the moſt *dignified* characters, and *illuſtrious* perſonages, that could be ſelected from all ages: kings, princes, and patriots; prieſts, ſaints, and martyrs. Should theſe be deemed inſufficient, I can exhibit a larger and nobler cloud of witneſſes;—*larger*, for they are a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues;—*nobler*, for they ſtand before the throne, and before the LAMB, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.——Aſk thoſe ſhining armies, Who they are, and whence they came? Their anſwer is comprized in one of my favourite portions of ſcripture; one of thoſe delightful texts, from which I hope to derive conſolation even in my laſt moments. For which reaſon, you will allow me to repeat it, tho' it may perhaps be mentioned in a former converſation. *We are they who came out of great tribulation; and have waſhed our robes, and made them white in the blood of the* LAMB: *therefore are we before the throne* *.

Some of them laid down their lives for the ſake of CHRIST; many of them were eminent for works of righteouſneſs; all of them were endued with real holineſs. Yet none of theſe qualifications conſtituted their *paſſport* into the regions of endleſs felicity. They had *waſhed their robes*; had fled to the atonement, and pleaded the merits of *JESUS* their SAVIOUR: Hereby they had *made them white*; this was the cauſe of their acquittance from guilt, and their complete juſtification:—And *therefore*, on this account, their perſons were accepted; they were preſented without ſpot before the throne; and admitted to that fulneſs of joy, which is at GOD's right hand for evermore.

Ther. I have no objection to your witneſſes. But methinks, your doctrine is ſtrangely *debaſing* to human nature.

Aſp. A ſign, *Theron*, that it is agreeable to the genius of the *goſpel*: which is calculated, as the eloquent *Iſaiah* foretold, to humble the ſinner, and exalt the SAVIOUR †: *The loftineſs of man ſhall be bowed down, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be made low, and the LORD alone ſhall be exalted in that day* ‡: "Man, though natu"rally vain, ſhall be made ſenſible of his numberleſs "offences; ſhall ſee the defects which attend his higheſt "attainments; ſhall confeſs the impoſſibility of being "juſtified by the deeds of the law; and place all his "hope upon the propitiatory death, and meritorious "obedience of the LORD JESUS CHRIST."

* Eccl. vii. 20. † Jam. iii. 2. ‡ Pſal. cxliii. 2.
‖ Neh. xiii. 22. § Luke xviii. 13. ¶ 2 Kings xx. 3.

* Rev. vii. 14. 15.

† This correſponds with a very valuable maxim, which an eminent divine once recommended to his people, as a touch-ſtone to diſtinguiſh *evangelical* truth.—That doctrine, he ſaid, which tends

To humble the ſinner;
To exalt the SAVIOUR;
To promote holineſs;

That doctrine which tends to accompliſh *all* theſe deſigns, you may embrace as ſound. That which is defective in its influence on *any one* of them, you ſhould reject as corrupt.

‡ Iſ. ii. 11.

DIALOGUE IX.

THERON, impreſſed with the laſt converſation, was very deſirous to reſume the ſubject, and renew the important debate. With this view, he conducted his friend into a retirement, commodious for the purpoſe.

They enter a ſpacious *lawn*; which lay oppoſite to the

the houſe, and ſtretched itſelf in the form of an expanded fan. The mounds, on either ſide, were dreſſed in verdure, and ran out in a ſlanting direction. The whole, to an eye placed at a diſtance, bore the reſemblance of a magnificent *viſta*; contracting, by ſlow degrees, its dimenſions; and leſſening, at laſt, into a point: which the regular and graceful ſeat, with all imaginable dignity, ſupplied.

Nature had ſunk the lawn into a gentle *decline*: on whoſe ample ſides, were oxen browzing, and lambs friſking. The luſty droves lowed, as they paſſed; and the thriving flocks bleated welcome muſic in their maſter's ear.——Along the midſt of this verdant ſlope, ran a ſpacious and extenſive *walk*: which, coated with gravel, and fenced with paliſadoes, looked like a plain ſtripe of brown, interſecting a carpet of the brighteſt green.—At the bottom, two handſome *canals*, copiouſly ſtocked with fiſh, floated to the breeze: whoſe waters, beheld from every front-room in the houſe, had a fine effect upon the ſight, not without a refreſhing influence on the imagination.—At the extremity of one, ſtood a ſtately *colonnade*. The roof was elevated on pillars of the *Ionic* order; and the area flabbed with ſtones, neatly ranged in the diamond-faſhion. Several foreſt-chairs accommodated the anglers with a ſeat, while the bending dome ſupplied them with a ſhade.

Correſponding, and on the margin of the other canal, was erected a *ſummer-houſe*, of a very ſingular kind.—The lower part had an opening towards the north. It was cool; it was gloomy; and had never ſeen the ſun. It carried the romantic air of a *grotto*, or rather the penſive appearance of a *hermit's cell*. The outſide was coarſe and rugged with protuberant ſtones. Partly overſpread with ivy, partly covered with moſs, it ſeemed to be the work of ancient years.—You deſcend, by ſteps of turf, through a low and narrow door. A ſcanty iron grate, inſtead of a large ſweeping ſaſh, tranſmits a glimmering light; juſt ſufficient to diſcover the inner ſtructure: which appeared like one continued piece of rock-work; a cavern cut, you would imagine, from the ſurrounding quarry.—*Above*, hung an irregular arch, with an aſpect rather threatening, than inviting. *Below*, lay a paving of homely pebbles; in ſome places, a little furrowed, as though it had been worn by the frequent tread of ſolitary feet. *All around*, were ruſticity and ſolemnity; ſolemnity never more viſibly ſeen than through a gloom.—The furniture of the ſame *groteſque* faſhion with the apartment. A bench hewed, you would ſuſpect, by nature's chiſel, out of the ſolid ſtone: a ſort of couch, compoſed of ſwelling moſs, and ſmall fibrous roots.—From one corner, trickled a pure ſpring, which crept with a bubbling moan, along the channelled floor, till its healthy current was collected into a baſon, rudely ſcooped from the ground. On the edge of this little receptacle, lay chained a ruſty bowl, and over it ſtood an antique worm-eaten table.——On the leaſt obſcure part of the wall, you diſcern, *dimly* diſcern, a parchment ſcroll, inſcribed with that ſage, but mortifying admonition, VANITY OF VANITIES! ALL IS VANITY!

Over this receſs, ſo pleaſingly horrid, and adapted to ſolemn muſings, aroſe an open and airy *Belvidere*. You aſcend by winding ſtairs; and coming from the *uncouth* abode below, are ſweetly ſurpriſed with an *elegant* hexagon.—The ceiling lofty, and decorated with the ſofteſt, richeſt, almoſt-flowing fret-work. The wainſcot, in large pannels of oak, retained its native auburn: ſo *beautifully plain*, that, like an amiable countenance, it would have been diſfigured, rather than improved, by the moſt coſtly paint. On this were diſpoſed, in gilded frames, and to great advantage, a variety of entertaining *landſcapes*. But none ſurpaſſed, none equalled all were a foil to, the noble, lovely views which the windows commanded.——The chimney-piece, of white ſhining marble, ſtreaked with veins of vivid red. *Over it* was carved a fine feſtoon of artificial, *in it* was ranged a choice collection of natural flowers.——On a table of gloſſy walnut, lay a portable *teleſcope*, attended with *Thomſon's Seaſons*, and *Vanierii Prædium Ruſticum* *.

The whole was fitted up in the higheſt taſte, and furniſhed with every pleaſurable ornament: on purpoſe to harmonize with that *laviſh gaiety*, which ſeemed to ſmile over all the face of nature; on purpoſe to correſpond with that *vernal delight*, which came breathing on the wings of every fragrant gale. I may add, on purpoſe to remind the beholder of thoſe *immortal manſions*, which are decorated with images infinitely more ſplendid, with objects unſpeakably more glorious: where holy beings will ſpend, not a few vacant hours in refined amuſement, but a boundleſs eternity in the conſummation of joy.——For, to a well-turned mind, nature is a preceptor; and theſe are her *inſtructive* leſſons. To the pure in heart, even ſenſe is edifying; and theſe are its *delicate* moralities.

The redundant waters of the canal rolled off in a ſpreading *caſcade*; which tumbling from many a little precipice, ſoothed the air with a ſymphony of ſoft and gurgling ſounds; nor ever intermitted the obliging office,

From morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve.

But when the fanning *breezes* dropt their wings, when the feathered choir were huſhed in ſleep, when not ſo much as a chirping graſhopper was heard throughout the meads, this liquid inſtrument ſtill played its *ſolo*; ſtill purſued its buſy way, and warbled, as it flowed, melodious murmurs.

Aſp. Such *Theron*; ſo uniform, uninterrupted, and invariable, ſhould be *our* conformity to the divine law.——But alas! thoſe ſacred precepts are ſo *exceeding broad*, that the moſt enlarged human obedience is far from being commenſurate to their extent; ſo *abſolutely holy*, that our higheſt attainments fall vaſtly ſhort of their exalted perfection.——How then can we expect juſtification from ſuch a conſummate rule? How dare we place our dependence upon ſuch imperfect duties? eſpecially before a GOD of unerring diſcernment, and immaculate purity.

Ther. Becauſe mankind are incapable of pleaſing their MAKER, by yielding an *abſolute* and *invariable* obedience to the moral law; does it follow from thence, that they cannot render themſelves acceptable to him, by an univerſal courſe of ſincere obedience?

Aſp. I think, it follows from what has been already obſerved. If you deſire new arguments, they are at hand.

The law, ſays the teacher of the *Gentiles*, *is the miniſtration of condemnation* †. How can this be true, if it requires no more than a *ſincere* obedience; ſuch as is proportioned to our infirm ſtate? If this be ſufficient to juſtify, and entitle us to our CREATOR's favour, the law ceaſes to be the miniſtration of condemnation. It becomes (which is flatly contradictory to the apoſtle's doctrine) the miniſtration of righteouſneſs.

The law is ſtyled, by the ſame inſpired teacher, *a ſchoolmaſter to* bring us to CHRIST ‡. How can it,

* *Vanierii prædium ruſticum*—A moſt elegant *Latin poem*; which treats of every remarkable peculiarity relating to the buſineſs of a country-life, or the furniture of a country-ſeat.—It entertains us with a deſcription of the moſt *agreeable* objects, in an eaſy flow of the *pureſt* language, and moſt *muſical* numbers.

It is, I think, one continued beauty; ſuperior to every thing of the kind I have met with among the moderns; and ſcarcely, if at all, unworthy the firſt genius of the *Auguſtan* age. *Uni Virgilio ſecundus, et pene par.*

† 2 *Cor.* iii. 7. In *this* place, I apprehend, the apoſtle means the *moral* law, and that principally; as that alone was *written and engraven on ſtones*. Elſewhere, I believe, he uſes the word in a larger ſenſe; and intends to exclude *all* law whatever, from bearing any ſhare in our juſtification.

‡ *Gal.* iii. 24. Παιδαγωγος, *a ſchoolmaſter*; who pretends not to *finiſh*

upon your ſuppoſition, be qualified for ſuch an office? If a ſincere obedience be the whole of its demands, it can no longer direct us to CHRIST; it will no longer deliver us over to a REDEEMER's merit; but muſt draw and attach us to *itſelf*; teaching us to look upon its precepts, and our own conſcientious obſervance of them, as the tenure of eternal life.

Do you inſiſt upon a third proof? A third preſents itſelf; not ſo much founded on argumentation, as deduced from example.——How was *Abraham* *, the friend of GOD, and father of the faithful, juſtified? By a courſe of ſincere obedience? No; but by faith in the promiſed MESSIAH. *Abraham worked not*, with a view, to obtain juſtification; *but believed on him, who juſtifieth the ungodly*.——How was *David* *, the man after GOD's own heart, juſtified? By his zeal for the LORD, and by his eminent ſervices? No; but by a righteouſneſs imputed; even that righteouſneſs of the bleſſed REDEEMER, through which *iniquity is forgiven, and ſin pardoned*.—And can we be ſaid to walk *humbly*, or can we be thought to walk *ſurely*, if refuſing to tread in the ſteps of theſe exemplary ſaints, we divert into a path of our own deviſing?

Ther. "Of our own deviſing!"—No, my friend: there is a *milder* law introduced by the goſpel, condeſcending and merciful to our infirmities, which accepts of ſincerity inſtead of perfect obedience.

Aſp. When was this milder law introduced, and the ſtricter abrogated? Not upon the entrance of ſin, I preſume. At this rate, the original law muſt be the creature of a *few days*, perhaps of a *few hours* only. But can we imagine, that the all-wiſe and unchangeable GOD would ordain a ſyſtem of precepts to be diſannulled as ſoon as enacted?—Not in our LORD's time, I am very certain. That holy commandment, which requires *ſupreme* love to GOD, and *perfect* charity to men, he aſſures us, was ſtill in force †. Nay, it is evident, from the nature of the DEITY, and from our relation to one another, that it always will be in force; that it never can ceaſe; but is neceſſary and everlaſting.

"A milder law, condeſcending to our infirmities."—What can we be the purport of ſuch an inſtitution? It muſt be ſuppoſed to ſpeak the following language: "Be it known unto you, O children of *Adam*, that "you are no longer injoined to love the LORD "with all your ſtrength, nor to love your neighbour "as yourſelves.——*Once*, indeed, I inſiſted upon abſolute purity of heart; *now* I can diſpenſe with ſome "degree of evil concupiſcence.——Since CHRIST is "come, and his goſpel preached, you need not always "be clothed with humility; but may feel ſome little "emotions of pride.——In ſhort becauſe you are *weak*, "I will *connive*, or even accommodate any demands to "your enfeebled and depraved condition."

Not to urge, (what muſt be ſhocking to every ear) that ſuch a doctrine would make the HOLY ONE of GOD a miniſter of ſin; and the goſpel of our ſalvation a patent for licentiouſneſs. Let me only aſk,—Does this agree with our LORD's declaration? *One jot or tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled* ‖.——Is this ſuitable to the perfections of the divine LEGISLATOR, *with whom is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning* §?—Will this conſiſt with the avowed reſolution of the mighty JEHOVAH? *He will magnify the law, and make it honourable* ‡.

Ther. However you may decry what I call the milder law, St *Paul* aſſerts it to be the *Chriſtian* ſcheme, he ſtrenuouſly argues for, as the only ſcheme by which any man can be juſtified in the ſight of *GOD*.

Aſp. Does he, *Theron?* In what epiſtle? what chapter? what verſe?—He ſays, addreſſing himſelf to the *Galatian* converts, *I do not fruſtrate the grace of GOD; for if righteouſneſs come by the law, CHRIST is dead in vain* ‖. From which paſſage, we learn two very momentous truths: That were we to derive a juſtifying righteouſneſs from the law, this would not only be *derogatory* to the honour of grace, but *ſubverſive* of its very being.—That, by ſeeking juſtification through our own conſcientious behaviour, we make, as far as in us lies the death of CHRIST a *vain* thing; for which there was no occaſion, and of which there is no uſe.

To the ſame purpoſe it is written in that invaluable epiſtle to the *Romans* §, *If they which are of the law be heirs*; if they who truſt to their own performance of the law, are thereby entitled to the heavenly inheritance; *faith is made void, and the promiſe made of none effect*.—See now, my friend, the tendency of your opinion! It is not a mere ſpeculative miſtake; an error of inconſiderable conſequence; but ſuch as ſtrikes at the fundamentals of the goſpel. Inſtead of being the only *Chriſtian* ſcheme, it totally overthrows ¶ *Chriſtianity* itſelf. For it would render the promiſe abortive, and ſuperſede the neceſſity of faith. It would deſtroy the very exiſtence of grace, and make even the death of CHRIST, a ſuperfluous tranſaction.

Ther. This I ſee, *Aſpaſio*, that the method of obtaining acceptance on account of our own ſincerity, is a benign expedient; ſuch as correſponds with the compaſſionate nature of the DEITY; and is, what the apoſtle ſtyles, *being juſtified by faith, without the deeds of the law*.

Aſp. How! To be juſtified by faith, and juſtified by ſincerity, the *ſame* thing!—Is it poſſible that theſe ſhould be *equivalent* terms?—Let me illuſtrate my query by a ſimilitude, which our preſent ſituation ſuggeſts. Sometimes, an eaſy compariſon is more convincing, than a laboured argument.

From this pleaſing eminence, we command an extenſive view of the country. Our eye connects the artleſs grandeur of nature, with the elegant embelliſh-

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finiſh the education of youth; but directs them to, and prepares them for, higher ſtudies, or nobler employs. The law, in like manner, aims not at furniſhing us with a title to happineſs; but *fits, diſpoſes*, and *diſciplines* us, for the all-ſufficient REDEEMER.

Some have thought, that εἰς Χριστον ſignifies, *until the coming of CHRIST*. But this will hardly conſiſt with the genius of the language, or with the import of the following clauſe, *That we might be juſtified by faith*.—Beſides, this would confine the efficacy of the law to that period of time which preceded our LORD's incarnation. Whereas, it *ſtill* does, and *always* will *act*, (until this corruptible ſhall put on incorruption) in a way of ſubſerviency to his merits.

* Theſe two examples are, with the trueſt judgment, ſelected, and with the utmoſt propriety applied, *Rom.* iv. 1. *&c. Rom.* iv. 6. *&c.*—*Abraham* was the moſt illuſtrious pattern of piety, among the *Jewiſh* patriarchs: *In glory there was none like him*, Eccluſ xliv. 19. *David* was the moſt zealous and ſeraphic of their kings; *a man after GOD's own heart*, 1 Sam. xiii. 14. If neither of theſe was juſtified by *his own* obedience, but each by *an imputed* righteouſneſs; if they both obtained acceptance with GOD, not as *upright* beings, who might claim it; but as *ſinful* creatures, who muſt implore it; the conſequence is glaring. It is ſuch, as muſt ſtrike every attentive underſtanding, and muſt affect every individual perſon.

† Matth. xxii. 37, 38, 39.

* Matth. v. 18. † Jam. i. 17. ‡ Iſ. xlii. 21.

‖ Gal. ii. 21. § Rom. iv. 14.

¶ St *Paul* ſays of thoſe preachers, who taught juſtification by the works of the law, *They would pervert*, or (as the original word μεταστρεψαι may be tranſlated) ſubvert and overthrow *the goſpel of* CHRIST.—To pervert, give a *wrong turn*, or a *falſe colour*, ſeems not to expreſs fully the apoſtle's idea, nor to preſerve the native energy of his argument. The *Greek* word is equivalent to the *Hebrew* הפך, which we generally render *evertere*. Gal. i. 7.

It may be worth our while to tranſcribe *Beza*'s deſcant upon the paſſage: which is no leſs pertinent, than it is important. *Quid enim magis contrarium eſt fidei, ſive gratuitæ juſtificationi, quam juſtificatio ex lege, ſine meritis, non CHRISTI ſed noſtris? Itaque qui volunt iſta duo conciliare, magis etiam ſunt inepti, quam ſi quis conetur lucem cum tenebris, mortem cum vita conjungere.*

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nts of the ſummer-houſe. Not is the public road the t entertaining part of the ſcene: becauſe it preſents with a *moving picture*; with a perpetual ſucceſſion of w objects.——How many travellers have paſſed in ſince we took our ſeat in this agreeable eleva- ; but at this inſtant, a *ſtage-coach* bolts out of the e; filled, I preſume, with paſſengers, that reſide in neighbourhood, or are to lodge in the next market- n. We will ſuppoſe them ſet down at their journey's d. An acquaintance viſits them; congratulates them their arrival; and aſks that cuſtomary queſtion, how they came?"—"We came," ſay they, "without walking a ſtep ourſelves; yet by walking, as well, and as far, as we were able."—Is this anſwer *intelligible*? e theſe methods of travelling *conſiſtent*? So intelligible my friend's doctrine. So conſiſtent is juſtification uchſafed without the deeds of the law; and juſtifica- on obtained, by performing the deeds of the law, *as ell* as we are able.

Ther. Without the law, ſignifies, without the neceſ- y of an exact and unerring conformity to it.

Aſp. This is not *without*, but *by* the law, qualified in e rigour of its demands, and departing ſomewhat from e perfection of its precepts. Could you affirm, with- y propriety, that this part of the hemiſphere is *with- t the ſun*, becauſe an intervening cloud has moderated fervour, and abated its glare?

What ſays the apoſtle? His words in another place, ill determine his meaning in this. If a ſtate of accep- nce with GOD be *of works*; be referable to our own bedience, whether ſincere or perfect; *it is no more of race* *. Works and grace, in point of juſtification, are reconcileable oppoſites †. On this pinnacle they can- ot ſtand together. One muſt ſupplant and overthrow he other.

But why do I ſpeak of grace? If my friend's opinion prevail, grace is at an end. What we took to be the oſpel, turns out a covenant of works. Salvation ceaſes o be a free gift, and becomes a neceſſary payment. For *to him that worketh*, that performeth what the law requires, *is the reward not reckoned of grace; but* he may claim it, as his due; it muſt be paid him, as matter *of* debt ‡.

Ther. You take no notice of what I urged concerning he *benignity* of this ſcheme, and how much it magnifies he *clemency* of the great LEGISLATOR.

Aſp. But why ſhould clemency erect its throne, on the *ruins* of almoſt every other attribute?—This method would diſhonour the *veracity* of GOD, which has de- nounced a curſe upon every deviation from his revealed will——It would depretiate the *adminiſtration* of his juſ- tice, which cannot but puniſh whatever violates his ſa- cred precepts.——It would greatly derogate from the *dignity* of his law, and make it a mere thing of wax; to bend, and truckle, and take its form from the ſin and weakneſs of human nature.

Ther. Will the divine law then make no favourable allowances for human infirmities, for conſtitutional faults, and ſtrength of paſſion?

Aſp. Far be it from me to repreſent the law of the MOST HIGH, either more ſtrict, or more yielding, than it really is. To avoid all poſſibility of ſuch a miſtake, let us hear the declaration of the law itſelf: *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things, that are written in the book of the law to do them* ‖.

Every one: without any exception of perſons; with- out any regard to pleas, either of human weakneſs, or violent temptation.——*That continueth not*; it is not enough to obſerve theſe holy commandments, in the general tenor of our converſation. Our courſe of obe- dience muſt be without any intermiſſion; from the ear- lieſt dawn of reaſon, to the lateſt period of life.——*In all things*; we muſt refrain from all the ſins that are forbid- den, and from every approach towards them. We muſt practiſe all the virtues that are injoined, and in their full extent of perfection.

In a word, the law inſiſts upon obedience, perfect in its *principle*; perfect in all its *parts*; perfect in every *degree*; and in each of theſe reſpects *perpetual*.——The leaſt deficiency in any one particular, renders us liable to vengeance; and, notwithſtanding any repentance for tranſgreſſions, notwithſtanding all pretenſions to ſince- rity of heart, ſubjects us to the curſe.

Theron pauſed.——He ſeemed to be ſtruck with ſur- priſe.——But rallying his thoughts, replied, If this be the ſenſe of the paſſage, who of all fleſh can be ſaved?

Aſp. Say rather, If the extent of the divine law be ſo enlarged, if its demands be ſo high, and its ſanction ſo awfully rigorous, then muſt every mouth be ſtopped;—then is all the world become guilty before GOD;—and *by the works of the law ſhall no man living be juſtified*.

Ther. Will not ſuch exceſſively-ſevere doctrine drive people into deſpondency, or even drown them in *deſpair*?

Aſp. No, *Theron*, unleſs it be *ſuch* a deſpair, as is the parent of heavenly hope; and productive of thoſe a- miable twins, peace and joy: A deſpair, I mean, of being reconciled to our offended GOD, and of obtain- ing eternal happineſs, by any ſatisfaction or any duties of our own.

Ther. Surely, you forget the gracious *manifeſto*, pub- liſhed by the condeſcending KING of heaven; *If there be firſt a willing mind, it is accepted, according to what a man hath, not according to what he hath not* †. Is it not plain from this text, that infinite goodneſs will admit our honeſt, though imperfect endeavours; and, ſince we are not able to pay an *unſinning*, will mercifully accept our *beſt* obedience?

Aſp. I do not forget, but poſſibly my friend may mi- apply the gracious *manifeſto*.—To whom was the word of this conſolation ſent? To true believers who had *given their own ſelves to the LORD* ‡; who *were eſtabliſh- ed in CHRIST* ‖; *and abounded in faith* §.—If you like- wiſe, my dear *Theron*, acknowledge yourſelf a vile ſin- ner in your worſt, and an unprofitable ſervant in your beſt eſtate: if, in conſequence of this acknowledgment, you fly for refuge to the wounds of a *crucified* SA- VIOUR; and rely, for ſalvation, only on *his obedience* unto death; then you imitate thoſe *Corinthian* converts; then you may apply that indulgent declaration to your- ſelf; and then would I venture to addreſs you, in the elegant and chearing language of the royal PREACHER: *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for GOD* now *accepteth* ¶ both thy perſon, and thy performances.

* *Rom.* xi. 6. The paſſage produced by *Aſpaſio*, refers *imme- diately* to the doctrine of election, and but *remotely* to the privilege of juſtification. However, as the former includes the latter, if *that* be perfectly free, *this* cannot be the conſequence of works. The argument, therefore, I apprehend, is concluſive, though the proof is not ſo direct.

† *E diametro inter ſe opponuntur, Moſes et* JESUS CHRISTUS, *lex et promiſſio; facere et credere; opera et fides; merces et donum.* BENGEL.

‡ Rom. iv. 4. ‖ Gal. iii. 10.

* That the law inſiſts upon an obedience *abſolutely perfect*, will be farther evident to the attentive reader, if he conſiders the tenor of St Paul's argumentation, in his epiſtle to the Romans, and to the Galatians; particularly *Rom.* iii. 23. iv. 15. *Gal.* iii. 21.

† 2 Cor. viii. 12. ‡ 2 Cor. viii. 5. ‖ 2 Cor. i. 21.

§ 2 Cor. viii. 7.

¶ *Eccl.* ix. 7.—*Aſpaſio*'s remark diſcovers an *ambiguity* in the word *accepted*.——If people mean, that ſincere obedience ſhall be accepted, as *their juſtifying* righteouſneſs, as that which conſtitutes their title to everlaſting felicity; the propoſition is ex- tremely falſe.——If they mean, that the ſincere obedience of believers, though very imperfect in itſelf, ſhall be *graciouſly regarded* in CHRIST, and find favour through his all-re- commending merit; the ſentiment is unqueſtionably true.——In

But, if you overlook the righteouſneſs of the bleſſed JESUS, if you depend upon yourſelf and your own attainments; you are (how ſhall I ſpeak it!) not accepted, but accurſed. In ſuch a caſe, you have already heard your doom denounced by the leader of the *Jews*, and may hear it ratified by the apoſtle of the *Gentiles*; *As many as are of the works of the law*, who ſeek juſtification by their own obſervance of its commands, *are under the curſe* *.

Ther. Under the curſe! Becauſe our attempts to obey, though faithfully exerted, are attended with defects! Is not this unreaſonable and ſhocking? *Unreaſonable*, that the GOD of juſtice ſhould eſtabliſh a law of ſuch conſummate perfection, as no child of *Adam* can, even with his utmoſt aſſiduity and care, fulfil? *Shocking*, that the GOD of mercy ſhould thunder out ſo ſevere a denunciation on the leaſt inadvertent breach, on every unavoidable failure?—This exceeds the relentleſs rigour of *Draco*, or the tyrannical impoſitions of the *Ægyptian* taſk-maſters. *Draco* is ſaid to have written his laws in blood. Yet he never enacted ſuch inſtitutions, as were abſolutely too ſtrict and difficult to be obſerved. And, though the *Ægyptian* taſk-maſters inſiſted upon the full tale of bricks, without allowing the neceſſary proportion of ſtraw, yet the puniſhment they inflicted, was incomparably leſs than everlaſting deſtruction.

Aſp. If GOD almighty, in delivering his law to fallen mankind, intended to propoſe the *means* of their *juſtification*; your argument would be valid, and your inference undeniable. But the SUPREME LEGISLATOR had a very different, a far more myſterious deſign.—However, before I proceed to touch upon this point, let me deſire to know *your* opinion.

For what reaſons, think you, was the law ordained?

Ther. For what reaſons?—To deter men from the commiſſion of vice, and excite them to the practice of virtue.—To ſet before them a rule for their conduct; which if they diligently obſerve, they ſhall be *rewarded* with eternal happineſs; which if they preſumptuouſly tranſgreſs, they ſhall be *puniſhed* with eternal miſery.

Aſp. If man had never fallen, this doctrine had been ſound divinity, and this method a practicable ſcheme. But, ever ſince the *fall*, ſuch a way of ſalvation is ſomewhat like the *north-eaſt* paſſage. As mountains of ice, and the ſevereſt rigours of winter, block up *this*; ſo extreme impotence in man, and the utmoſt perfection in the law, bar up *that*.—*The law*, ſaith the apoſtle, *is weak*; is incapable of furniſhing us with a title to the heavenly felicity †: not through any defect in its precepts, but *through the fleſh*; through the inability of our degenerate nature.

Yet I muſt confeſs, you are not alone in your opinion. Multitudes have unwarily entertained the ſame notion: not apprehenſive, that they fruſtrate hereby the grace of GOD, and render it of none effect with regard to themſelves.—If you examine the *ſcriptural* account, you will find it quite of another ſtrain.

Ther. Pray let me hear the ſcriptural account. For, whenever thoſe DIVINE ORACLES ſpeak, I am all attention. Where-ever they interpoſe their authority, I am all ſubmiſſion.

Aſp. *By the law is the knowledge of ſin* *. For inſtead of being our juſtifier, it is our accuſer. It arraigns and approves us guilty. It demonſtrates, beyond all poſſibility of contradiction, that the very beſt among us have failed and come ſhort of our duty; nay, that the very beſt among us have done amiſs, and dealt wickedly.

I was alive without the law once, ſays the apoſtle †: I thought myſelf upright and holy; and entitled by virtue of theſe qualifications, to life eternal. *But when the commandment came*, ſhining in its purity, and operating with power, *ſin revived*; a clear and lively ſenſe of guilt ſhot, like a piercing ray, through all my ſoul. I ſaw myſelf chargeable with many vaſt provocations. I felt myſelf ſubject to much remaining corruption. In conſequence of which, *I died*; my vain conceits were blaſted; my preſumptuous hopes expired; I could not but acknowledge myſelf juſtly liable to condemnation and death.

Ther. It had this effect on *Saul*, when he was a malignant and barbarous perſecutor. But, when people are *virtuous* and *benevolent*, what purpoſe does it then ſerve?

Aſp. A very important one; yet ſuch as may, probably, at the firſt hearing, affect you with a little ſurpriſe. *The law entered*, ſays the apoſtle, *that the offence might*—

Ther. Be *reſtrained*, no doubt.

Aſp. That the offence might *abound* ‡, is the aſſertion.

Ther. Surpriſing indeed! Is it poſſible that GOD's law ſhould give countenance to ſin? nay, add ſpurs to the ſinner?

Aſp. Let us beware of miſtaking our ſacred cauſe. The law entered, not that the *commiſſion* of ſin might be *authoriſed*, but that the *abundance* of our ſins might be *manifeſted*: that all mankind, even your virtuous perſons, may perceive the great multitude of their iniquities; the greater impurity of their hearts ‖; together with the utter imperfection of their attainments, and beſt ſervices.

This end could not be anſwered by a law, relaxed in its demands, or warping to our weakneſs; only by a ſyſtem of precepts, *every* way exact, and in *all* degrees perfect. Whoever would repreſent to his neighbour, the ſpots that ſully, or the ſcars that diſfigure his countenance, muſt effect the deſign, not by a ſtained, but by a pure mirror.

Ther. *The knowledge of ſin, and a conviction of our exceeding ſinfulneſs!*—Theſe are intentions, which I ſhould not have ſuſpected.

Aſp. Theſe are not all. There is another intention of the law, equally neceſſary, and no leſs awful. *It reveals the wrath of GOD, againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men* §.—Having ſet before the ſinner, his innumerable offences, and enormous guilt; it denounces the doom, which he deſerves. It unſheaths the ſword of juſtice, and threatens the offender with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the LORD.

Ther. A modern writer ſuppoſes, that GOD may *ſet aſide* the law, in favour of frail men. I might far more reaſonably ſuppoſe, that he would *mitigate* the law, on the ſame conſideration. But what you urge, makes me afraid to lean on ſo precarious a prop.

Aſp. To look for comfort and ſalvation from this quarter, would be *to lean*, as the *Arabian* proverb ſpeaks, *on a wave of the ſea*: which will not only fail to ſupport, but will certainly ſwallow up, the unadviſed and raſh depender.

No, *Theron*; rather than the divine law ſhould loſe its honours, *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were laid in aſhes;

ſincerity the *effect of faith*? Then we may rejoice in it, with the happy apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* i. 12. Would ſincerity be the *condition of our juſtification*? Then we muſt renounce it, with holy *Job*, chap. ix. 15.

* Gal. iii. 10.

† *Rom.* viii. 3. Therefore he ſays in another place, *IF there had been a law given, which could have given life*, Gal. iii. 21. It is the ſame way of ſpeaking, and intended to denote the very ſame *impoſſibility*, which is implied in that ſpeech of *JEHOVAH* to *Abraham*; *IF a man can number the duſt of the earth*, Gen. xiii. 16.

* Rom. iii. 20. † Rom. vii. 9. ‡ Rom. v. 20.

‖ *And* therefore *was law giv'n them, to evince Their natural pravity.* MILT. b. XII. 287.

§ Rom. i. 18.

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the ancient world was deſtroyed with a deluge; the preſent frame of nature is deſtined to the flames, and all its unholy inhabitants will be condemned to hell.——Nay, rather than the *leaſt tittle* ſhould paſs unaccompliſhed, its curſe has been executed on GOD's own SON, and all its injunctions have been fulfilled in the perſon of JESUS CHRIST.

Ther. As I dare not confide in the modern proviſionary *ſalvo*, ſo neither can I accede to your ſevere and terrifying notions.——The laws of a wiſe and beneficent governor, are calculated for the *good* of his ſubjects. What good, what advantage can accrue to us, from receiving ſuch a ſentence, and poſſeſſing ſuch convictions?

Aſp. Though I might mention many advantages, I ſhall content myſelf with ſelecting one; which is not only valuable in itſelf, but the introduction to *every* ſpiritual bleſſing.——When, by the inſtrumentality of the law and the illumination of the SPIRIT, we are brought under ſuch convictions; then we are taught to *ſee* our danger: then we are made to *feel* our miſery; and then we ſhall no longer ſleep in ſecurity, but ſolicitouſly look out for deliverance, and gladly accept the ſovereign remedy.

Ther. The law, according to your repreſentation, is intended to *accuſe* me,—to *convict* me,—to *condemn* me. So it becomes, inſtead of a ſalutary, a killing ſyſtem.

Aſp. The letter killeth, but the ſpirit giveth life *. If we adhere to the literal ſenſe, without attending to the ſpiritual deſign: if we regard only the precept and the ſanction, as they ſtand in *themſelves*; and neither conſider, nor improve them, as acting in *ſubſerviency* to the MEDIATOR's righteouſneſs; they are doubtleſs a killing ordinance, and bind us down under a ſentence of death.——But rightly improved,—Hold! let me proceed no farther with the argument.

You are a ſportſman, *Theron*, and delight in the manly recreations of the field. You muſt therefore have read that fine poem, which ſo elegantly deſcribes your favourite diverſion.

Ther. *The* CHACE, I ſuppoſe, you mean.

Aſp. The ſame.—Do you remember the large deſcription of the *royal ſtag-chace*?

Ther. Perfectly well. It is not a week ſince I peruſed the whole paſſage; and with as much pleaſure, as if it had been entirely new.

Aſp. Then you can give me a ſummary of the agreeable narrative.

Ther. I can. But will not this chace lead us away very far from our ſubject?

Aſp. Perhaps, not ſo far as you imagine. I have a reaſon for my requeſt.

Ther. What reaſon I beſeech you?

Aſp. You ſhall ſoon know. Only favour me with the account.

Ther. I proteſt, I cannot diſcern the leaſt connection between theſe rural ſports, and the grand topic of our converſation. However, ſince you command, I will implicitly obey.

The ſtag, rouſed from his lair, ſhakes his dappled ſides; tolles his beamy head; and conſcious of ſuperior agility, ſeems to defy the gathering ſtorm.—You ſee, ſpeaking of poetry, I have catched ſomething of the poetical ſtrain.

Aſp. This enlivened manner excites my eagerneſs, and makes me more deſirous to hear the ſequel.

Ther. Firſt, he has recourſe to ſtratagem, and evaſive ſhifts. He plunges into the copſe; darts acroſs the glade; and wheels about in doubling mazes; as though he would purſue, even the foe he avoids. The full-mouthed pack unravel all his windings, and drive him from his wily arts.

Now he betakes himſelf to flight, and confides in his ſpeed. He burſts through the woods; bounds over the lawns; and leaves the lagging beagles far behind. The beagles ſlow, but ſure, trace his ſteps, through woods, through lawns, through half the extended foreſt. Unwearied, ſtill unwearied they urge their ardent way, and gain upon the alarmed object of their purſuit.

Again he flies; flies with redoubled ſwiftneſs, ſhoots down the ſteep; ſtrains up the hill; and takes ſhelter in the inmoſt receſs of ſome ſequeſtered grove. The ſagacious hounds hang, with greedy noſtrils, on the ſcent. They recover, by indefatigable aſſiduity, the ground they had loſt. Up they come a third time; and, joining in a general peal of vengeance, hurry the affrighted animal from his ſhort concealment.

Perplexed, and in the utmoſt diſtreſs, he ſeeks the numerous herd. He would loſe himſelf, and elude his purſuers, amidſt the multitude of his fellows. But they, unconcerned for a brother's wo, ſhun the miſerable creature, or expel him from the ſelfiſh circle.——Abandoned by his aſſociates, and haunted with apprehenſions of approaching ruin, he trembles at every leaf that ſhakes. He ſtarts; he ſprings; and wild and ſwift as the wind, flies he knows not where, yet pours all his ſoul in flight.——Vain, vain are his efforts. The horrid cry, lately leſſened, thickens upon the gale, and thunders in his ear.——Now the poor breathleſs victim is full in view. His ſprightlineſs forſakes him. His agility is ſpent. See! how he toils in yonder valley, with faltering limbs, and a hobbling gait. The ſight of their game, quickens the pace, and whets the ardour of the impetuous hounds. With tumultuous violence they ruſh in, and with clamorous joy demand their prey.

What can he do, ſurrounded as he is, with inſulting tongues, and ravenous jaws? Deſpair is capable of inſpiriting even the timorous breaſt. Having nothing to hope, he forgets to fear. He faces about, and makes a reſolute ſtand. The trunk of a ſturdy tree covers his rear; and his own branching horns, defend him in front. He ruſhes upon his adverſaries; goars ſome; lays other grovelling on the turf; and makes the whole coward pack give way.

Encouraged by this unexpected ſucceſs, his hopes revive. He rallies once again his drooping ſpirits; exerts the little remainder of his ſtrength; and ſprings through the midſt of the retiring rout.—It is his laſt, laſt chance. He ſtretches every nerve; once more loſes ſight of the rabble from the kennel; and, finding no ſecurity on the land, takes to the water. He throws his burning ſides into the river; ſails down the cooling ſtream; and ſlinks away to the verge of ſome little ſhelving iſland. There, finding a reſting-place for his feet, he ſculks cloſe to the ſhady margin. All immerſed in the wave, excepting only his noſtrils, he baffles, for a while, the prying eye of man, and the keener ſmell of brute.

Diſcovered, at length, and forced to quit this unavailing refuge, he climbs the ſlippery bank. Unable to fly any longer, he ſtands at bay againſt an aged willow; ſtands, all faint with toil, and ſobbing with anguiſh. The crouds that gather round him, with mercileſs and outrageous tranſport, triumph in his miſery. A multitude of blood-thirſty throats, joined with the ſonorous horn, ring his funeral knell.——The tears, till this fatal inſtant unknown, guſh from his languiſhing eyes, and roll down his reeking cheeks. He caſts one more look on the woods, the lawns, the pleaſing ſcenes of his former delights; and, determined to die, prepares to ſell his life as dear as poſſible.

At this moſt critical juncture, the *royal* ſportſman comes up. He ſees the diſtreſſed creature; and, as ſoon as he ſees, he pities. The clemency, which attends the throne, accompanies even the diverſions of majeſty. He iſſues the high command. The prohibitory ſignal is given. The pack, though raving for blood, are checked in a moment; and not checked only, but called off from the prey. Diſappointed and grumbling,

* 2 Cor. iii. 6.

grumbling, they retire, and leave the intended victim of their fury, to enjoy his liberty, his safety, and his ease again.

I have now followed the stag, till I have tired your patience. Why did you suffer me to run on at this extravagant rate? You know, I am, on these favourite topics, an everlasting talker.

Asp. Why this apology, *Theron?* I am sure you did not see my mouth, nay even my head, while you was pursuing your subject. Besides, I intend to make reprizals, and put *your* attention to the same trial.

Thus the strictness of the *law* pursues the soul; dislodges it from every refuge of lies, and never remits its terrifying menaces, till the poor delinquent ceases from self-confidence, and fixes on CHRIST for his whole salvation *.

The man, perhaps, is awakened into a serious concern for his eternal state. In consequence of which, he relinquishes his profane and iniquitous practices; breaks the Sabbath; and defrauds his neighbour no more.——But the law quickly remonstrates, and in a glaring light, that a *negative* obedience is by no means sufficient.

Upon this, he betakes himself to a course of *positive* holiness; gets acquainted with religious people, and performs religious duties; prays in secret, and attends public ordinances; conscientiously observes the LORD's day, and regulates his behaviour by the rule of GOD's commandments. Now he is ready to congratulate himself on his remarkable and hopeful reformation.

Soon he perceives, that all his proficiency is but skin-deep; a mere *outside* varnish, which has not penetrated the inner man. He begins, therefore, to watch over the motions, and bewail the evils of his heart. He labours to subdue pride, and curb passion; to purge our filthy lusts, and to banish spiritual wickedness. Notwithstanding all his vigilance, conscience flies in his face, either for the neglect of some virtue, or the commission of some sin. The law rings in his ear that dreadful denunciation; "Cursed is he that performeth not *all* things."

Struck by this conviction, his wounds bleed afresh. He is obliged to seek some new balm for his sore. In order to appease an offended GOD, and atone for his sinful relapses, he makes many sorrowful confessions; possibly, submits to voluntary sufferings. He denies himself, and bestows liberally on the poor. He sighs deeply, and mourns bitterly.——But can waters that are muddy, cleanse the garment that is filthy? Wilt thou satisfy, O vain man, wilt thou satisfy for one sin, by committing another? In *these* penitential exercises, were thy thoughts steadily devout? In *those* acts of beneficence, was thy heart warmly affectionate? If not, such fancied reparations of past faults, only aggravate the heavy score.

What shall he do? He cannot *pay*. To *beg* he is ashamed. Fain would he enter into life, yet not be too much indebted to grace. He attempts therefore to *compound* with heaven. He binds himself by solemn, perhaps by sacramental engagements, to use greater circumspection for the future: then turns his eye to the divine MEDIATOR; not with a view of relying wholly on his righteousness; but only to obtain such a supply, as may make up the deficiencies of his own.——Somewhat like this was the mistake of the *Galatian* converts; against which St *Paul*, in his epistle to that people, so solidly disputes, and so sharply inveighs †.

For a while, he holds fast his purposed integrity. At length, falling monstrously short in executing his part, a stumbling voice sounds in his ear that dreadful alarm, "Cursed is he that *continueth* not." His heart sinks with discouragement, and his resolutions hang their enfeebled heads. He has tried every method that he can devise, and has found every method ineffectual. All his expedients are a spider's web, and his hope is as the giving up of the ghost.

His soul, pursued by the law, and hunted by terror, is brought to the gates of death, or the very brink of despair. And now the KING of kings, now the LORD our righteousness, appears for his rescue. Now is accomplished that gracious declaration, *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help* *.——Driven from every false refuge, and drawn by the blessed SPIRIT, he becomes weary and heavy laden to CHRIST. Convinced of the sin of his nature, the sin of his life, and the sin of his best duties, he renounces himself in every view. This is all his salvation, and all his desire, that he may win CHRIST, and be found in him. Did that poor afflicted woman say, *If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole?* With equal ardour does this enlightened sinner cry, "If I may but have fellowship with the glorious "EMMANUEL, in his merits and in his benefits, I am "alive from the dead; I am happy for ever."

Having seen a glimpse of the transcendent excellency of the *REDEEMER*'s person; having received a taste from the inexhaustible fulness of his grace; O! how he longs for brighter manifestations! how he thirsts after more plentiful draughts!—None that come to *CHRIST*, are cast out. He that awakens these ardent desires, in his due time gives the desired blessings. After various conflicts, a comfortable and established faith is wrought in the penitent's soul. He believes, that the *SON* of the *MOST HIGH* died in *his* stead, and was obedient for *his* justification; believes, that all the unsearchable riches of the adored MEDIATOR's life and death are his portion †.

By this faith, his heart is purified; his heart is quickened; he is fitted for every good work.——Though temptations assault him, he drives strength from his SAVIOUR; resists the devil; and is faithful unto death.——Though corruptions defile him, he flies to the *fountain opened for uncleanness* ‡; makes daily, hourly application of the blood of sprinkling; and goes on his way, rejoicing in GOD his SAVIOUR.

Ther. Your discourse puts me in mind of *Absalom*'s procedure, when *Joab* refused to make him a visit. The prince ordered his servant to set on fire the general's standing corn ‖. This stratagem had its intended effect. The apprehension of danger *drove* him, when the respectful invitation would not *lead* him, to a personal interview. You seem to suppose, that the law was delivered with such a design; to lay us under a *necessity* of flying to the atonement of *CHRIST*.

* *Lex pœnitem urget, donec is ad CHRISTUM confugit. Tum ipsa dicit, Assum et noctus, desino te persequi; sapis, salvus es.* That is; The *law* urges and pursues the *sinner*, till he flies for refuge to *JESUS CHRIST*. Then the law speaks to this effect; "You are entered into the *strong-hold*: my demands are satisfied; my curses are silenced; I remit the pursuit. You are wise; you are safe; you are happy."

BENGEL.

† *Strongly* indeed! for, instead of saluting them, under the honourable title of *saints, and faithful in* CHRIST JESUS, he stigmatizes them with that severe appellation, *O foolish Galatians!*—And as to their practice, which was a departure from justification by CHRIST *alone*, he styles it, not merely an error, but an error of the most mischievous and horrid kind,—*an infatuation,—a bewitchery*, Τις εβασκανε. Gal. iii. 1.

* Hos. xiii. 9.

† See this work of grace, and procedure of conversion, more copiously displayed, in a valuable little piece, entitled, *Human nature in its fourfold state*, by Mr *Thomas Boston*, page 227.—Which in my opinion, is one of our best books for common readers. The sentences are short, and the comparisons striking. The language is easy, and the doctrine evangelical. The method proper, the plan comprehensive, the manner searching, yet consolatory.—If another celebrated treatise is styled, *The whole duty of man*, I would call this *The* WHOLE *of man*; as it comprises—what he *was* originally—what he *is* by transgression—what he *should be* through grace—and then what he *will be* in glory.

‡ Zech. xiii. 1.

‖ 2 Sam. xiv. 30.

Asp.

Ther. I do, *Theron*. And for this opinion I have a far better authority than my own ſuppoſition. We are told, that the morning wiſdom, that *CHRIST is the end of the law*. It points invariably to him. It terminates wholly in him; and *then* obtains its firſt, its principal purpoſe, when ſinners are brought to their divine REDEEMER, for righteouſneſs and ſtrength: for that *righteouſneſs*, which entitles to heaven; that *ſtrength*, which capacitates for obedience.

The law hath concluded all mankind *under ſin* †; yet not with an intention, that any ſhould be diſcouraged now or perith for ever; but that every one may ſee his inexpreſſible need of a SAVIOUR's death, and a SAVIOUR's obedience ‡: that, being thus prepared, both to value and receive ſo precious a bleſſing, *the promiſe of juſtification by faith in JESUS CHRIST, may be given to them that believe.*

Let us advert to this grand aim of the law. Then we ſhall ſee goodneſs, unqueſtionable and ſovereign goodneſs, in forming its conſtitution ſo *ſublimely perfect*, and making its threatenings ſo *inflexibly ſevere*. Excluſive of this wholeſome ſeverity, we ſhould ſupinely diſeſteem, perhaps wantonly reject, the grace of the goſpel.—The *prodigal ſon* would never have returned to his father in that humble, ſubmiſſive, ſupplicating poſture, if he had not found his circumſtances utterly ruined, and felt himſelf periſhing with hunger. No more would the conceited ſons of *Adam*, diſclaiming all pretence to any merit of their own, and with nothing but the halter * of ſelf-condemnation about their necks, fall down at the feet of a merciful REDEEMER, if they were not inſtigated by the ſharp goad, or rather driven by the flaming ſword of the law.

Ther. Has the law then nothing to do with our temper and converſation? Is it no longer to be conſidered as a ſyſtem of duties? no longer to be regarded as a rule of life?

Aſp. When it has forced the lines of ſelf-righteouſneſs, and driven us to JESUS CHRIST, that only citadel of ſafety, for acceptance and ſalvation; *then* it ſerves us a rule for our conduct. *Then* it ſhews us, like a friend and a guide, how to order our converſation, and adorn our profeſſion; how to glorify GOD, and expreſs our gratitude to CHRIST. But, till it has accompliſhed the forementioned end, it thunders vengeance; it flaſhes terror; it is, as *Moſes* ſpeaks, *a fiery law* †.

And is it, my dear *Theron*, a fiery law? Then let it conſtrain us to take ſhelter in that meritorious obedience, which will be to our guilty ſouls *as the cold of ſnow in the time of harveſt* ‡.—Is it a law which *worketh wrath*? Let it endear to our affections that ineſtimably-precious goſpel, which *preacheth peace by JESUS CHRIST* ‖.—Is it *the miniſtration of condemnation* §? O! let it quicken our flight to that all-gracious SURETY, who was condemned at *Pilate*'s bar, that we may be acquitted at GOD's tribunal.

To all this agrees our celebrated *Milton*; whoſe divinity is as faultleſs, as his poetry is matchleſs. You will give me leave to quote a few of his beautiful lines; which *recapitulate*, as it were, the whole preceding converſation; and, while they recapitulate the converſation, *confirm* the doctrine. This will make you ſome amends, for my late tedious harangue. This will tip the lead with gold.

So law appears imperfect; and but giv'n
With purpoſe to reſign them, in full time,
Up to a better cov'nant; diſciplin'd
From ſhadowy types to truth; from fleſh to ſpirit;
From impoſition of ſtrict laws, to free
Acceptance of large grace; from ſervile fear,
To filial; works of law, to works of faith ¶.

* Alluding to thoſe remarkable words of *Benhadad*'s ſervants; *Let us put ſackcloth upon our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to meet the king of Iſrael; peradventure he will ſave thy life.* 1 Kings xx. 31.

† *Fiery law*, Deut. xxxiii. 2. I dare not affirm, that this is the exact import of the original, nor do I preſume to determine the preciſe ſignification of a phraſe ſo remarkably difficult. But as this is our received verſion; as it ſuggeſts a very *uſeful* truth; and a truth, which, in the preſent age, is peculiarly *needful* to be inculcated; I am inclined to acquieſce in the common rendering.

‡ Prov. xxv. 13. ‖ Acts x. 36.

§ 2 Cor. iii. 9. ¶ B. XII. 302.

DIALOGUE X.

Aſp. AGAIN, *Theron!* muſt we never lay aſide the weapons of controverſy?—You put me in mind of the reſolute *Athenian*; who having fought with diſtinguiſhed bravery on the field of *Marathon*, purſued the vanquiſhed *Perſians* to their fleet. At that very inſtant, a galley full of the enemy's troops was putting off to ſea. Determined if poſſible, to prevent their eſcape, he laid hold on the veſſel with his right hand; which was no ſooner fixed, than chopped off by the ſailors. The warrior, not at all diſcouraged, ſeized it with his left. When that alſo was cut away, he faſtened his teeth in its ſide; and never quitted his gripe, till he reſigned his breath *.

Ther. I have been reconſidering the caſe of *imputed righteouſneſs*; and am by no means ſatisfied, as to the propriety of the phraſe, or the truth of the doctrine,

* The *Athenian*'s name was *Cynægyrus*. The author who relates this extraordinary ſtory, is *Juſtin*. If the reader ſhould think it a *rhodomontade*, I believe, he will not judge amiſs. And I promiſe myſelf, the ſame good ſenſe will enable him to diſtinguiſh between what is *hinted* by way of *pleaſantry*, and what is *urged* by way of *argument*.

especially in the sense which you espouse.—Objections arise, more substantial and weighty, than any that have hitherto been urged; and which, if I mistake not, you will find it a more difficult task to answer.

Asp. I must do my best. And if my best attempts prove unsuccessful, I shall say with the gallant *Ipbicrates*, when overpowered by the eloquence of his antagonist; "My adversary is the better actor, but mine is the bet-"ter play."

I say *better*—For to you, *Theron*, I will freely own, what to another person I should not be so willing to disclose, That I receive no comfort, but from the habitual belief, and daily application of this precious doctrine.—Whenever I read the most *correct* and *beautiful* writings, that proceed in the contrary strain, I feel my spirits heavy; I find my prospects gloomy; and not one ray of consolation gleams upon my mind. Whereas *much meaner* compositions, which breathe the savour of this evangelical unction, seldom fail to quicken my hopes; to brighten my views; and put into my mouth that piously-alert profession of the psalmist, *I will run the way of thy commandments, now thou hast set my feet at liberty* *. —Though I am far from laying any considerable stress upon this observation, farther still from advancing it into the place of an argument; yet I may be permitted to mention it, in the confidence and familiarity of friendship.

Ther. An opinion proposed with so much modesty, and so nearly connected with my *Aspasio*'s comfort, has doubtless a claim to my serious attention. Otherwise, it might possibly provoke my raillery. For, you must know, I am no great admirer of inward feelings. I cannot think them a very solid method of demonstrating your point. It must be enforced by better reasons, if you would gain it access to *my* heart.

We must place, you say, a dependence upon the LORD JESUS CHRIST, in all that he has *done* and *suffered*. What HE has done and suffered, you add, is our only justifying righteousness; and to place our dependence on it, is the only method to obtain pardon of our sins, and life eternal.

Asp. I have said it, *Theron*, and I abide by it. This being the righteousness of GOD, is——

Ther. Give me leave, before you proceed farther, to propose a query. Does the righteousness of GOD signify the active and passive obedience of CHRIST?

Asp. Righteousness is a conformity to the law, in heart, and in life. As the SON of GOD voluntarily made himself subject to the law; perfectly fulfilled its precepts; and suffered to the utmost its penalty; this I should imagine, furnishes us with the *truest* and *noblest* signification of the phrase.

Ther. What, if I or others should imagine quite the reverse?

Asp. I thank my friend for his admonition. It is indeed unreasonable, that *my bare* imagination should pass for orthodoxy and truth. Let us then inquire after better proof.

When the divine name, in the sacred phraseology, is added to a substantive, it expresses some very extraordinary property.—*The trees of the LORD* †, denote those stately and magnificent forests, which the hand of the MOST HIGH planted.—*The mountains of GOD* ‡, are those prodigiously-large elevations of the earth, which none but an almighty arm could establish.—The righteousness of GOD likewise means, a righteousness of the *most super-eminent* dignity; such as is worthy to be called by his name; and may justly challenge his acceptance. And where shall we find this, but in the conduct and person of his blessed SON?—This has a most unexceptionable claim to the exalted title; being, as a masterly critic explains the phrase, "a righteousness devised by "GOD the FATHER, from all eternity, wrought out "by GOD the SON, in the person of *JESUS CHRIST*, "applied by GOD the HOLY GHOST, to the sin-"ner's soul."

Ther. This doctrine of yours, if I rightly understand it, would make remission of sins but one *half* of our justification; and something else necessary, in order to obtain eternal life. Which is just as rational, as to suppose, that though one cause may expel darkness, another must supervene, in order to introduce light.

Asp. The nature of justification, and the nature of condemnation, are two *opposites*, which will mutually illustrate each other.——What is implied in the condemnation of a sinner? He forfeits eternal life, and is doomed to eternal death.——What is included in the justification of a sinner? It supersedes his obligation to punishment, and invests him with a title to happiness.——In order to the *first*, there must be a remission of sins; in order to the *second*, an imputation of righteousness. *Both* which are derived from *CHRIST*'s mediation in our behalf, and *both* take place, when we are united to that divine HEAD.——So that we do not derive them from two different sources, but ascribe them to one and the same great, all-sufficient CAUSE.

Your comparison, though intended to overthrow, I think, fully establishes the sentiment.——When yonder bright orb makes his first appearance in the east, what effects are produced? The shades of night are dispersed, and the light of day is diffused.——To what are they owing? Each to a separate, or both to the same origin? Every one's experience will answer the question. Thus when the *Sun of Righteousness* arises in the soul, he brings *at once* pardon and acceptance. Remission and salvation are under his wings. Both which constitute the *healing* * of the nations; and both owe their being to *CHRIST*'s obedience, embraced as active, and not rejected as passive.

Ther. This, I know, is the fine-spun theory of your systematic divines. But where is their *warrant* from scripture? By what authority do they introduce such subtile distinctions?

Asp. I cannot think the distinction so subtile, or the theory so finely spun. To be released from the *damnatory* sentence, is one thing; to be treated as a *righteous* person, is evidently another.——*Absalom* was pardoned, when he received a permission to remove from *Geshur*, and dwell at *Jerusalem*. But this was very different from the recommencement of filial duty, and parental endearment †. A rebel may be *exempted* from the capital punishment, which his traiterous practices deserve; without being *restored* to the dignity of his former state, or the rights of a loyal subject. In *Christianity* likewise, to be freed from the charge of guilt, and to be regarded as a righteous person, are two several blessings; really distinct in themselves, and often distinguished in scripture.

Ther. Where are they distinguished? in what texts of scripture? This is what I called for—your scriptural warrant.

Asp. What think you of *Job*'s reply to his censorious friends? *GOD forbid, that I should justify you* ‡! That he *forgave* them, there is no doubt. Yet he could not justify them; could not allow their reflections to be equitable, or their behaviour charitable.

What think you of *Solomon*'s supplication? *Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants; condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righ-*

* Psal. cxix. 32. † Psal. civ. 16.

‡ This is the import of the original, ההרי אל *Psal.* xxxvi. ver. 7. *Heb.* ver. 6. *Eng.*

* Mal. iv. 2. † 2 Sam. xiv. 24.

‡ *Job* xxxvii. 5. *Vos justos in causa vestra adversus me pronunciem.* SCHULT.

teousness

condemn. To condemn, in this paſſage, evidently ſignifies to pronounce guilty, and obnoxious to puniſhment. By parity of reaſon, to *juſtify* muſt denote to pronounce righteous, and entitled to happineſs.

What ſays *Solomon's* father? *Enter not into judgment with thy ſervant, O LORD! For in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified* †. A man might be *pardoned*, if judged according to the tenor of his own obedience. But no man could be *declared righteous*, in conſequence of ſuch a trial: this were abſolutely and univerſally impoſſible.

From all which paſſages I conclude, that to be juſtified, is different from, is ſuperior to, the bare remiſſion of ſin.

Ther. All theſe inſtances are derived from the *Old* Teſtament: the *New*, if I miſtake not, ſpeaks another language. Conſider the caſe of the penitent *publican*. What does he requeſt? *GOD be merciful to me a ſinner!* What does he obtain? *He went down to his houſe juſtified* ‡. If then the petition and the grant may be deemed correſpondent, pardon and juſtification muſt be reckoned equivalent.

Aſp. The Old and the New Teſtament are, in their ſtyle and contents, exactly correſpondent. *Echo*, in yonder cloyſters, does not more punctually reverberate the ſpeaker's voice, than thoſe divine books harmonize with each other.

Yet it will not follow, from the *publican*'s requeſt and the *publican*'s bleſſing, that pardon and juſtification are the ſame. Only, that GOD's bounty frequently *exceeds* our prayers, and is larger than our expectations; or, that the bleſſing which was implored, and the bleſſing which was vouchſafed, are *inſeparably* connected, and always accompany each other.

St *Paul* mentions *a juſtification of life*: not barely an exemption from the ſentence of death; but ſuch a juſtification, as gives *a title* ‖ to the reward of life. The words are very emphatical. We ſhall injure the dignity of their meaning, if we underſtand them in a more contracted ſenſe.—Towards the cloſe of the ſame chapter, we have another paſſage rich with conſolation, and full to our purpoſe: *Grace reigneth through righteouſneſs unto eternal life* §: Here is pointed out the *prime ſource* of all our bleſſings, infinitely-free and triumphant grace: the *meritorious cauſe*, not any works of man, not any qualifications of our own, but the perfect righteouſneſs of our LORD JESUS CHRIST: the *effect* or *end* of all; which is, not barely an abſolution from guilt, but an inſtatement in life; a life of holy communion with GOD in this world, to be crowned with an eternal fruition of him in another ¶.

Let me produce one text more, which juſt at this inſtant occurs to my memory. You will find it in the apoſtle's defence of himſelf, before *Feſtus* and *Agrippa*. He opens, as it were, his apoſtolical commiſſion, and repeats the words of his royal MASTER. *I ſend thee to* ignorant and enſlaved, guilty and ruined creatures; *to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto GOD; that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among all them which are ſanctified by faith that is in me* ‡. The great PREACHER of the *Gentiles*, or rather the ſupreme LORD of all preachers, has diſtinguiſhed between *remiſſion of ſins*, and the *inheritance of ſaints*; between the *pardon* that delivers from hell, and the *juſtification* that entitles to heaven. So that the former does by no means conſtitute the latter; but is connected with it, as a link in the ſame ſacred chain; or included in it, as part of the ſame glorious whole.

Ther. Admitting your diſtinction to be proper, is not the ſatisfaction made by the death of CHRIST, ſufficient of *itſelf* to obtain, both our full pardon, and our final happineſs?

Aſp. Since my friend has ſtarted the queſtion, I may venture, with all reverence to the divine counſels, to anſwer in the negative; it being neceſſary, that the REDEEMER of men ſhould *obey*, as well as *ſuffer*, in their ſtead.——For this we have the teſtimony of our LORD himſelf. *This commandment*, ſays he, *have I received of my* FATHER, *that I ſhould lay down my life* *. *Thus it becometh us*, adds he in another place, *to fulfil all righteouſneſs* †. To which his apoſtle ſubjoins, that, if we *reign in life*, it muſt be not only through thoſe ſufferings which expiate, but alſo *through* that *righteouſneſs* ‡ which merits.

Ther. Our LORD's teſtimony relates only to a *poſitive* inſtitution, and is quite foreign to your purpoſe.——I have often been diſguſted at ſuch ſtrained applications of ſcripture. The partizans of a ſyſtem wreſt the ſacred book. They deal with divine truth, as the tyrant *Procruſtes* ſerved thoſe unhappy creatures, who fell into his mercileſs hands. Is a text too ſhort, to ſuit their deſign? Our *Procruſtean* expoſitors can ſtretch it on the rack, and lengthen its ſenſe. Is it too full, to conſiſt with their ſcheme? They can lop off a limb, ſecrete a ſentence, or contract the meaning.——Is this to reverence the great GOD? Is this to treat reſpectfully his holy word?

Aſp. I have been grieved, I aſſure you, and diſguſted at this practice, as well as yourſelf. A practice, not only very irreverent, but very injudicious alſo. It really prejudices the cauſe it would unfairly recommend. Such a ſupport is like *a broken tooth, or a foot out of joint* ‖; not only unſerviceable, but hurtful; an obſtruction, rather than a furtherance.——However, I am not conſcious of committing any violence on this paſſage, or of forcing it into my ſervice. The circumſtance you object, rather ſtrengthens, than invalidates the concluſion. If it was ſo requiſite for our bleſſed MEDIATOR to obſerve a *poſitive* inſtitution, how much more neceſſary to fulfil thoſe *moral* precepts, whoſe obligation is unalterable and everlaſting?

Beſides, it ſhould be conſidered, whether CHRIST's ſufferings were a complete ſatisfaction to the law? Complete they were, with regard to the *penalty*, not with regard to the *precept*. A diſtinction obvious and important. From whence ariſes the following argument; which for once, you will allow me to propoſe in the *logical* form.

By what alone the law was not ſatisfied, by that alone ſinners could not be juſtified:

By CHRIST's ſufferings alone, the law was not ſatisfied:

Therefore by CHRIST's ſufferings alone, ſinners could not be juſtified.

But when we join the active with the paſſive obedience of our LORD; the efficacy of the one, with the perfection of the other; how does our juſtification ſtand firm, in the *fulleſt* ſenſe of the word! We have *all* that the law demands, both for our exemption from the curſe, and as a title to the bleſſing.

Ther. Does not the ſcripture aſcribe the *whole* of our ſalvation to the death of CHRIST? delivering it, as a never-to-be-forgotten maxim in Chriſtianity, That *we have redemption through his blood* §: *are brought near through the blood of* CHRIST ¶; nay, that *we are juſtified* (the very point under debate) *through his blood* †.——Would the inſpired writer have aſſigned theſe various bleſſings to this *one* cauſe, if it had been a

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* 1 Kings viii. 32. † Pſal. cxliii. 2. ‡ Luke xviii. 13, 14.

‖ *Rom.* v. 18. Δικαιωσις ζωης *eſt declaratio divina illa, qua peccator, mortis reus, vitæ adjudicatur, idque jure.* BENGEL. in loc.

§ Rom. v. 21.

¶ Accordingly, eternal life is called *the hope*, not of forgiveneſs, but *of righteouſneſs*, Gal. v. 5. And it is beſtowed, not barely becauſe of abſolution, but *becauſe of righteouſneſs*, Rom. viii. 10.

† Acts xxvi. 18.

* John x. 18. † Matth. iii. 15. ‡ Rom. v. 17.

‖ Prov. xxv. 19. § Eph. i. 7. ¶ Eph. ii. 13.

† Rom. v. 9.

price

price inadequate to the purchaſe, or a means inſufficient to accompliſh the end?

Aſp. This *part* of our LORD's meritorious humiliation is, by a very uſual figure, put for the *whole*. The death of CHRIST includes, not only his ſufferings, but his obedience. The ſhedding of his precious blood, was at once the grand inſtance of his ſuffering, and the finiſhing act of his obedience. In this view it is conſidered, and thus it is interpreted, by his own ambaſſador; who, ſpeaking of his divine MASTER, ſays, *He was* obedient *unto death, even the death of the croſs* *.

By the ſame figure, faith is ſometimes ſaid to be a lively influential perſuaſion, *That CHRIST died for our ſins* †. At other times, it is repreſented as a firm practical belief, that GOD *hath raiſed him from the dead* ‡. Neither of which can, without the utmoſt contrariety to the analogy of ſcripture, be taken in the *excluſive* ſenſe. Each act muſt be underſtood, not ſeparately, but jointly; each as implying both, or reciprocally inferring one another.

In like manner, when the ſcripture aſcribes our juſtification to the death of CHRIST, we are not to think, that it would *ſet aſide*, but *imply* his obedience. It is not becauſe his active obedience has no concern in procuring the bleſſing; but becauſe his bitter paſſion was the moſt conſpicuous, and the completing ſtage of his ever-glorious undertaking. Then, and not till then, he could truly ſay, FATHER, *I have finiſhed the work thou gaveſt me to do* ||.

Ther. According to your account then, it ſhould be poſſible for a man to have all his ſins done away, yet not attain to *complete* juſtification. Which is as contrary to ſound ſenſe, and true divinity, as to imagine, that crookedneſs may be removed, and the object not become ſtraight.

Aſp. No, *Theron*. According to my account, it is impoſſible, that the active and paſſive obedience of our REDEEMER ſhould be diſjoined. To whomſoever the one is imputed, from him the other is not with-held. They were *undivided in* CHRIST the illuſtrious head, and they are *undivided* in their application to his myſtical body. As CHRIST in ſuffering obeyed, and in obeying ſuffered; ſo whoever receives CHRIST as an atonement, receives him alſo as a righteouſneſs.

This has been obſerved before; and if this be real fact, what an *ineſtimably-precious* gift is the gift of CHRIST! Never was the moſt ſovereign remedy ſo admirably ſuited to any malady, as this is adapted to all our wants. In HIM may we be found, living and dying! How ſafe, how happy then!—Let me not weary your patience, if I repeat a paſſage from our excellent Dr *Lightfoot*: which, though artleſs and remarkably ſimple, has very much affected my mind; and, I hope, will leave ſome valuable impreſſion on my friend's. "Juſtification," ſays that judicious divine, "is a man's being intereſted in all CHRIST's righteouſneſs. And if any "thing is to be longed for, ſure that is, to be intereſted "in *all* CHRIST's righteouſneſs."

Ther. You don't weary my patience; neither do you ſatisfy my doubts. For you take no notice of the *abſurdity* objected, and the compariſon that enforces it.

Aſp. Your compariſon, my dear friend, is not founded on a *parallel* caſe. Neither ſenſe nor philoſophy find a medium between the removal of crookedneſs, and the ſucceſſion of ſtraightneſs. But reaſon diſcerns an *apparent*, and revelation maintains an *important* difference, between the pardon of guilt, and a title to life. This has already been proved from ſcripture; and is, to me at leaſt, evident from the very nature of things. For, if a king, in favour of ſome condemned malefactor, revoke the ſentence of death; this is one very conſiderable act of clemency. But if he pleaſes to make the pardoned criminal, a *partaker* of his kingdom, or an heir of his crown; this ſurely is a new, and a much higher inſtance of royal bounty.

If you inſiſt upon a *ſimilitude*, the word of GOD, which always ſpeaks with conſummate propriety, will furniſh us with one. *Zechariah* illuſtrates the doctrine of juſtification. He repreſents the ſinner by a perſon arrayed in *filthy garments*. His pardon is deſcribed by *taking away* this ſordid apparel. By which benefit, he ceaſes to be defiled; yet is he not hereby clothed; yet is he not hereby juſtified. This is an additional bleſſing; ſignified by putting on *change of raiment* *, and wearing beautiful robes. Here the circumſtances tally. The two conſtituent parts of juſtification, are ſeverally diſplayed, and ſtrongly marked. Here we have the removal of filth, and the robe of righteouſneſs? that which frees us from being abhorred, and that which renders us accepted; which, though diſtinguiſhable in themſelves, and diſtinguiſhed by the ſacred writer, are always united in the divine donation.

Ther. This notion is founded on a *chimerical* covenant, that CHRIST would take upon him the obedience due from man, of which there is not the leaſt intimation in holy ſcripture.

Aſp. That CHRIST undertook every thing neceſſary to redeem *loſt ſinners* from guilt and condemnation, every thing neceſſary to procure for *attainted rebels* a freſh title to life and glory; this cannot be reckoned chimerical. This muſt be as real, as that loſt ſinners are redeemed, or attainted rebels reſtored. Every proof of the one, proves and eſtabliſhes the other. This is what we call a *covenant*; and, from its benign nature, THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

Without *undertaking* this, I ſee not how our LORD could ſubſtain the character of a SURETY; nor without *fulfilling* it, how he could execute the office of a REDEEMER.——And I believe, you yourſelf will be at a loſs to ſhew, with what kind of juſtice the eternal FATHER could *lay* † our iniquities on the innocent JESUS, unleſs he had *conſented* to be anſwerable for our guilt.

Ther. This is no anſwear to my objection. I ſaid,—and it has been aſſerted by a very eminent and able pen,—that there is no intimation of any ſuch covenant in the whole ſcriptures.

Aſp. What then can be the meaning of thoſe remarkable words, in the prophecy of *Zechariah*? *The counſel of peace ſhall be between them both* ‡. Here, I

* Phil. ii. 8. † 1 Cor. xv. 3.

‡ Rom. x. 9. || John xvii. 4.

* Zech. iii. 3. 4. 5. † Iſ. liii. 6.

‡ *Zech.* vi. 12. 13. Theſe two verſes contain a brief, but very fine deſcription of the REDEEMER; of his perſon, his office, and his glory; together with the all-gracious cauſe, and ever-bleſſed fruit of our redemption.

His *perſon*: He is *the man*; or, as the *Hebrew* imports, the *real*, but at the ſame time, the *illuſtrious* man.——*Whoſe name is the BRANCH*; being the new origin of a new race; the father of a ſpiritual ſeed, who are children, not of the fleſh, but of the promiſe.—A branch that ſhall ſpring, not from a common root, not from any human planting, but ויצמח *from under himſelf*; being born of a pure virgin, and by the power of his own SPIRIT, he ſhall be both ſtock and ſtem to himſelf.

His *office*: It is to *build the temple*, the church of the elect; which is the houſe of the living GOD; in which he dwells, and by whom he is worſhipped; laying the foundation of this ſpiritual edifice in his croſs, and cementing it with his blood.—Which he ſhall rule as a *king*, after having redeemed it as a *prieſt*; uniting the ſacerdotal cenſer with the regal diadem, and been *a prieſt upon his throne*. Hence proceeds his *glory*: for he *ſtands* not, like other prieſts, offering daily the ſame oblations; but having, by one ſacrifice, obtained eternal redemption for us, is *ſet* down at the right hand of the MAJESTY on high.

What is the *cauſe* of theſe great events? What, but that moſt ſacred and auguſt convention, *the counſel of peace*? which was

think, the covenant is mentioned, and the parties are ſpecified.——*The counſel of peace*, if I miſtake not, ſignifies the myſterious and unſearchable contrivance, formed for the recovery of ruined man:—formed and carried into execution by the LORD almighty, or GOD the FATHER; and that illuſtrious perſon, who is to *build the temple, and bear the glory*. A character, which none can claim; a taſk, to which none is equal; but the bleſſed JESUS only.

In *pſalm* the xlth, the *conditions* of the covenant are circumſtantially recorded: which were the incarnation and obedience of the eternal SON: *A body haſt thou prepared me. Lo! I come to do thy will* *. The *accompliſhment* of theſe conditions, is alledged and pleaded by our great MEDIATOR, in the introduction to his laſt ſolemn prayer †. What he implores, in the proceſs of his ſupplications, may be looked upon as the *recompence* ‡ decreed him by the FATHER, and ſtipulated in this magnificent treaty. *Implores*, did I ſay? 'Tis very obſervable, that our LORD makes a *demand*, rather than a *requeſt*. The expreſſion is not αἰτῶ, but θέλω ‖: A word of authority, not of ſupplication. He claims what, by the FATHER's engagement, and by his own obedience, was become his unqueſtionable right.

Here are the parties of the covenant; the conditions of the covenant; the performance of the covenant; and the reward, which, by virtue of ſuch performance, is merited, is claimable, is due. All this, I ſhould imagine, amounts to an *intimation*, and ſomewhat *more* than an intimation of the covenant.

Ther. This you call the covenant of grace: but if we are juſtified by CHRIST's fulfilling of the law, we are juſtified by works. So that, before you can ſtrike out ſuch a way of ſalvation, you muſt *contradict* yourſelf: and, what is more adventurous, you muſt aboliſh that fundamental principle of the goſpel; *By the works of the law ſhall no fleſh be juſtified.*

Aſp. We *are*, I grant it, juſtified by works. But whoſe? The works of CHRIST, not our own.—This is very far from contradicting ourſelves; equally far is it from aboliſhing what you call the *goſpel-principle*. Which, though an undeniable truth, is not an evangelical doctrine: becauſe it only ſhews our miſerable ſtate, and the utter impoſſibility of relieving ourſelves. Whereas nothing is *genuine* goſpel, but what ſpeaks comfort, and adminiſters recovery.

Between the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace, this, I apprehend, is the difference: By the former, man was indiſpenſably bound to obey, in his *own perſon*. By the latter, the obedience of *his Surety* is accepted, inſtead of his own. The righteouſneſs required by both, is not *ſincere*, but *complete*; not proportioned to the abilities of fallen man, but to the purity of the law, and the majeſty of the LAWGIVER.—By this means, the glory of GOD as an awful Sovereign, and the glory of his law as an inviolable ſyſtem, are entirely preſerved and illuſtriouſly diſplayed. The ſalvation of ſinners, neither claſhes with the truth, nor interferes with the juſtice of the Supreme LEGISLATOR. On the contrary, it becomes a *faithful* and *juſt* § procedure of the moſt high GOD, to juſtify *him that believeth on* JESUS.

Ther. When you make this difference between the two covenants, where is your authority from ſcripture? Which of the ſacred writers have taught us, that, tho' one demanded perſonal, the other is content with *vicarious* obedience?

Aſp. Which?—*The firſt three.* The moſt eminent hiſtorian; the moſt enraptured poet; and the moſt zealous preacher. I need not inform you, that I mean *Moſes*, *David*, and *Paul*.

The teſtimony of *David* has been already recited.—*Moſes* gives us a conciſe, but very inſtructive account of the ſecond covenant. With *whom*, according to his repreſentation, was it made? Not with *Adam*, or any of his poſterity; but with the LORD JESUS CHRIST, in the room and ſtead of both. None of the articles are propoſed to a poor, impotent, ruined creature; but the whole is conſigned over to the interpoſing SAVIOUR, ſignificantly deſcribed by *the ſeed of the woman*. It is not ſaid, "Thy beſt endeavours, *O Adam*, thy true repen-"tance and ſincere obedience," ſhall retrieve this fatal "miſcarriage; but, *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the* "*ſerpent's head* *: the SON of the MOST HIGH, by "taking thy nature, ſubmitting to thy obligations, and "ſuffering death for thy ſins, ſhall fully repair thy loſs."

CHRIST, we ſee, undertook to execute the conditions. *CHRIST* was our repreſentative in this great tranſaction. For which reaſon he is ſtyled by St *Paul*, *the ſecond Man* †, *and the ſurety of a better covenant* ‡.——Our help being laid upon ONE that is ſo mighty; upon ONE that is ſo faithful; the covenant is ſaid to be *in all things well ordered and ſure* ‖: admirably well ordered indeed, for the comfort of the *Chriſtian*, and the ſecurity of his ſalvation.—"'Tis true," may he argue, "I cannot ful-"fil the conditions; and 'tis equally true, that this is not "required at my hands. The LORD JESUS CHRIST, "of his adorably-rich goodneſs, has performed all that "was conditionary §; and has eſtabliſhed, for me and "for his people, a *valid title* to the promiſes, the privi-"leges, and—

Ther. "has thereby releaſed me from all obligation "to duty,"—Farewell then to our own obedience. No more occaſion for any holineſs of life. Nay, the ſluice is opened for an inundation of ungodlineſs.——Fine divinity truly! Should I not rather ſay, downright *Antinomianiſm!*

Aſp. No, my friend: *CHRIST came not to deſtroy the law, but to fulfil* ¶. He has fulfilled it, to the very uttermoſt, in his own perſon. He has alſo merited for us thoſe ſupplies of the SPIRIT, which alone can enable weak corrupt creatures to yield faithful and acceptable obedience.—Though our LORD JESUS *died*, and was obedient *for the ungodly*; though he *finds* us ungodly, when he juſtifies us; yet he never *leaves* his people in this abominable ſtate. On the contrary, he *teaches them to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts* †.

Pray, let us conſider the tenor of this covenant; ſince you are ſo very apprehenſive of its conſequences.—"*I* "*will put my laws into their minds, and on their hearts* "*will I write them* ††. They ſhall diſcern ſuch a "beauty and glory in my precepts, as will engage

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was ſettled *between them both*; between the LORD JEHOVAH on one hand, and the man whoſe name is the BRANCH on the other.—Called a *council*, from the entire conſent, which actuated each party; and the tranſcendent wiſdom, diſplayed in the whole ſcheme.—The counſel of *peace*, becauſe of its ſovereign efficacy, to make peace with an offended GOD, peace in the accuſing conſcience, peace among people of jarring tempers and diſcordant principles.

* Heb. x. 5. 7. † John xvii.

‡ The recompence is ſpecified and promiſed, in another authentic copy of the ſame grand treaty, recorded, Iſ. xlix. 1. 6.

‖ Not I *beg*, but I *will*, John xvii. 24. *Sic volo, ſic jubeo.*

§ 1 John i. 9.

* Gen. iii. 15. † 1 Cor. xv. 48.

‡ Heb. vii. 22. ‖ 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

§ *Witſius*, inſtead of repreſenting the *covenant of grace* as a *chimerical* thing, moſt affectionately and charmingly diſplays its excellency: *Si quicquam ergo attentiſſima conſideratione dignum cenſeri debeat, ſane id fœdus gratiæ eſt. Hic via oſtenditur ad meliorem terreſtri paradiſum, et ad certiorem ſtabilioremque felicitatem, ea qua Adamus excidit. Hic nova ſpes perditis mortalibus affulget, quæ eo gratior eſſe debet, quo inexſpectatior obvenit. Hic conditiones offeruntur, quibus æterna ſalus annexa eſt; conditiones non a nobis rurſus præſtandæ, quod animum deſpondere faceret: ſed ab EO, qui vita non excederet, antequam vere dixerit,* Conſummatum eſt.

De Oecon. lib. II. cap. i.

¶ Matth. v. 17. † Tit. ii. 12. †† Heb. viii. 10.

"their deſires, and win their affections: ſo that it ſhall "be no longer their *burden*, but their *delight*, even their "meat and drink, to do the will of their FATHER in "heaven."——This, this is one of the privileges purchaſed by our great MEDIATOR. And it ſeems wondrous ſtrange, that the *purchaſe* of an eſtate for you or me, ſhould be reckoned the ſure means to *deprive* us of the poſſeſſion, or *débar* us from the enjoyment.

How often is this weak ſurmiſe urged as an argument? All whoſe plauſibility is owing to a palpable miſtake, or an egregious fallacy; to a ſuppoſed ſeparation of things, which are abſolutely inſeparable; I mean our juſtification and our ſanctification *. You are a philoſopher, *Theron*. Try, if you can ſeparate *gravity* from the ſtone, or *heat* from the fire. If theſe bodies and their eſſential properties are indiſſolubly connected; ſo are a genuine faith and a conſcientious obedience. To ſuppoſe them diſunited, is as contrary to *ſound divinity*, as it would be contrary to *true philoſophy*, if you ſhould talk of a burning ſubſtance that has no warmth, or of a ſolid ſubſtance that has no weight.——Never therefore, my dear friend, repeat this ſtale objection; never propagate this ungrounded † clamour; nor adopt a cavil, which is altogether as unphiloſophical, as it is anti-evangelical.

Ther. We digreſs from the point. My principal objection is not ſatisfied. I was obſerving, that, according to *your* manner of ſtating the affair, ſalvation is no longer free, but founded upon works.——They are the works of the law, though *CHRIST* performs them. To maintain, that we are juſtified by theſe works, is to confound the difference beween the law and the goſpel.

Aſp. Though we ſhould admit your premiſes, we cannot acquieſce in your concluſion. The ſame righteouſneſs, by which we are juſtified, is both legal and evangelical. *Legal*, in reſpect to CHRIST, who was made under the law, that he might obey all its commands. *Evangelical*, in reſpect to us, who work not ourſelves, but believe in the great FULFILLER of all righteouſneſs.—This is much of the ſame nature, with that other momentous diſtinction in divinity, Salvation is freely given, yet dearly bought. *Freely given*, with regard to us; *dearly bought*, with regard to CHRIST. So we are juſtified *by* works, if you look forward to our SURETY; we are juſtified *without* works, if you caſt a retroſpective view on ourſelves.

* See *Iſ.* xlv. 24. 1 *Cor.* i. 30. 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. where theſe bleſſings walk hand in hand; and never *were*, never *will*, never *can* be parted.

† This puts me in mind of what Theodorus replied to Philocles; who was often inſinuating, that he preached licentious doctrine; becauſe he enlarged, with peculiar aſſiduity, upon faith in JESUS CHRIST; and frequently choſe ſuch texts as, *Believe in the LORD JESUS, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.*

"I preach ſalvation by *JESUS CHRIST*; and give me leave "to aſk, whether you know what ſalvation by *CHRIST* means?" —Philocles pauſed. He began to bluſh: would have eluded the queſtion, and declined an anſwer.—"No," ſaid Theodorus: "you muſt permit me to inſiſt upon a reply. Becauſe, if it be a "*right* one, it will juſtify me and my conduct: if it be a *wrong* "one, it will prove, that you blame you know not what; and "have more reaſon to inform yourſelf, than to cenſure others."

This diſconcerted him ſtill more. Upon which Theodorus proceeded. "Salvation by *CHRIST* means, not only a deliverance "from the *guilt*, but alſo from the *power* of ſin. *He gave himſelf* "*for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; redeem us from* "*our vain converſation*, as well as deliver us from the wrath to "come.—Go now, Philocles, and tell the world, that, by teaching theſe doctrines, I promote the cauſe of licentiouſneſs. And "you will be juſt as *rational*, juſt as *candid*, juſt as *true*, as if you "ſhould affirm, that the *firemen*, by playing the engine, and pouring in water, burnt your houſe to the ground, and laid your "furniture in aſhes."

Theron was ſilent. *Aſpaſio*, after a ſhort interval, renewed the diſcourſe.—I know not, whether my friend is yielding to my arguments, or ſearching after objections; deliberating upon a capitulation, or muſtering his forces for a freſh ſally. However, let me take this opportunity of dropping a hint, and ſuggeſting a caution.

The grand reaſon, which inclines ſome people to reject this comfortable doctrine, lies concealed, if not in an abſolute diſbelief of our LORD's eternal glory and GODHEAD, yet in *unſettled* apprehenſions of it, or an habitual *inattention* to it.——If our SAVIOUR was not really GOD, as ſome writers, unhappily miſtaken themſelves, endeavour to perſuade the world, it would be a reaſonable practice, and entirely conſiſtent with their ſcheme, to diſavow the imputation of his righteouſneſs. Becauſe, upon ſuch a ſuppoſition, his obedience was no more than bounden duty; in which there could not be the leaſt pretence to merit, and which could be profitable to none but himſelf.——Whereas, if we verily believe him to be the incarnate GOD, his ſubmiſſion to the law becomes an act of *voluntary* humiliation. Which circumſtance, together with the *tranſcendent* dignity of his perſon, render his obedience, not meritorious only, but inexpreſſibly and *infinitely* meritorious.

As the blood of CHRIST is called GOD's *own blood* *; ſo the obedience of CHRIST was performed in the perſon of that adorable MEDIATOR, *who is* GOD *over all* †. He acted through the whole courſe of his life, and ſuffered death at the laſt, not merely as man, but as GOD-Man; as JEHOVAH-JESUS; EMMANUEL.——Let me entreat you to remember, nay, let me entreat you never to forget this *all-important* article of our faith. And may the SPIRIT of wiſdom give us an underſtanding, to know the weighty, the extenſive influence of ſo glorious a truth!

Ther. Far be it from me, to derogate from the dignity of our SAVIOUR's perſon, or to depretiate the merits of his mediatorial office. Place them as high as words can reach; exalt them as far as thought can ſoar; I ſtedfaſtly believe, you will ſtill fall ſhort, unmeaſurably ſhort, of their real worth.—But this conſideration ſeems to increaſe the abſurdity of your notion. For, if *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs, *his very* righteouſneſs be imputed; then the true believers are altogether as righteous, as *CHRIST* himſelf. Whereas, if you maintain, that his righteouſneſs is imputed only *as to its effects*, you will keep clear of this rock.

Aſp. This, I apprehend, will be like keeping clear of *Scylla*, only to fall foul upon *Charybdis*.——What are the effects of the *MEDIATOR*'s righteouſneſs? Pardon of ſin, juſtification of our perſons, and the ſanctification of our nature. Shall we ſay, theſe effects theſe benefits are imputed?—To *talk* of their imputation, I think, is an affront to ſound ſenſe; as, I am ſure, to be *put off* with their imputation, would be a fatal diſappointment of our hopes.—All theſe benefits are, not imputed, but imparted; they are not reckoned to us, but are really enjoyed by us; ours they are, not barely in the divine eſtimation, but by proper and perſonal poſſeſſion.

Yet it does by no means follow, that believers are altogether as righteous as CHRIST himſelf, unleſs you can prove, that to be the *reciever* is, in all reſpects, the ſame as to be the *author* and *finiſher* ‡.—The righteouſneſs of CHRIST ariſes wholly from himſelf, the ſource of ours ſubſiſts in another. CHRIST's righteouſneſs is originally and abſolutely *his own*; whereas it is made ours in a way of favour and gracious imputation. Circumſtances theſe, which create a material difference, which yield room for a vaſt pre-eminence.

* Acts xx. 28. † Rom. ix. 5. ‡ Heb. xii. 2.

Ther.

Ther. But if CHRIST's perfect obedience be accounted ours, methinks, we ſhould have no more need of *pardoning* mercy, than CHRIST himſelf.

Aſp. Yes; becauſe, *before* this imputation, we were ſunk in guilt, and dead in ſins; becauſe, *after* it, we are defective in our duty, and in many things offend.

Ther. Does not this doctrine render the interceſſion of our SAVIOUR *ſuperfluous?* What occaſion have *they* for an advocate with the FATHER, whoſe righteouſneſs has neither blemiſh nor imperfection?

Aſp. They ſtand in need of an advocate; firſt, that they may be brought home to *the REPAIRER of their breaches* *, and made partakers of his righteouſneſs by a living faith. Next, that their faith may be preſerved, notwithſtanding all oppoſition, ſtedfaſt and immoveable; or rather, may be carried on, victorious and triumphant, even to the end.

Ther. You ſay, "CHRIST performed all that was "conditionary;" then he *repented* for us, and *believed* for us. This muſt be admitted in purſuance of your principles. But this is ſo wild a notion, ſo contrary to reaſon and ſcripture, that to mention it, is to refute it.

Aſp. CHRIST performed whatever was required by the covenant of works, both before it was violated, and after it had been tranſgreſſed. But neither *repentance* nor *faith* were comprehended in this inſtitution. It knew nothing of the one, and it would not admit of the other. —It was not therefore neceſſary, neither indeed was it poſſible, for our ſpotleſs and divine LORD, to repent of ſin, or believe in a SAVIOUR. But he did unſpeakably more, *He put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf* †. He is himſelf the SAVIOUR of all the ends of the earth; and he has power to beſtow that bleſſed SPIRIT, which worketh faith and produceth repentance.

Ther. However, from what you have advanced, *this* will unavoidably follow,—That a man is to be juſtified, under the character of a notorious tranſgreſſor of the law; and juſtified under the character of a ſinleſs obſerver of the law. And what is this, but a *glaring inconſiſtency?*

Aſp. Not at all inconſiſtent, but abſolutely needful, if we conſider thoſe diſtinct branches of the divine law, the *preceptive* and the *penal*. Both which, in caſe of guilt already contracted, muſt neceſſarily be ſatisfied.——Not at all inconſiſtent, but perfectly harmonious, if we take in the two *conſtituent parts* of juſtification, the acquittance from guilt, and a title to life. The former ſuppoſes us to be tranſgreſſors of the law; and ſuch the higheſt ſaints in the world are. The latter requires us to be obſervers of the law; and ſuch muſt the inheritors of heaven be. —Much leſs is this inconſiſtent, if we conſider believers in their *perſonal* and *relative* capacity; as they are in themſelves, and as they are in their SURETY. Notorious tranſgreſſors in themſelves, they have a ſinleſs obedience in CHRIST. The conſciouſneſs of *that*, will be an everlaſting motive to humility; the belief of *this*, an inexhauſtible ſource of joy.

All this is no more inconſiſtent, than the union of a gloomy contexture, and a lightſome ſplendor, in thoſe detached clouds, which float amidſt the firmament. In themſelves, they are a *louring* and *dark* collection of vapours; by the impreſſion of the ſun-beams, they are *fair* and *bright* as the poliſhed ſilver.

Ther. After all, the imputation taught in ſcripture, is not the imputation of CHRIST's righteouſneſs, but of our *own faith*. Agreeably to the apoſtle's expreſs declaration, *Abraham believed GOD, and it was imputed to him for righteouſneſs* ‡.

Aſp. This objection admits the thing in diſpute, though it controverts the way and manner of obtaining it; admits the neceſſity of ſome *active, poſitive* righteouſneſs, in order to our juſtification. In this particular, I am glad to agree with my *Theron*: and in this particular, I believe, the generality of ſerious people agree with us both.——Whenever their conſciences are awakened, and ſeek to eſtabliſh the hope of eternal life, they conſtantly turn their eyes to *ſome* righteouſneſs; which, they apprehend, may, either in whole or in part, anſwer the demands of the law. Some look to their own *ſincere* obedience. Others call in to their ſuccour works of *ſupererogation*. My friend would aſſign this office to his *faith*.

Ther. Is this a proper anſwer to my objection, *Aſpaſio?* The text is point-blank againſt your tenet. You do wiſely therefore not to confront, but to elude the evidence.

Aſp. I did not intend it for an anſwer; only as on *occaſional* obſervation, which nevetheleſs has a pretty cloſe connection with the ſubject.——Neither would I uſe ſo mean a ſubterfuge, as to elude an argument, which I could not confute. If my friend had allowed me leiſure to explain myſelf, this ſhould have been my reply.

That a man is not juſtified by works, is a poſition moſt clearly demonſtrated, and a doctrine moſt zealouſly inculcated, by St *Paul*. That faith is a work *, exerted by the human mind, is equally certain. Unleſs therefore we would render the apoſtle inconſiſtent with himſelf, we muſt underſtand the paſſage in a qualified ſenſe. ——Why ſhould we not ſuffer him to be his own interpreter? Why ſhould we not take the *narrative* of his experience, for a *comment* on his doctrine? He declares, that the ground of his own comfort, the cauſe of his own juſtification, was, not the *grace* of *faith*, but *the righteouſneſs which is of GOD* by faith †. Not the act of believing, but that grand and glorious object of a ſinner's belief, *the LORD our righteouſneſs*.

Beſides, what was that faith of *Abraham*, to which the apoſtle refers; and which he propoſes, as the invariable model of our juſtification?—It was faith in the *promiſed ſeed;* in JESUS CHRIST the righteous ‡. It was a firm perſuaſion, that this illuſtrious PERSON ſhould ſpring from his loins; and be the author of forgiveneſs, acceptance, and ſalvation to himſelf, and to a multitude of believers, numberleſs as the ſtars of heaven. Let us tread in theſe ſteps of the holy patriarch, and we ſhall aſcribe *little*, aſcribe *nothing* to our faith, but *all* to the infinitely-excellent obedience of our *REDEEMER*.

Ther. Sure, *Aſpaſio*, you will not preſume to correct inſpiration! The inſpired writer makes no mention of a REDEEMER's obedience. He ſays expreſsly and poſitively,—*It*, that is, *Abraham*'s faith, and not any thing elſe, *was counted unto him for righteouſneſs*.

Aſp. True, *Theron;* as thoſe windows are reckoned, are counted, *the lights* of your houſe. Why? Becauſe they illuminate? No; but becauſe they afford a paſſage to the illuminating rays. Through them, the firſt and beſt of elements is diffuſed into all your habitation.—— So *we are ſaved by grace through faith;* by grace imputing, through faith accepting, the righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST. Grace is the magnificent ſource of this nobler light; faith is the means of tranſmitting it into all the faculties of the ſoul.

When our LORD declares to the diſeaſed woman *Thy faith hath made the whole* ‖; how are we to underſtand his words? that the patient's belief, and not

* Iſ. lviii. 12. † Heb. ix. 26.

‡ Rom. iv. 3.

* So it is called by HIM, who knew what was in man, and what were the differences of things; *This is* THE WORK *of GOD, that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent*, John vi. 29.

† Phil. iii. 9.

‡ Compare *Gen.* xv. 5, 6. with *Gal.* iii. 16.

‖ Matth. ix. 22.

the

he agency of CHRIST, wrought the cure? To suppose this, would be extremely derogatory to the power of our great PHYSICIAN. And if we ascribe justification to the act of believing, this will be equally derogatory to the obedience of our great MEDIATOR. In the *former* case, CHRIST and his omnipotent operation were all in all. In the *latter* case, CHRIST and his infinite merit are all in all. In *both* cases, faith is only the eye to discern, or the hand to receive, the sovereign good.

I would farther observe, that faith is very particularly *distinguished from* the righteousness which justifies. We read of the righteousness which is *by* faith, which is *of* faith *. This form of expression puts an apparent difference between the evangelical faith, and the evangelical righteousness. Since whatever is *by* another, and *of* another, cannot, without the greatest violence to reason and language, be reckoned that other.——If faith was the cause of our acceptance with GOD, then we should be justified by a righteousness which is confessedly *imperfect*. For who has ever attained to the highest degree of this virtue? Or whose faith is not mixed with an alloy of unbelief?—If faith itself was the matter of our justification, I see not how boasting could be *excluded*; how the law could be *magnified*; or what reason the apostle could have to account all things, but the righteousness of CHRIST, meaner than dross †.

Say not, that we presume to correct inspiration. We only interpret the inspired word in an harmonious *consistency* with itself. This sense is agreeable to the prevailing doctrine, and to the current language of scripture.—To the *prevailing doctrine*; which is *a believing in HIM who justifieth the ungodly*. Sift and examine this expression; *him* who justifieth. You will find, that the work is CHRIST's; CHRIST's and no *other's*. The *HOLY GHOST* assigns not the least share, not so much as a co-efficiency, to any other cause. Faith therefore, if it presumes to arrogate this exalted prerogative, or if it pretends to the least part in this important business, is a sacrilegious usurper.—To the *current language*; as when GOD is called our fear ‡, our hope ‖, our joy §. In these places, the act is undoubtedly put for the object. So, in the passage before us, the *act* must denote the *object* of faith. It is to be understood, not absolutely, but as some divines speak, objectively, instrumentally, relatively.

Ther. In the name of wonder, what can you mean by this heap of harsh and obscure expressions! Let me entreat you, *Aspasio*, to speak in your own style, not in the dialect of *Aquinas*. I have an irreconcileable aversion to these scholastic terms. They are the *barbarisms* of divinity. I know but one use they are fitted to serve; that is, to perplex and puzzle a cause you cannot maintain. Somewhat like the liquor, which a certain fish, when closely pursued, is said to emit, by which the water is darkened, and the foe eluded.

Asp. This, *Theron*, is the meaning of our uncouth phrases: It is not faith itself, which justifies; but that righteousness, which faith continually *views*; which faith delightfully *apprehends*; and on which it finally *terminates*.

To be plainer still;—we are justified by faith, in the same manner as we are fed by the hand, or as we are said to drink of a cup. Neither the hand nor the cup are the *cause* of our sustenance, but the *instruments*, one of conveying it, the other of receiving it *.——If an apostle affirms, *We are justified by faith*; faith itself declares, *In the LORD I have righteousness*. Put these passages together, and you will have the true sense of our doctrine, and the true doctrine of the gospel.

When *Themistocles* fled from the malice of his countrymen, what recommended him to the protection of King *Admetus*?—Not his name; that was obnoxious.—Not his actions; they had been hostile.—But the person of the *young prince*; whom the distressed refugee caught up in his arms; and, charged with these credentials, presented himself to the royal parent †.——So faith recommends to GOD, and justifies the soul, not for itself, or its own worth; but on account of what it *presents*, and what it *pleads*.

Ther. Is not this a fanciful distinction, and an excessive refinement? Has it any foundation in scripture?

Asp. It is implied in almost all the representations of CHRIST, and all the descriptions of faith, which occur in the sacred writings.

CHRIST is likened to *cloathing*; and believers are said to *have put on CHRIST* ‡. Now, it cannot be the act of putting on, that covers our bodies, or keeps them warm; but the commodious garment which is worn.—He is compared to *bread: I am the bread of life* ‖. Shall we say, it is the act of eating, which strengthens the constitution, and recruits our spirits? No surely; but the food eaten and digested.——CHRIST was typified by the *cities of refuge* §; and sinners, by the obnoxious manslayer; who, if he fled to one of those privileged abodes, and there remained, was safe. No prosecution against him could be valid. He had nothing to fear from the avenger of blood. In this case, was it the bare act of flying that screened the criminal? By no means. This *conveyed* him to a place of security. But the *place itself* was his sanctuary, his asylum, his safeguard.

Faith is styled, *a receiving of CHRIST* ¶: *As many as received him, to them gave he power*, or granted the privilege, *to become the sons of* GOD. The office of

* *Rom.* ix. 30. *Phil.* iii. 9. The apostles, I believe, never make use of this phrase δικαιωθεῖσες ὑπερ πιστεως, or διαι την πιστιν, but εκ πιστεως or διαι της πιστεως. Not *for*, or on *account of* our faith, but *by* or *through* faith; making this grace, not the procuring cause, but only the instrument of application.—Such language as the former seems contrary to the sound words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Yet if *Theron*'s sense of the text were admitted, the doctrine, contained in this unscriptural and offensive style, were the unavoidable consequence.

† *Phil.* iii. 8. The original is σκυβαλα—a word of the most contemptible meaning; it signifies the *worthless* scraps, and *sordid* offals, that are cast to the dogs. The reader may see this passage more fully explained in *Letter* V.

‡ Gen. xxxi. 42 53. ‖ Psal. lxxi. 5. Jer. xiv. 8. § Psal. xliii. 4.

* Though I am entirely of *Theron*'s mind, and can by no means admire our *scholastic* divines, or their *logical* terms; yet a remark from *Paræus*, couched in this style, is so pertinent to the purpose, and so full an explication of the point, that it would be an injury to the cause, not to make it a part of my notes. And some readers, I apprehend, not much acquainted with this old-fashioned dialect, may be well enough pleased to view a specimen; may like it, as they do the *rust* of a *medal*, merely for its uncouthness and antiquity.

"Faith justifies," says my author, "not *effectively*, as working "an habitual righteousness in us: not *materially*, as though it "were itself the constituent cause of our justification; but it justifieth *objectively*, as it apprehendeth CHRIST; and *instrumentally*, as it applieth his righteousness."

† This, says *Plutarch*, was a custom peculiar to that country; was reckoned the most solemn method of supplicating favour; and *seldom* met with a repulse.—To which I may add, it is a custom that *Christians* should imitate, in all their addresses to the GOD and *FATHER* of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. When thus used, thus improved, it will *never* fail of success.

‡ Gal. iii. 27. ‖ John vi. 35. § Numb. xxxv. 13.

¶ *John* i. 12. See also *Rom.* v. 17; where a critic of accurate judgment, and delicate taste, (though little known in *England*), makes this remark on the word λαμβανοντες, *Non justificat actus sumendi, quatenus est actus; sed illud quod sumitur aut apprehenditur.* BENGELIUS in loc.——His annotations on the New Testament are comprised in a small *quarto* volume. They present the reader with many refined observations on the

faith is, according to this definition, not to contribute its quota, much leſs to depoſit the whole ſum, but to take and uſe the ineſtimable gift.——Faith is called, *a looking into JESUS* *; in allufion, I ſuppoſe to the famous expedient provided for the wounded *Iſraelites* ‡. Our crucified LORD was prefigured by the brazen ſerpent; our guilt by the ſtings of the fiery ſerpents; and our faith by looking to the miraculous remedy. Did the healing power, I would aſk, reſide in the mere act of viewing? No: but in the emblem of a dying SAVIOUR, elevated on the pole, and ordained for the recovery of the people. *Here* all the efficacy was lodged. *From hence* it was all derived. The action of the eye, like the office of faith, was only to fetch home, and apply the ſanative virtue.

Once more; Faith is repreſented, as *laying hold* on GOD, our SAVIOUR ‡; *leaning* upon our BELOVED ‖; *cleaving* to the LORD §.—Pleaſe to take notice of yonder vine. Its ſhoots are weak, and its branches ſlimſy. Being abſolutely unable to ſupport themſelves, they are furniſhed with a very remarkable ſet of *claſpers*; which, like ſo many fingers, lay hold on the pegs of the wall, or faſten themſelves to the poles within their reach. Without ſuch a proviſion, the boughs muſt lie proſtrate on the ground, and be expoſed to the inſults of every foot. Whereas, by this kind contrivance of nature, ſo *creeping* a plant will climb into the air, and enjoy the breeze; ſo *feeble* a plant will ſtand out the winter, and defy the ſtorms.——An inſtructive admonition to ſinners! and no contemptible illuſtration of faith, eſpecially in its principal and moſt diſtinguiſhing employ! Thus let us apprehend the bleſſed *JESUS*; hold us faſt by our adored REDEEMER; cleave to his ineffable worthineſs, as thoſe twining tendrils, by repeated circumvolutions, adhere to their ſubſtantial ſupporters. Then ſhall we riſe, by merits *not our own*, from the moſt abject and miſerable condition, to a ſtate of everlaſting honour and joy.

Ther. Some people, I believe, would hardly forbear ſmiling at the peculiarity of your diction; and might be inclined to call your diſcourſe *canting*, rather than *reaſoning*. For my own part, I muſt acknowledge, that, as all your peculiar phraſes are derived from the ſcriptures, I hear them with reverence, rather than any diſpoſition to ſneer. Was my friend delivering a *Latin* oration, it would be a ſufficient warrant for any of his expreſſions, to prove that they came from the *Ciceronian* mint. And will it not be, at leaſt, an equally-ſufficient authority for any modes of ſpeech uſed in a *theological* eſſay, to allege that they bear the ſtamp of the *Bible?*

Though I make no objection to your language, I have yet another ſcruple with regard to your doctrine.—Do the *ancient fathers* adopt or inculcate this imputed righteouſneſs? If it was ſo important an article of our faith, ſurely it could not be *unknown* in thoſe early ages, which were ſo near the apoſtolical fountain. It would not have been *omitted* by thoſe zealous preachers, who choſe to endure all the rigours of perſecution, rather than renounce their holy profeſſion.

Aſp. I think, it were ſufficient to anſwer this queſtion, by aſking another,—Do the apoſtles, does the *HOLY SPIRIT* of *GOD* ſpeaking in ſcripture, inculcate this doctrine, or diſplay this privilege? If ſo, we need not be very ſolicitous for any farther authority. *To the law, and to the teſtimony* ¶, is our grand, our final appeal. Amidſt all the darkneſs and uncertainty, which evidently run through the writings of the beſt of men, this is our unſpeakable happineſs, that *we have a more ſure word of prophecy; to which we do well to take heed* *.

However, to be a little more particular:——It cannot be expected, that we ſhould find many paſſages in thoſe pious authors, very ſtrong and very explicit, upon the point. Becauſe in their days, it was not ſo profeſſedly oppoſed; and therefore could not be ſo exactly diſcuſſed, as in later ages. Nevertheleſs, they have left enough behind them, to avouch the ſubſtance of what we aſſert, *That a man is not juſtified by any works, duties, or righteouſneſs of his own, but only by faith in JESUS CHRIST.*——I cannot ſay, that I have charged my memory with their very words; and, for that reaſon, muſt not attempt at preſent to make any citation. But, when a proper opportunity offers, and their works are before me, I may poſſibly produce a few of their teſtimonies.

In the mean time, I can mention a ſet of writers, whoſe atteſtation will, I imagine, carry as much weight with my friend, as the united voice of the *Greek* and *Latin* fathers.

Ther. Who are they?

Aſp. Our venerable *reformers*. The homilies compoſed by thoſe excellent divines, are as expreſs to my purpoſe, as they are unexceptionable in their evidence. This is their language:—"The true underſtanding of "this doctrine, *We be juſtified freely by faith without works*, "is not, that this our *act to believe*, or this our faith in "*CHRIST*, doth juſtify us: for that were to count our"ſelves to be juſtified by ſome act or virtue that is *with"in ourſelves*. But the true meaning thereof is, that al"though we hear GOD's word, and believe it; although "we have hope and faith, charity and repentance, and "do never ſo many good works: yet we muſt renounce "the merit of all our virtues and good deeds, as things "that be far too weak and inſufficient, to deſerve remiſ"ſion of ſin, and our juſtification. We muſt truſt only "in GOD's mercy, and that ſacrifice which our High "Prieſt and Saviour *JESUS CHRIST*, the SON of GOD, "offered for us upon the croſs."

The homily ſubjoins a very appoſite illuſtration; which may conclude our diſcourſe with perfect propriety, and I hope with equal efficacy.—"So that as St "*John Baptiſt*, although he were never ſo virtuous and "godly a man, yet in the matter of forgiving ſin, he did "put the people from him, and appoint them unto "*CHRIST*, ſaying thus unto them, Behold! yonder *is "the LAMB of GOD, which taketh away the ſins of the "world*: even ſo, as great and as godly a virtue as the "lively faith is, yet it *putteth us from itſelf*, and remitteth us "unto *CHRIST*, for to have only by him remiſſion of "ſins or juſtification. So that our faith in CHRIST, as "it were, ſaith unto us thus, It is not I that take away "your ſins, but it is CHRIST only; and to him only I "ſend you for that purpoſe, forſaking therein all your "good words, thoughts, and works, and only putting "your truſt in CHRIST †."

Ther. If there be any tolerable ſenſe of the notion under debate, I think, it muſt be underſtood as follows.—CHRIST's performance of the law of his mediation, or in other words, his unſinning obedience to the moral law, and the ſpotleſs ſacrifice of himſelf to the vindictive juſtice of GOD; theſe are the *only* valuable conſideration, on account of which the *gracious* GOD reſtores guilty creatures to a ſtate of acceptance with his divine MAJESTY.

Aſp. I am far from denying your propoſition. I rejoice in the propriety of my *Theron's* ſentiments. May

the elegancies of the ſtyle, and ſublimity of the doctrines. They are a pattern of the conciſe manner; and, which is perhaps the crowning excellency, they all along indicate a heart warm and glowing with the love of its ſubject.

* Heb. xii. 2. † Numb. xxi. 8. ‡ Iſ. xxvii. 5.

‖ Cant. viii. 5. § Acts xi. 23.

¶ Iſ. viii. 20.

* 2 Pet. i. 19.

† See the ſecond part of the *Homily on ſalvation.*

his faith, which is *thus far* advanced, be carried on by grace, till it is completed in glory!—That unsinning obedience, and that spotless sacrifice, are indeed the only valuable, they are also the *truly*, or rather the *infinitely* valuable consideration, which has fully merited for us the remission of sins, and the enjoyment of life; and this not only from the gracious, but even from the *just*, the faithful, the righteous GOD.

But then, they must be *imputed*, in order to furnish us with a claim, and invest us with a right, to the purchased privileges.—Suppose them not imputed; and what becomes of our *interest* in them? They are like a medicine prepared, but not applied. Suppose them imputed; and they lay a firm, an apparent, a rational *foundation*, for every pleasing hope, and for every heavenly blessing.

Ther. I fear, I have acknowledged too much.——My thoughts fluctuate. My mind is unsettled.——I would not withstand the truth. I would not disbelieve any doctrine of the gospel. Yet—what shall I say? While I *listen* to your reasoning, I am half a convert. When I *recollect* the objections, I revert to my first opinion.

Of this, however, I am convinced, That human righteousness is *insufficient* for our justification. Here your arguments have carried their point. I shall henceforth place my hopes of everlasting happiness, not upon any works of my own, but upon the free goodness, and unbounded beneficence, of the Supreme BEING; pursuant to that maxim of scripture, *The gift of GOD is eternal life.*

Asp. You do right, *Theron*, to expect eternal life as the gift of GOD, not as the wages of your own obediential service. But be pleased to remember, that all the gifts of grace, though perfectly *free* to sinners, are founded upon a grand and inestimable *price*, paid by their SAVIOUR.——Are they entirely absolved from guilt? It is because CHRIST gave his life for their ransom.——Are they heard with acceptance when they pray? It is because their exalted HIGH PREIST intercedes in their behalf.—Are they completely justified, and instated in endless bliss? It is because their REDEEMER's consummate obedience, is the glorious equivalent for this and every other blessing.——Therefore, when you mention eternal life as the gift of GOD, you should not forget to add with the holy apostle, *through* JESUS CHRIST *our* LORD*.——Well, my *Theron*; what say you farther?——Is your quiver emptied? are your scruples satisfied? May I interpret this silence, as an act of assent?

Ther. Observe, how the *ranunculuses*, on yonder gay parterre, have contracted their spreading tufts, and the *tulips* have closed their expanded cups; while all the neighbouring flowers have shut their ivory doors, or drawn their velvet curtains.——Such is the state of my thoughts. They are all bent inwards; *collected* in themselves; and *pondering* upon your discourse. Which has inclined me, before I was aware, to contemplate, rather than talk.—You will excuse my thoughtfulness, *Aspasio*. Or, if it wants an apology, you must blame yourself. For, had your reasons been less cogent, my attention had been more disengaged.

* Rom. iv. 20.

Asp. My dear *Theron*, I shall only wish, in allusion to your own simile, and in the language of the best of books, that these truths may *distil as the dew* * upon your mind, and *lie all night upon your branches* †. This, I am persuaded, is the only way to have all your comforts *green before the sun*, and all your virtues *flourish as an herb*. Whereas, under the influence of any other faith, I am afraid, they will be as the garden that is visited with a drought, or as the leaves that are smitten with a blast.

Ther. I shall attentively consider, both your doctrine, and your arguments. Which that I may execute, with more ease, and to better purpose, be pleased to *sum up*, in a few words, the substance of what has passed.——This done, it will be time to withdraw. The flowers, you see, are our monitors. They have folded up their robes, and veiled their beauties. A custom which they seldom use, till the *rising damps* render it unsafe for their master to be among them; and the *surrounding gloom* renders it difficult for his eye to distinguish them.

Asp. You could not oblige me more, than by giving me such a command.——We trust for salvation,

Not on our own *external duties*. This were to build our house upon the sand; which, when the rains descend, when the torrents pour, when the winds blow with tempestuous violence, will certainly fall; and bury the builder, with all his vain hopes, in irretrievable ruin.

Not on the *sincerity* of our *hearts*. This, if opposed to *CHRIST*, and made the rival of his merits, will be a "despised broken idol." *Despised* by the infinitely sublime and majestic RULER of the world. *Broken*, with regard to the stress we lay, or the confidence we repose, on so deceitful a prop. No more able to stand in the judgment of the great day, than *Dagon* was able to maintain his station, before the ark of the LORD GOD of hosts ‡.

Not upon our *faith*. This is often weak, as the rickety child; sometimes quite faint, like the person in a deep swoon; always imperfect, like every other performance of ours. Alas! to what afflicting fears, to what grievous despondency should I, for my part, be perpetually liable, if my own faith was the ground of my justification? Blessed be the FATHER of mercies! we have a surer support. Not upon faith, not upon faith, but upon its gracious AUTHOR, and glorious OBJECT, is the hope of *Israel* founded. Yet

Not upon our LORD's righteousness considered only as passive; but upon his *active* and *passive* obedience united: all that he *did*, in conformity to the commands of the law, and all that he *suffered* in submission to its penalty. Both which, immensely dignified by his divine nature, are a basis for our faith, which nothing can shake; are a foundation for our affiance, which can never be removed.——Nothing else, in any creature, or in all worlds, could expiate the *least sin*. This not only expiates all sin, but gives a title to *every blessing*;—to the blessings of grace, and of glory; of evangelical holiness, and everlasting happiness.

* Deut. xxxii. 2. † Job xxix. 19.

‡ 1 Sam. v. 3. 4.

DIALOGUE XI.

Asp. I Have often purposed, and as often forgot, to ask my *Theron*,—what *picture* he was so attentively surveying, when I stole unperceived upon him, in this favourite arbour *.

Ther. I was indulging a pensive pleasure, in viewing the ruins, and contemplating the fate of *Babylon*,—that renowned and opulent city! once the residence of the *Assyrian* monarchs, and capital of one of the greatest empires in the world. The draught I held in my hand, represented some of its remains. And indeed this was the very last subject which employed my thoughts. In the morning, my son brought me his observations upon the scene, which I have just now been revising.

For I frequently set him to exercise his judgment, or display his fancy, on remarkable passages which occur in history.—He was lately commissioned to determine

* *See* Dialogue V.

mine a controverſy between the illuſtrious *Leonidas*, and the leſs celebrated *Pædaretus*. This was the point in debate, Which of them diſcovered the *trueſt* generoſity of ſpirit, and the *moſt heroic* love of their country? The former, who willingly ſacrificed his life in its defence? or the latter, who, when he was candidate for a ſeat among the three hundred, and loſt his election, inſtead of being chagrined or diſſatisfied, went home unfeignedly rejoicing, "that there were found in *Sparta* three hundred "men more worthy than himſelf?"—The taſk of this day was, to give a *deſcriptive picture* of thoſe wonderful ruins.

Aſp. Pray let me have the pleaſure of hearing the young gentleman's performance.

Ther. It will be too long, and too puerile; tire your patience, and offend your taſte.

Aſp. I don't uſe to make either of theſe complaints, when I am entertained with *Theron*'s compoſitions. And, as the ſon has ſo much of his father's genius, I am not at all apprehenſive of any ſuch diſappointment.——We have a moſt agreeable ſituation, and more than an hour's leiſure. I muſt therefore repeat my requeſt.

Ther. 'Tis true, I have retouched the ſketch; which may render it ſomewhat more tolerable. And ſince you perſiſt in your demand, I will read the paper.——Only deſiring ſome allowance for a little *luxuriancy* of imagination; which, in young writers, it may be adviſeable to indulge, rather than repreſs; as age and judgment will, probably, come with the pruning-knife, and make the proper retrenchments.——I muſt farther obſerve, that, contrary to the cuſtom which prevails in our ſchools, I generally chuſe to have him expreſs his ſentiments in *Engliſh*: becauſe it is in this language he muſt communicate *his own*, and become acquainted with the ideas of *others*: becauſe to acquire ſome good degree of propriety and fluency in this his native tongue, will be incomparably more ſerviceable, than to ſpeak *Latin* with the *Terentian* elegance, or to write it with the *Ciceronian* copiouſneſs.

Is this *Babylon?* the glory of kingdoms! the beauty of the *Chaldean* excellency!

Where once the gorgeous eaſt, with richeſt hand,
Shower'd on her kings barbaric pearl and gold.

How is ſhe fallen! fallen from the height of magnificence, into the abyſs of confuſion! What was once the object of univerſal admiration, is now a ſpectacle of aſtoniſhment and horror.

The *palace*, where Majeſty ſat enthroned like ſome terreſtrial deity, is a heap of rubbiſh; no longer diſtinguiſhed by an air of ſuperior elegance, but by ſtronger and more melancholy marks of departed dignity *.——Where the nobles of that *ſumptuous court* trailed along the marble pavements their robes of purple and embroidery, there the creſted ſnake hiſſes, or the fierce envenomed adder glides.

How changed is the hoſpitable *hall*, and how diſgraced the *room* of *ſtate!* The firſt offered a conſtant and cordial reception to the welcome gueſts; in the laſt, the great king gave audience to his cringing, his adoring vaſſals. Now thorns over-run the circumference, and "deſolation ſits in the threſhold of them both."——Where are the roofs of ivory, painted with *vermilion*, and adorned with *ſculpture?* the radiant roofs, whoſe lamps of burniſhed ſilver, pendent in many a blazing row, yielded light as from another ſky? Swept from their foundations, they lie clotted with defiling dirt, or claſped with tangling briers.——*Muſic* no longer pours her harmony, through the ſpacious and extended apartment; but the night-owl, neſtling in ſome clift of the ruins, ſcreams her harſh and portentous diſſonance. *Joy* no longer leads up the ſprightly dance, amidſt the luſtre of that artificial day; but the ſolitary bat flits in ſilent circles, or flaps her ſooty wings. All thoſe gay delights,—let the *ſons* of *ſenſuality* hear the tale, and take warning from the cataſtrophe! all thoſe gay delights are extinguiſhed, like one of their feebleſt tapers, which, having illuminated for a while the feſtive aſſembly, ſhone itſelf to the edges of the exhauſted ſocket, and in a moment flaſhed into ſtench and darkneſs.

The *walls*, though cemented with bitumen *, and conſolidated into the firmneſs of a flint, are become like the broken bubble. There was a time, when the inhabitants, confiding in the ſtrength of their bulwarks, and the multitude of their towers, looked down with fearleſs diſdain on the army of beſiegers. But now the prophet's threatening is moſt terribly fulfilled: *The fortreſs of the high fort of thy walls hath HE brought down, laid low, and brought to the ground, even to the duſt* †.——Where are the *gates*, the grand and glittering gates ‡, which admitted the triumphant hoſts, or poured forth their numerous legions againſt the day of battle? Not one trace remains, to tell the inquiſitive ſtranger, "Here the ſpacious ave-"nues opened: Here the maſſy portals roſe."—Commodious *walks*, in which the cluſtering merchants raiſed the buſy hum, and planned the ſchemes of commerce; ample *ſtreets*, in which Induſtry drove the toiling car, or ſmote the ſounding anvil; are ſhrouded with matted graſs, or buried beneath the rankeſt weeds. Silence, in both places, a ſullen ſilence reigns; and inactivity, a death-like inactivity, ſlumbers.

What is become of thoſe *hanging-gardens*, which, for curious contrivance and ſtupendous workmanſhip, were never equalled in any nation under heaven? *Terraces*, that overlooked the talleſt houſes! *Parterres*, exalted to the clouds, and opening their flowery beauties in that ſtrange region! *Groves*, whoſe very roots were higher than the tops of the loftieſt trees ‖!—They are now ſmitten by a dreadful blaſt. Their beauty is decayed, like a withered leaf. Their very being is gone, like the chaff of the ſummer threſhing-floors; which the wind carrieth away, and its place is no where found §. What was once the favourite retreat of a queen, and the admiration of the whole world, is now a neſt for poiſonous reptiles, and a kennel for ravenous beaſts.—The traveller, inſtead of expatiating with delight, where this *penſile paradiſe* flouriſhed, is ſtruck with horror; keeps at a trembling diſtance; and, ſurveying the rueful ſpot, cries out, *Righteous art thou, O LORD, and true are thy judgments!*

Here ſtands an *obeliſk*, maimed by the ſtroke of revolving years, like a mountain-oak ſhattered by the flaming bolt. Another, all unhinged and quite diſjointed, ſeems to tremble before every blaſt that blows. ——There the *pyramid* ¶, firm as the ſolid rock, and

* *Benjamin*, a Jew of *Tudela*, in his *Itinerary*, written about the year of our LORD 1170, tells us,—"That he was upon the place "where this city formerly ſtood, and found it wholly deſolated "and deſtroyed. Only ſome ruins of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s palace "were ſtill remaining; but men were afraid to go near them, by "reaſon of the many ſerpents and ſcorpions, that were then in "the place."

* The walls were built of brick, and cemented with a *glutinous* kind of ſlime, which binds more firmly than any mortar, and ſoon grows harder than the bricks or ſtones themſelves.—Theſe fortifications were, according to the account given by *Herodotus*, in *breadth* eighty-ſeven feet, in *height* three hundred and fifty feet, and reckoned to be abſolutely *impregnable*: inſomuch that the inhabitants, when beſieged by *Cyrus*, inſulted him from the walls, and laughed at his attempt, as a vain impracticable project.—Οι δε εν των τειχων καθεζομενοι την πολιορκιαν. ΧΕΝΟΡΗ. *Inſt. Cyr.* lib. VII.

† Iſ. xxv. 12.

‡ There were no leſs than an hundred gates, all of *ſolid braſs*. Hence it is, that when JEHOVAH promiſes to make *Cyrus* maſter of *Babylon*, he ſpeaks in this very remarkable and particularizing manner, *I will break in pieces before thee the gates of braſs*, Iſ. xlv. 2.

‖ *Penſiles horti ſunt, ſummam murorum altitudinem æquantes, multarumque urborum umbra et proceritate amœni.* CURT. lib. V.

§ Dan. ii. 35.

¶ *Strabo* calls the temple of *Belus* a *pyramid*, lib. XV. But if

ſtable, one would have thought, as the everlaſting hills, wrenched from its mighty baſe, is tumbled head-long in enormous ruin, and has cruſhed many a ſtructure by its fall.——See yonder the *triumphal arch*, which exhibited, through its extenſive and beautiful bend, an advantageous view of the firmament. It was, once, the graceful memorial of ſome celebrated victory; it is now converted into a trophy of a very different kind. Juſt retaining two uneven, battered, ragged ſtumps, it ſerves to recognize the deſtructive ravages of time.——*Spires*, that pierced the clouds, and ſhot into the ſkies, are levelled with the trodden ſoil. On *pinnacles*, to which the ſtrong-winged bird could hardly ſoar, the grovelling worm crawls, and the ſordid ſnail leaves her ſlimy track.——*Baths*, that contained the tranſlucent wave, and were ſo often perfumed with odoriferous unguents, are choked with filth; the grand *colonnade*, that ſurrounded them, is ſhivered to pieces, and the elevated *dome*, that covered them, is daſhed to the ground.——The public *aqueducts*, which conveyed cleanlineſs and health along their cryſtal currents, are degenerated into a ſtagnating lake; while croaking vermin ſwarm among the weeds, and noiſome exhalations ſteam from the mire.

Auguſt and ſtately *temples*, that ſeemed to affect the neighbourhood of heaven *, are ſunk to the very duſt.—Who can point the ſpot, where the conſecrated victim bled, or the ſacred fire glowed? where the ſceptered image liſted its majeſtic head, or the venerating crouds bowed the ſuppliant knee †? Degraded are thoſe ſplendid vanities, and caſt (according to the denunciation of the ſacred oracles) *to the bats and to the moles* ‡. All is low; low as the ſpurious dignity of the idols they complimented; low *as the ſtraw that is trodden down for the dunghill.*

Sepulchres, the once venerable repoſitories of the dead, awful manſions, deſtined to everlaſting concealment, are cleft and rent aſunder. They diſcloſe the horrid ſecrets of the pit, and frightfully yawn upon the blaſted day. Poſſibly ſome ravenous creature lurks within, that has already rifled the tomb of its hero; given the putrid bones a new grave; and waits only for the approach of night, to repeat his funeral dirge in yells.—*Inſcriptions*, deſigned to perpetuate ſome illuſtrious character, or eternize ſome heroic deed, are blended in the promiſcuous maſs. In vain would the prying antiquary ſearch for a legible or conſiſtent ſentence; in vain attempt to find the memorable names of a *Nebuchadnezzar* or a *Nimrod*. Theſe, though engraved on plates of braſs, or cut in blocks of marble, are loſt amidſt the ſtupendous lumber; as prints on the unſteady ſand are effaced, when returning tides ſmooth the furrowed beach.

Here and there a ſtraggling cypreſs riſes, as it were with funeral ſolemnity, amidſt the waſte §. Some-

what like the black plumes, nodding over the mournful hearſe, they augment the ſadneſs of the ſcene, and throw a deeper horror on all below.——No human voice is heard, nor human face ſeen, amidſt theſe deſolated heaps. Too dreary, even for the roam of hoary hermit, or the cell of gloomy monk. Abandoned they are, totally abandoned, to the dominion of ſolitude; or elſe to the unmoleſted reſort of ſhaggy monſters, and feathered hags; which ſtun the midnight-hours,—*theſe*, with their importunate ſkrieks,—*thoſe*, with their execrable howls.

See! to what a deſpicable, what an abhorred ſtate, the proudeſt monuments of earthly grandeur, and the moſt coſtly apparatus for earthly felicity, may be reduced! A pregnant and alarming proof, that for *laſting honour*, or *real happineſs*,

They build too low, who build beneath the ſkies.

Aſp. I very much approve the choice of your ſubject. The ruins of *Perſepolis* would have given us a view of magnificence in abaſement. The ruins of *Palmyra* might have ſhewed us elegance in the duſt. But the ruins of *Babylon* diſplay at once, magnificence and elegance under an eclipſe, *ſcripture* and *revelation* in their glory.——The utter deſtruction of this city, which was abſolutely unequalled * in every inſtance of dignity, and ſeemingly invincible by an enemy, muſt certainly have been looked upon as the *moſt improbable* of events. Nevertheleſs its utter deſtruction was decreed by JEHOVAH, and denounced by his prophet ſeveral ages before the execution took place. The awful *ſentence* was not only denounced, but recorded, and is ſtill remaining, in the public archives of our religion.

Ther. Where is this ſentence recorded, and remaining?

Aſp. In the prophecy of *Iſaiah*; and not only recorded, but in the moſt circumſtantial manner, and with a minute detail of the horrible deſolations. Theſe are the words of the inſpiried writer; BABYLON, *the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency, ſhall be as when GOD overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It ſhall never be inhabited; neither ſhall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither ſhall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither ſhall the ſhepherds make their fold there. But wild beaſts of the deſert ſhall lie there, and their houſes ſhall be full of doleful creatures, and owls ſhall dwell there, and ſatyrs ſhall dance there. And the wild beaſts of the iſland ſhall cry in their deſolate houſes and dragons in their pleaſant palaces* †.

In the two firſt ſentences, is comprized the moſt finiſhed picture of proſperity and grandeur. *The glory of kingdoms:* beyond every other royal ſeat, ſpacious, ornamented, and wealthy; revered by many conquered and tributary dominions, as their miſtreſs, and their ſovereign. ——*The beauty of the Chaldees excellency;* the *Chaldeans*, who excelled all the nations of the earth in riches, in ſplendor, and in power, *even they* gloried in this wonderful city. This was the higheſt honour of the moſt illuſtrious, and chief ſtrength of the moſt victorious people; faireſt, where all was conſpicuouſly fair; nobleſt, where all was ſupereminently noble.——Yet this diſtinguiſhed, this crowning city, *ſhall*, at the blaſting of the breath of JEHOVAH, *be* totally, totally deſtroyed, even *as when GOD overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.*

if the critics in hiſtory ſhould queſtion or deny the exiſtence of pyramids among the *Babylonians*, for this and other liberties uſed by our young declaimer, *Horace* ſhall make an apology:

——*Pictoribus atque poetis*
Quidlibet audendi ſemper fuit æqua poteſtas.

* A tower in the temple of *Belus*, and dedicated to his worſhip, was moſt amazingly high. It conſiſted of eight piles of building, erected one above another. It aroſe to the elevation of ſix hundred feet perpendicular; and is thought, by the learned *Bochart*, to have been part of that ſuperb work, which was began when *the whole earth was of one language*; but miſcarried, or rather was providentially defeated, by the confuſion of tongues. In this ſtructure, there were doubtleſs very ſtrong traces of that arrogant boaſt, *Let us build us a city and a tower, whoſe top may reach to heaven*, Gen. xi. 4.

† Alluding to that prodigious inſtance of profuſeneſs, oſtentation, and idolatrous madneſs, *the golden image ſet up in the plain of* Dura: *whoſe height* (that is, the height of the ſtatue and pedeſtal taken together) *was threeſcore cubits*, Dan. iii. 1. See PRIDEAUX's *Connection*, vol. I. p. 95. *&c.* p. 567. *&c.*

‡ Iſ. ii. 20. ‖ Iſ. xxv. 10.

§ *Ranwolf*, a *German* traveller, who paſſed that way, in the year of our LORD 1574, ſays, "This country is ſo dry and barren, that "it cannot be tilled; and ſo bare, that I ſhould have doubted, "whether the potent *Babylon* did ſtand there, if I had not known it "by ſeveral ancient and delicate antiquities, that are ſtill ſtanding "hereabout in great deſolation."

* *Unequalled*—repreſented therefore by the *golden* head, in *Nebuchadnezzar*'s prophetic dream, and emblematic image, *Dan.* ii. 38.—and deſcribed by an ancient author, as *omnium quas unquam ſol aſpexit urbium maxima.* PAUSAN. in Arcad.

† Iſ. xiii. 19. 20. 21. 22.

In

In describing the overthrow, the prophet is equally admirable; and rises, by a most judicious gradation, into all the pomp of horror. *q. d.* "Now, indeed, it "is thronged with citizens; but the hour is coming, "when it shall be entirely depopulated, and not so much "as a single inhabitant left.——Lest you should think, "that in process of time it may be re-edified, and "again abound with joyful multitudes, *it shall never be* "*inhabited* more; no, *never be dwelt in* any more, *from* "*generation to generation*; but shall continue a dismal "waste, through all succeeding ages.—A waste so dis-"mal, that none of the neighbouring *shepherds* shall *make* "*their fold*, or find so much as an occasional shelter for "their flocks, where kings, grandees, and crouds of "affluent citizens, reposed themselves in profound tran-"quillity. Even the rude and roving *Arabian* shall not "venture to *pitch his tent*, nor be able to procure for "himself the poor accommodation of a night's lodging "where millions of polite people basked in the sunshine "of profuse prosperity.—In short, it shall neither be "*habitable*, nor *accessible*; but a *dwelling-place for dragons*, "*an astonishment and a hissing* *. What was once the gol-"den city †, and the metropolis of the world, shall be "an everlasting scene of desolation and horror; a fearful "monument of divine vengeance, and an awful admo-"nition to human pride."

All this is foretold in scripture; and, though to human appearance impossible, though to human apprehension incredible, was, in the appointed time, most minutely accomplished. The memorials and evidences of the accomplishment remain to this very day ‡. They are so authentic, that the most inquisitive curiosity cannot doubt; and so incontestable, that the most bigotted incredulity will not deny. And should not this teach us, to reverence the authority, to admire the wisdom, and confide in the promises, of that heavenly volume?

I know, you are not fond of compliments, *Theron*. Therefore, instead of speaking my opinion of your son's performance, I will endeavour to return your favour.—You have entertained me with an account of the most memorable ruins extant in the material world. Let me present my friend with a picture of ruins, no less *remarkable*, far more *deplorable*, and unspeakably *interesting* to us all. I shall give it, in the colouring of a great master; whose works, this very day, I happened to be perusing.

The passage displays a doctrine of the utmost importance in the Christian scheme; and by one of the finest pieces of imagery, to be met with in elegant writing. I think, it may be looked upon as a *practical improvement* of *Eugenio*'s declamation. It pleased me so much, that I transcribed it; and I make no apology for reading it, because I shall expect your thanks.—Only let me hint, that it considers the human soul, as originally an habitation of GOD through the SPIRIT; and then, speaking of its fallen condition, proceeds.

"That he *hath withdrawn himself*, and left *this his temple* "desolate, we have many sad and plain proofs before "us. The *stately ruins* are visible to every eye, that bear "in their front (yet extant) this doleful inscription; "HERE GOD ONCE DWELT. Enough appears of "the admirable frame and structure of the *soul of man*, to "shew the divine presence did sometime reside in it; "more than enough of vitious *deformity*, to proclaim he "is now *retired* and *gone*. The *lamps* are extinct, the "*altar* overturned; the *light* and *love* are now vanished, "which did the one *shine* with so heavenly brightness; "the other *burn* with so pious fervour. The *golden can-*"*dlestick* is displaced, and thrown away as an useless "thing, to make room for the throne of the *prince of* "*darkness*. The *sacred incense*, which sent rolling up in "clouds its rich perfumes, is exchanged for a poisonous "hellish vapour; and here is, *instead of a sweet savour, a* "*stench*. The comely order of this house is turned all "into confusion; the *beauties of holiness* into *noisome im-*"*purities*; the *house of prayer* to a *den of thieves*, and that "of the worst and most horrid kind; for every *lust* is a "*thief*, and every *theft* is *sacrilege*. Continual rapine and "robbery is committed upon *holy things*. The noble "powers, which were designed and dedicated to *divine* "*contemplation* and *delight*, are alienated to the service of "the most despicable idols, and employed unto the vilest "intuitions and embraces; to behold and admire *lying* "*vanities*, to indulge and cherish lust and wickedness.

"There is not now a system, an entire table of *cohe-*"*rent truths* to be found, or a *frame of holiness*, but some "shivered parcels. How many attempts have been "made, since that fearful fall and ruin of this fabric, to "compose again the truths of so many several kinds in-"to their distinct orders, and make up frames of science "or useful knowledge! and after so many ages, nothing "is finished in any kind. Sometimes truths are mis-"placed, and what belongs to *one kind*, is transferred to "*another*, where it will not fitly match; sometimes *false-*"*hood inserted*, which shatters or disturbs the whole "frame. And what with much fruitless pains is done by "one hand, is dashed in pieces by another; and it is the "work of a following age to sweep away the fine-spun "cobwebs of a former. And those truths which are of "greatest use, are least regarded; their tendency and "design are overlooked, or they are so loosened and "torn off, that they cannot be wrought in, so as to take "hold of the soul; but hover as *faint ineffectual notions*, "that signify nothing. Its very fundamental powers "are shaken and disjointed, and their order towards one "another confounded and broken. So that what is "judged *considerable*, is not *considered*; what is recom-"mended as *eligible* and *lovely*, is not loved and chosen. "Yea, the truth which is after godliness, is not so much "*disbelieved*, as *hated*, *held in unrighteousness*; and "shines as too feeble a *light*, in that malignant dark-"ness, which *comprehends it not*. You come, amidst "all this confusion, as into the ruined palace of some "great prince, in which you see here the fragments "of a noble pillar, there the shattered pieces of some "curious imagery; and all lying neglected and use-"less amongst heaps of dirt. He that invites you to "take a view of the soul of man, gives you but "such another prospect, and doth but say to you, "*Behold the desolation*, all things rude and waste. So "that should there be any pretence to the divine pre-"sence, it might be said, *If GOD be here, why is it* "*thus?* The faded glory, the darkness, the disorder, "the impurity, the decayed state in all respects of this

* Jer. li. 37. † Is. xiv. 4.

‡ It is said, by a very learned author, *Babylonem usque eo concidisse, ut nemo cum fiducia illius locum amplius demonstrare queat.* i. e. "*Babylon* is now so totally destroyed, that the most skilful geo-"graphers cannot, with certainty, determine the place on which "it stood."

Should any of my readers prefer this account, I shall neither litigate the point, nor be anxious for the consequence. It may indeed rank *Eugenio*'s composition among the works of fancy. But it will realize *Aspasio*'s assertion, and corroborate his argument. If we find *no memorials* of the city, we have the *most evident* verification, and the *fullest* accomplishment, of the prophecy.

If this be the case, it gives an amazing emphasis to that just, but terrible decree, issued from the supreme tribunal; *I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts*. "I "will not lay it in ruins, but extirpate it from the earth. I will "efface the very footsteps of its existence; and not leave so much "as a *fragment* or a *trace* of the magnificent, but wicked *Babylon*. "Is. xiv. 23.

"temple, too plainly ſhew, *The* GREAT INHABI-"TANT *is gone* *."

Ther. Your painter, I muſt own, is a maſter in his profeſſion; and ſeems to have a peculiar talent for a *night-piece*.—But why, I beſeech you, ſo much of his ſhades and ſolemnity? Has he no colours, but the dark? no lineaments, but the four? Could he not allow us one bright tint, one ſmiling feature, when he was copying the nobleſt being in this ſublunary world?—Is it for the honour of the great GREATOR, to give ſuch a deformed draught of his moſt finiſhed workmanſhip?

Aſp. It reflects no kind of diſhonour upon the architect of *Babylon*, that its palaces are fallen, its edifices demoliſhed, and its walls levelled with the ground. They might have been built with the exacteſt ſymmetry, and once embelliſhed with every graceful ornament, notwithſtanding the ſtroke of violence, or the ſap of years, have now reduced them to heaps of rubbiſh.—The human ſoul, when recent from the inſpiration of the ALMIGHTY, was bright with knowledge, amiable with virtue, and in every reſpect excellent. But *how*—to ſpeak in the language of the mourning prophet, a language never more pertinent than on the preſent occaſion,—*how is the gold become dim! how is the moſt fine gold changed!*

Ther. Man's ſoul is rational and eternal; is the offſpring of the DEITY, and capable of reſembling its MAKER.

Aſp. What *Milton* allows to the fallen archangel, I can readily allow to fallen man:

——He had not loſt
All his original brightneſs.

The grand and diſtinguiſhing faculties of the ſoul remain. Juſt as, when a fountain is poiſoned, the waters continue to flow; but flow no longer with *health*, flow rather with *death* in the ſtream. Theſe very faculties, unleſs renewed and regulated by the influence of religion, muſt be our preſent miſery, and will prove our everlaſting curſe.——"The ſoul," you ſay, "is rational, "is eternal." And do not even the devils poſſeſs the powers of reaſon? Is not *their* exiſtence alſo of an endleſs duration? Yet are they, of all creatures, the moſt execrable and the moſt miſerable.

You call the human ſoul the offspring of the DEITY. And you call it properly. Muſt we not then adopt the prophet's exclamation, "*How art thou fallen, O Lucifer,* "*ſon of the morning* †*!* How art thou degenerated, O "man, ſon of the MOST HIGH! Thy glorious origi-"nal ſerves only to ſet forth, with more glaring evidence, "thy deplorable apoſtaſy."

Capable, you add, of reſembling its MAKER. This, I acknowledge, is a valuable prerogative. In this the infernal ſpirits have no ſhare. But this capacity will always lie dormant, will never awaken into act, never be eſtabliſhed in habit, unleſs almighty GRACE intervene.

Ther. The moſt celebrated philoſophers of antiquity, frequently exhort their readers to *follow nature*, as a certain guide to true excellence.——Many eloquent writers of our own country enlarge upon the *dignity* of human nature; and from this topic derive very forcible arguments, for a correſpondent dignity both of ſentiment and behaviour.—Upon what can thoſe principles of the ancient ſages, and of our later moraliſts, be founded?

Aſp. Indeed, *Theron*, I am at a loſs to tell. If they have any foundation, it is merely imaginary; not laid in truth, nor confirmed by experience.——According to my apprehenſion, they invert the order of things. They take that for a *poſtulatum*, which ought to be ranked among the *deſiderata*; and make an axiom of a mere figment.

Had man continued as he was created, to act according to nature, and according to the law of GOD, would have been one and the ſame thing. For which reaſon, we find no precepts of religion, no delineation of morality, given to *Adam* in paradiſe. Becauſe religion and morality were engraven on his heart; or rather, they reſulted from the very bent and tendency of his perfect frame.——But ſince the fall it is quite otherwiſe.

Ther. Have not many of the ancient worthies been *living confutations* of your opinion? wiſe philoſophers, judicious lawgivers, and ſteady miniſters of juſtice? their deſires refined, their affections benevolent, their whole conduct upright?

Aſp. I cannot forbear wondering, that you ſhould inſtance in lawgivers and miniſters of juſtice. Since the very inſtitution of their office *preſuppoſes* the depravity of mankind. Was human nature agitated by no irregular or vitious inclinations, the barrier of laws would be as needleſs in civil ſocieties, as the vaſt banks of *Holland* are needleſs in our upland counties.

But this, you will ſay, is a digreſſive obſervation. Your queſtion requires a poſitive anſwer. And it is eaſy to anſwer, That the painting is beyond the life. If my author has been too free with the *dark*, my friend has been too laviſh of the *glittering* colours.—Thoſe famous men might aim, perhaps, at the excellency you deſcribe. Not one of them came up to the mark.——Or, ſuppoſe they did, this would not invalidate my tenet.

Ther. This not invalidate your tenet! Then demonſtration carries no conviction.

Aſp. Pray, who is your greateſt favourite, among all the renowned perſons of antiquity?

Ther. Socrates.—He ſtands at the head of the claſs; and was, indiſputably, the wiſeſt and the beſt of the Heathen world.

Aſp. I think ſo too.——Be pleaſed, however, to recollect the ſtory of the *phyſiognomiſt*, who pretended to diſcover the diſpoſition of the mind by the caſt of the countenance. The profeſſor of this occult ſcience undertook, you know, to exerciſe his ſkill upon *Socrates*; and pronounced him, after an examination of his features, laſcivious, paſſionate and moroſe.——This judgment, ſo extravagantly wide of the truth, was bringing a ſtorm of ridicule and reſentment upon the poor fortune-teller. When the ingenuous philoſopher interpoſed, and owned the deſcription to be exactly true. That *ſuch* was his *natural* temper; and if his converſation had been of a different turn, it was owing to the aids of philoſophy.——So that, even in your moſt finiſhed * character, there was no *innate* dignity. All was *adventitious*.

Ther. If corruption was derived unto all men from

* See Mr *Howe*'s treatiſe, entitled, *The living temple.*

† Iſ. xiv. 12.

* Though I love and admire the character of *Socrates*, yet I cannot approve the whole of his conduct. One thing which gives me particular offence is, the *habitual* practice of *ſwearing*, which occurs in all his conferences with his pupils. Μα τον Δια, Νη Δι, or ſome ſuch appeal to the DEITY, is uſed, not only in every diſcourſe, but almoſt in every page; and that upon the moſt *unneceſſary* occaſions.—I have often wondered, that ſo polite a writer as *Xenophon* ſhould admit this flagrant impropriety into his dialogues. Which beſides its *irreligious* air, is ſomewhat like the *crambe repetita*; and recurs, and recurs, and recurs, till it is really tireſome. But more I wonder, that his excellent maſter ſhould ſuffer the ſanction of an oath to become ſo *trivial*, and the honour of his *Jupiter* ſo *cheap*.

This proves the deplorable *blindneſs* of human reaſon; which could miſtake ſo notorious a profanation of the divine name, for a genteel embelliſhment of ſpeech;—it ſhews us, likewiſe, our extreme need of that *revealed* law, which, among other refined precepts, unknown to the religion of nature, injoins, *Above all things, ſwear not*;—and, *Thou ſhalt not take the name of the LORD thy GOD in vain.*

their

eir forefather *Adam*, methinks all ſhould be equally rrupt. But this is contrary to known fact. Some we naturally loving and lovely, gentle in their manners, d ſubject to no inordinate appetites.

Aſp. Some perſons may be of *more compoſed*, or, if you eaſe, of *leſs diſſolute* manners, than the generality of her people. Thanks to a better temperature of their nſtitution, or a more watchful care in their education. —But ſhew me the unregenerate man, who is ſub- ct to *no* inordinate appetites. One vile affection may eck another, or a ſenſe of decency may hold the curb on all. But it is one thing, to have the wild beaſt in e heart chained; another, to have him expelled, or the n transformed into a lamb.

Ther. Have we not often obſerved heroic courage, nd a generoſity of ſpirit, where the education has been one of the ſtricteſt? To what can we aſcribe theſe udable qualities, but to the innate virtue and nobleneſs the temper, working without any auxiliary ſuc- ours?

Aſp. Virtue, *Theron*, is a *complete* aſſemblage, not ſome *disjointed* ſhreds, of laudable qualities. Thoſe you men- on, if not accompanied with the whole circle of ami- le accompliſhments, are no more to be called virtue, an two or three ſcattered fragments of an edifice, are be honoured with the appellation of an houſe.—How ften are thoſe very perſons, with all the fortitude, ſlaves ignoble pleaſures, or in bondage to the baſeſt luſts? moſt infallible indication, that they have no *uniform* enerosity, nor any *real* courage.—Deſire of fame may rompt to many ſuch acts, as *dazzle* the ſuperficial eye; hich yet are far, very far from *genuine* virtue.

Ther. Do you then attribute the *Grecian* politeneſs, nd the high *Roman* ſpirit, all the gallant actions of their eroes and generals, to a deſire of fame?

Aſp. There is reaſon to ſuſpect, that they derived their rigin from ſome improper motive. And no motive as more artfully inſtilled, or more aſſiduouſly cheriſh- d, than the ſpirit of ambition.——View their crowns, heir ſtatues, their triumphal ſolemnities.——Read their rators, their hiſtorians, their poets.——The former were he *ſchool*, the latter were the *maſters*, to inculcate this rand leſſon.

Let us conſider the *Romans* a little more attentively; nd not amidſt the dregs of their community, but in heir very beſt ages; when their republic ſubſiſted, and heir *Scipios* flouriſhed. Many great and ſhining deeds were undoubtedly performed. But did they ſpring rom a *reverential regard* to the Supreme BEING; rom obedience to his will, or zeal for his honour?

If this principle ſhould be thought too refined, did hey proceed from a *love* to their *fellow-creatures?* In caſe neither of theſe motives * actuated their conduct, it can never be placed to the account of virtue.—Had benevo- ence been their leading principle, why ſuch *inhumanity* o *Carthage?* Why muſt that opulent city be laid in aſhes, and her numerous citizens be put to the ſword? Were they enemies to mankind, or a nuiſance in the world? You well know, that they were only too in- duſtrious, and too powerful. By which means, they would be in a condition to eclipſe the magnificence of the *Roman* name, and diſpute the prize of ſovereignty with the *Roman* ſtate. For this crime,—a crime, in ambition's eye, abſolutely inexcuſable,—even *Cato*'s upright ſoul ſhall doom them to utter deſtruction, and *Scipio*'s gentle hand ſhall execute the horrid decree.

Is *this* virtue? Does virtue ravage countries, from the mere wantonneſs of pride, or luſt of pre-eminence? Does virtue deſtroy millions of lives, only to aggrandize a particular people, or extend the dominion of ſome favourite empire? If *this* were virtue, *Brutus* thought too honourably of her character, when he termed her an *empty name*.——I am ſure, my *Theron* has juſter notions of things. He needs not be informed, that true virtue, far from perſonating the rapacious harpy, acts as a father to others, as a father to all; and, like HIM, who is both its pattern and its author, *goes about doing good.*

Ther. The moſt elegant cane, if plunged into yonder baſon, while the waters are curled by the breeze, will appear both crooked and coarſe. I cannot but think, the accuſers of human nature examine her ſtate with a *prejudiced* underſtanding; which has the ſame perverſe effect upon their judgment, as thoſe ruffled waves have upon the ſight.——Or elſe, they contemplate her condition with a *melancholy* mind; which, like a jaundiced eye, gives every object a diſtempered aſpect, darkens the chearful, diſcolours the beautiful, and hangs even the ſun in mourning.

Aſp. Rather let this be the compariſon to illuſtrate our point.——View the meaneſt piece of earth, through the *priſmatic* glaſs; and it will appear, not beautiful only, but perfectly ſplendid. Remove the deluſory medium, and all the ſophiſticated finery vaniſhes. The indigo, the orange, the violet are gone; and leave nothing to be ſeen, but a rude unornamented lump of clay.——So, if we conſider human nature according to the *partial* repreſentations of ſelf-love, or contemplate it in the *flattering* mirror of ſome popular writings, it may ſeem regular, holy, excellent. But if we behold it under the light, the unerring light of revelation, its fancied charms diſappear; it ſtands clothed with deformity; and is a ſpectacle of commiſeration, if not of horror.

Ther. What reaſon have you to father ſuch a notion upon the ſacred writings?—The ſacred writings inform us, that man was made *after the image of GOD.* This, ſure, could not be ſo diſhonourable and depraved a pattern, as your diſcourſe would inſinuate.

Aſp. Far, very far from a diſhonourable pattern! The image of GOD is the *conſummate ſtandard* of all perfection.—In conformity to this admirable exemplar, our firſt parents were created; and in this admirable condition they continued, till by tranſgreſſion they *fell;* fell from the moſt holy and happy ſtate, into guilt, condemnation, and ruin.——Therefore when this fatal cataſtrophe had taken place, the ſacred hiſtorian varies his ſtyle; and with a remarkable peculiarity, as well as propriety of ſpeech, ſays, *Adam begat a ſon in his* * ; not in the DIVINE *likeneſs*. That every reader may advert to this melancholy, but important truth, it is marked more ſtrongly ſtill, it is inforced by a very emphatical repetition. *After his own image* †, *Moſes* adds; as contradiſtinguiſhed to the image of GOD, mentioned in a preceding verſe. Which expreſſions are evidently intended to denote the difference between the ſtate in which *Adam* was created, and *Seth* was begotten.

Ther. Pray, let me have a ſuccinct, but full account of this tragical ſtory; ſince all your orthodox divines lay ſuch a mighty ſtreſs upon the doctrine of the *fall.*

Aſp. GOD, having formed the human body out of the ground, animated the ſtructure with a living ſoul; and tranſcribed upon this ſoul the image of his bleſſed SELF. All was light in the underſtanding;

* A zeal for the honour of GOD, and a concern for the good of our fellow-creatures, are the true ſources of virtue, 1 Cor. x. 24. 31. When our actions flow not from theſe principles, reaſon will put a *query* upon them, and revelation will *expunge* them from the liſt of virtues.—They may be ſpecious in themſelves; they may be coſtly to the performer; they may even be ſerviceable to others: but can no more deſerve the title of *virtue*, than the activity of our fun-fire officers, in extinguiſhing the flames on ſome inſured houſe, can merit the name of *charity*.

* This is affirmed, not of *Cain*, but of *Seth*, the moſt excellent of *Adam*'s children, and father of the holy ſeed.

† בדמותו כצלמו Gen. v. 3. *Corruptus corruptum.*

all

all was rectitude in the will; and nothing but harmony in the affections.——Man, thus endowed, was placed in the delightful garden of *Eden*: and furnished with every accommodation, which was necessary to support his being, or desirable to gratify his senses.——He was constituted lord of this lower creation; and, amidst numberless indulgencies, received only *one—easy—negative* command, *not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*.——From this he was to abstain, as a pledge of his subjection, and as an exercise of his obedience. Bliss and immortality were to be the reward of duty; misery and death the punishment of disobedience. *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die* *, was the sanction of the divine law.

How equitable! how gracious the terms! Yet neither the goodness of GOD could induce him to keep them, nor the authority of GOD deter him from breaking them.——Unreasonably discontented even with such advantageous circumstances, and presumptuously aspiring to be like the MOST HIGH, he hearkened to the suggestions of the evil spirit.——In a word he violated the precept, and incurred the penalty. GOD was just, and man was undone. He lost his uprightness †; became subject to mortality; and, as the nervous original expresses it, *died the death*.

Ther. True; he became subject to many bodily infirmities, and to the necessity of final dissolution.——But what has this sentence, or what have these sufferings to do with *your* notion of universal depravity in the mind? The death which the almighty LEGISLATOR threatened, can be opposed only to the life which the almighty CREATOR gave.

Asp. Be it so.—The CREATOR gave, and man possessed a life, incomparably more excellent than that which the pulse imparts, or the beasts enjoy. He possessed a *divine life*; which, according to the definition of the apostle, consisted *in knowledge, in righteousness, and true holiness* ‡. This,—which was the distinguishing glory, and the supreme felicity of his nature,—this, alas! was extinct.

His understanding, originally enlightened with wisdom, was clouded and overwhelmed with ignorance.—His heart, once filled with religious veneration, and warmed with heavenly love, became alienated from GOD his MAKER.——His passions and appetites, instead of moving on, in orderly array, according to the beauteous measures of truth and duty, grew mutinous; shook off the government of reason; and ran wild into the most lawless extravagancies.—In a word, the whole moral frame was unhinged, disjointed, broken.

Ther. What cause have you to suppose, that all this misery was either included in the threatening or introduced by the fall?

Asp. The *ignorance* of fallen *Adam* was palpable. Witness that absurd attempt to hide himself from the eye of OMNISCIENCE, among the trees of the garden.—His *aversion* to the all-gracious GOD was equally plain. Otherwise he would never have fled from his MAKER; but rather have hasted, and on the wings of desire, into the place of the divine manifestation.

A strange variety of *disorderly passions* ‖ were evidently predominant in his breast.——*Pride*; for he refuses to acknowledge his guilt, though he cannot deny own the fact.——*Ingratitude*; for he obliquely upbraids the CREATOR with his gift, as though it had been a snare, rather than a blessing; *The woman whom thou gavest me.—Want of natural affection*; for he endeavours to cast all the blame upon the weaker vessel; and to acquit his obnoxious self, by impeaching the wife of his bosom.—The female criminal acts the same unnatural part; neither takes shame to herself; nor gives glory to GOD, nor puts up a single petition for pardon.

As all these disasters ensued upon the breach of the commandment; they furnish us, I think, with the best *key* to open the meaning of the prohibitory sanction. They prove beyond any argument, that spiritual death and all its consequences, were comprehended in the extent of the threatening.

Ther. How could *one* act of disobedience produce such destructive effects? erase the fair image of the GODHEAD; and stamp the monster, stamp the very devil in its stead?—and so *small* an act of disobedience too!

Asp. The *prohibition*, if you please, was small, not so the transgression. It was committed against the clearest knowledge of duty, and the strongest obligations, to obedience. It argued ingratitude for the richest favours, and unbelief of the most solemn declarations. It was an act of the most horrid presumption in the creature, and of the most impious rebellion against the CREATOR.

As to the smallness, or rather the *gentle* and *benign* import of the command, this aggravates beyond measure the crime of disobedience. Alluding to the words once addressed to the *Syrian* general, we may justly expostulate,—"O thou *Adam*, if thy LORD had bid thee do "some great thing *, in submission to his high authority, "and out of gratitude for his unspeakable goodness, "oughtst thou not to have done it? How much more "when he says to thee?—Freely eat of all, except this "single tree. *Thousands, thousands* of honours, privileges, "and gifts be thine, only *one* acknowledgment of thy "subjection, mine; and that the *easiest* which thy heart "can wish, or even thy fancy conceive."

You ask, *How* could one act of disobedience produce such destructive effects?—I answer, the *reality* of the fact, in numberless instances of material nature, is plain to a demonstration; while the *manner* of operation remains an impenetrable secret. Every child perceives the former; *Newton* himself is at a loss for the latter.—For which reason, I have always thought it better to believe what GOD has taught, than attempt to explain what GOD has concealed. Let us forego this curious, perhaps fruitless inquiry; and substitute a remark, which naturally arises from the subject, and may considerably edify our minds.

Ther. Edify! Is it possible to render this dishonourable and afflictive notion *edifying*? Can any generous fruit spring from such a penurious soil?

Asp. Samson, I believe, had no expectation of finding any thing valuable in the relics of his slain lion. But, to his agreeable disappointment, *there was honey in the carcase* †. If our doctrine appear *ghastly* as the one, it may yield a benefit *sweet* as the other.

From hence we may learn (what, when rightly learned

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* Gen. ii. 17.

† ——— *Innocence, that as a veil*
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone,
Just confidence, and native righteousness.
MILT. book IX. 1054.

‡ Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10.

‖ *Milton*, speaking of the unhappy pair, and describing the consequences of their fall, says,

——— *Nor only tears*
Rain'd at their eyes: but high winds within
Began to rise: high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook sore
Their inward state of mind: calm region once,
And full of peace: now tost'd and turbulent!
For, understanding rul'd not, and the will
Heard not her lore: but, in subjection now
To sensual appetite, who from beneath
Usurping, over sovereign reason claim'd
Superior sway.
Book IX. 1121.

* 2 Kings v. 13. † Judg. xiv. 8.

earned, is more ſerviceable than all the ſciences) the *exceſſive malignity* of ſin.——When *volcanos* open their tremendous jaws, and diſgorge a fiery inundation, they confine their fury to a ſingle territory.—When *Famine* ſifts her mildewed hand, and deſtroys the ſupports of animal life, ſhe is content with ruining a kingdom or a nation.——When *War* drenches his ſword in blood, or the *Peſtilence* impregnates the air with poiſon; they alſo, even they obſerve ſome limits, and never make the whole compaſs of nature the ſcene of their ravages.—— But *Sin* levelled its blow at the whole human race. SIN poured contagion, and ſpread deſtruction, through *all* countries, and *all* ages. One *ſingle* act of ſin brought confuſion and a curſe upon the material, and miſeries, *infinite millions* of miſeries, on the rational world *.—How then ſhould we fear this *moſt pernicious* of all evils! with what carefulneſs guard againſt its inſidious allurements! with what reſolution fly from its killing careſſes!

Ther. I muſt obſerve, that you take for granted, what remains to be proved. For ſuppoſing your account true with regard to *Adam*; yet how does this affect his children? Why muſt all his poſterity be contaminated, becauſe their forefather has played the prodigal! Such a heavy charge againſt the whole body of mankind will not be admitted, without very cogent proofs.

Aſp. The proofs are cogent; perhaps irrefragable.—Reaſon offers to turn evidence in the caſe. Reaſon, in concurrence with revelation, demands, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean* †? If the fountain be polluted, how can the ſtreams be pure? and if the root is corrupt, 'tis impoſſible to conceive, how the branches ſhould be ſound, or the fruit good ‡.

The ſcriptural teſtimonies are almoſt innumerable. They pour their evidence from every quarter; and conſtitute, not two or three only, but a whole cloud of witneſſes.—*GOD made man upright*, ſays the royal preacher; the human nature in its primitive ſtate was without any wrong bias. *But* at, and ever ſince the firſt tranſgreſſion, *they have found out* and followed *many* perverſe *inventions* ‖.

Ther. I don't deny, but multitudes of people, ſeduced by bad *example*, or betrayed by their own *inadvertency*, have departed from the rule of duty; have, as the wiſe man affirms, tried many fooliſh experiments to acquire happineſs, and deviſed as many idle excuſes for their folly. But this is no ſuch irrefragable proof, that they were *originally* bad. It only implies, that, not taking proper heed to their ways, they warped from their native uprightneſs. As yonder *tulips*, though perfectly beautiful at preſent, if not attended with the neceſſary cultivation, will degenerate into homely flowers; and, at length, be no better than tawdry weeds.

Aſp. No, my friend. Iniquity is not an adventitious thing, catched from example, or contracted by careleſſneſs. Theſe may increaſe, but theſe do not occaſion, the *moral malady*. A ſinful diſpoſition is as early as our being; the very mould in which all our faculties are caſt.——*David* bears very expreſs teſtimony to this humbling truth. *Behold!* (He ſets his *N. B.* upon the paſſage. 'Tis a ſad, but certain fact; ſuch as ſhould never depart from my memory, nor ever, be omitted in my confeſſions; and is much to be regarded by every reader). *I was ſhapen in wickedneſs, and in ſin did my mother conceive me* *. As though he had ſaid,—"Alas! "LORD, this crime, though extremely horrid, is but a "little part of my guilt. I have not only ſinned in prac-"tice, but I am totally and univerſally corrupt in my "very nature."

This he acknowledges, not to extenuate his offence, but to lay open his exceſſive vileneſs. And indeed it is not poſſible to form a *right judgment* of ourſelves, or to be *duly humbled* before *GOD*, unleſs we add the depravation of our nature to the tranſgreſſions of our life. Juſt as it is impoſſible to diſcern what monſtrous and voracious animals lie hid in the ocean, if we only glance an eye even upon the ſurface of the waters.

Ther. This, you know, was written by the royal penitent, under the pangs of ſevere remorſe. Does not a ſenſe of his enormous iniquity, together with the apprehenſion of divine wrath, make his hand ſhake, and lead him to *aggravate* features?—Or ſuppoſe it were true of the adulterous king, is it equally applicable to others, who have eſcaped ſuch groſs pollutions?

Aſp. It is no exaggerating draught, but a faithful delineation; and exactly repreſents every child of *Adam*.—It was written with the utmoſt deliberation; and therefore is introduced with that call for peculiar attention, *Behold!*——And, though *David* was ſcandalouſly criminal in his intrigue with the wife of *Uriah*, yet the *general* tenor of his life was not only irreproachable, but exemplary. Who ſo zealous for the houſe of his *GOD*, or ſo devoted an admirer of the divine word? His heart was an altar, ever flaming with heavenly love; and his tongue a trumpet, to ſound the praiſes of *JEHOVAH* through all generations.——And if *he* had reaſon to make this abaſing confeſſion, who is the perſon that can think himſelf aggrieved by ſharing in the imputation?

One of our moſt eminent martyrs †, when he heard of any malefactor condemned to ſuffer an ignominious death, uſed to lay his hand upon his breaſt, and ſay,—"The ſeeds of all thoſe villanies, which brought that "unhappy wretch to the gibbet, were ſown *here*. And, "if they have not ſprung up into the ſame deteſtable "deeds, unto divine grace, unto divine grace *alone*, be "all the glory!"

Ther. Your martyrs had honeſt hearts, but not always the cleareſt heads. I admire their zeal, and reverence their memories; but I can no more receive their opinion as an oracle, than I can be perſuaded to worſhip their relics.

Aſp. I have no intention to palm Popery on my friend, nor any deſire to calumniate the human ſpecies. If it be diſingenuous and ſinful to aſperſe a particular character, how much more unjuſtifiable to traduce our nature in general!

My account, dark and diſguſtful as it is, ſtand confirmed by a higher authority than any private opinion. It is confirmed from an univerſal *ſurvey* of mankind, taken by the eye of the *CREATOR* himſelf, and left upon record in the books of revelation. *The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand, and ſeek after GOD.*——What is the reſult of this grand inquiry? It muſt, without all peradventure, be infallibly true: becauſe *GOD*'s inſpection is too keen to be deluded, and his judgment too impartial to be biaſſed. This is the report, made by the infinitely-wiſe OB-

* St *Chryſoſtom* calls the firſt tranſgreſſion, ἡ πανὸς λυμαινομένη ἁμαρτία. Which is, in a manner, tranſlated by *Milton*, who, ſpeaking of the ſame tragical act, ſays,

——*It*
Brought death into the world, and all our woe.

† Job. xiv. 4.

‡ *Milton* has anticipated *Theron*'s objection; and, in *Adam*'s ſoliloquy, very judiciouſly, ſolved it.

——*Ah! why ſhould all mankind,*
For one man's fault, thus guiltleſs be condemn'd,
If guiltleſs? But from me what can proceed
But all corrupt, both body and mind deprav'd;
Not to do only, but to will the ſame
With me? How can they acquitted ſtand
In ſight of GOD? Book X. 822.

‖ Eccl. vii. 29.

* Pſ. l. li. 5. † Mr *Bradford*.

SERVER: *They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy* *; *there is none that doth good, no not one.*

Ther. This, I apprehend, is the character of those besotted creatures, those most egregious of all fools, *who say, There is no GOD.* To them the *psalm* relates, and to them the abandoned character is appropriated. They have it, if I may so speak, *cum privilegio.*

Asp. It is meant rather of practical, than of speculative Atheists; who say, not *explicitly* with their mouths, but *implicitly* in their hearts, There is no GOD; who live, as if there was no ALL-SEEING, to take cognisance of their present conduct; no Supreme JUDGE, to call them to a future reckoning.—And I dare appeal to yourself, though perhaps the fondest of fathers, whether this instance of *foolishness is not bound upon the hearts of our children* †? nay, whether it be not natural to us all, both in youth and manhood, to forget our CREATOR?

In this case, *Theron*, there is no monopoly. Your right and mine are too strongly established by experience, and too clearly expressed in the preceding scripture, to admit of any controversy.——If there were *any* that understood—They are *all* gone out of the way—There is *none* that doth good—No, not *one.*—Could any conveyancer in *Europe* have contrived a form of words, more fully to ascertain our unhappy title?

Ther. There may be some texts in scripture, which seem to countenance your assertion. But these refer to the worst of men, in the worst of times. And can you, with any justice, ascribe the properties of a few reprobates to the whole species?

Asp. This very passage, and others of a like import, are adopted by St *Paul*, and applied both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*; with this professed design, *that* every *mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be found guilty* ‡ *before GOD.* Which evinces, I should think, beyond all doubt, the *universality* of its extent.

If to the universality, we add the *antiquity* of this fact, it will bear the two grand characteristics of truth. Far from being a novel opinion, it was received as a maxim, in the early age of *Job. What is man, that he should* pretend to *be clean? and he that is born of a woman, that he should* presume to *be righteous?* righteous before the infinitely JUST and HOLY ONE! *Behold! he putteth no trust in his saints,* though the most exalted of all intelligent beings. *Yea, the heavens,* those brightest parts of the material creation, *are not clean in his sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man* ‖*? who drinketh iniquity;* though loathsome to GOD, and worse than poison to his own soul; yet drinketh it *like water*; without any hesitation or the least fear, with an eager and profuse delight.

This, you will observe, was alledged in a dispute, carried on with no small vehemency? yet is admitted, on all hands, as unexceptionably true.——Be pleased also to take notice, that the charge is not confined to some very notorious sinners, but is laid against the whole body of mankind. Whatever figure they may make, each in his own conceit; they are all described in the word of GOD,—as *beings*, insatiably athirst after evil; —from *objects*, that we cannot endure to behold, or cannot behold without abhorrence *.——*Such* is man by nature! People must have eyes very different from mine, to discern any *dignity* in this draught.

Ther. As to innate dignity, we will let it pass. But this I must insist upon, and several writers of the first repute are on my side,—That we enter the stage of life, in a state of *indifference* either to good or evil:—That the affections are like a balance, nicely poised, and preponderating neither one way nor the other:—The whole soul, like a sheet of fair paper, is equally susceptible of strait or crooked lines; and will as readily receive the amiable features of an angel, as the hideous deformity of a devil.

Asp. With regard to your first illustration,—The simile, I think, confutes the sentiment. For to be *in suspence* where we shall love the LORD our GOD, the giver of all good, and the source of all perfection; this, surely, must be condemned as an irreligious temper.—This is a criminal halting between GOD and *Baal.*—A neutrality, which is no better than hostility.

I fear, the writers you mention, pay but little deference to the inspired volume. Our escutcheon is very differently blazoned in that office of spiritual heraldry. *A transgressor from the womb* †, is one of our hereditary titles. Transgressors we are by strong internal propensity, even before we transgress in outward act.

Observe the young *hawthorn* plants, which have unfolded their green leaves, in yonder nursery; but have scarce learned to spread the gay blossom. Is there in those an equal aptitude to produce the luscious juicy grape, or their own coarse and husky berry? By no means. They will (unless grafted with some generous cyon) *certainly, universally, constantly* bear the same harsh fruit with their parent-tree.——So certainly will the human mind, if not renewed by the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, branch out into ungodly tempers, and bring forth wicked practices.

Ther. The nobleman, mentioned by *Xenophon* ‡, when overcome by an alluring temptation, devised, for his excuse, the notion of two souls; one that inclined him to vice; another that prompted him to virtue. This was a moderate *caricatura* ‖, compared with my friend's. He will allow nothing regular or graceful in the human heart.——You have metamorphosed the masterpiece of the creation into such a deformed object, as may justly render him a terror to himself.—Can there be a grosser libel upon the CREA-

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* *Psal.* xiv. 2. 3. The two original words סר נאלחו are metaphorical expressions; taken from—*wines*, that are become *sour*, —and *meats*, that are in a state of *putrefaction.* I believe, it is impossible to find images, more strongly expressive of a *total* depravity, and of the utmost degeneracy.

† *Prov.* xxii. 15. Let none think, that by *foolishness* the sacred writer means only those *silly* tricks, which discover a weakness of understanding in children. *Solomon*'s fool is not the *idiot*, but the *sinner*; and the folly stigmatized throughout the *Proverbs*, denotes, not a failure in the intellectual, but in the religious and moral character.

The words, in this passage, are peculiarly forcible. *Foolishness is in the heart*; implanted in the very nature; sunk deep into the inmost faculties: and not only sunk deep, but adhere almost inseparably: קשור is *wrapt, tied*, and *bound*: twines like the ivy, and is rooted like the oak.

‡ *Rom.* iii. 19. Υπόδικος γένηται, "May *become* guilty," does not so exactly answer the scope of the context, neither does it so solidly establish the apostle's argument, as "may be *found* guilty;" be fully convicted, and apparently liable to most just condemnation. —Those things were written of old, and were quoted by St *Paul*, not to *render* men criminal, but to *prove* them so.

‖ *Job* xv. 14. 15. 16. The immaculate purity of the blessed GOD, and the utter depravity of fallen man, are points of so great importance in the scriptural system of divinity, that they are inculcated no less than *three times*, within the compass of this single book; and by much the *same* noble contrast of striking images; *chap.* iv. 17. 18. xv. 14. 15. 16. xxv. 4. 5. 6.

* The original words are תועב ומאוס—One is used to signify that *abominable* practice, which the *Ægyptians* could not bear to see, *Exod.* vii. ver. 22. *Heb. Bib.* ver. 26. *Engl. Bib.*—The other denotes an object too *squalid* to be viewed without loathing.

† *Is.* xlviii. 8. A truth so apparent and undeniable, that *Seneca* could not but *discern* it, though he was an *unenlightened* Heathen; could not but *acknowledge* it, though he was one of the *proud Stoic* sect. *Hac conditione* nati sumus, *animalia obnoxia non paucioribus animi quam corporis morbis.* De ira. lib. II. c. 9.

‡ *Cyropæd.* lib. VI.

‖ A term used by the *Italian* painters, to signify a resemblance *horrid*, or *ridiculous.*

TOR,

TOR, or a greater diſcouragement to our fellow-creatures?

Aſp. If this be a diſtorted piece, what will you call the following deſcription? GOD *ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great upon the earth; and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually* *.—— This, perhaps, may be reckoned a more monſtrous drawing ſtill. Yet it came from *that* hand, which painted the canopy of the ſkies, and touched all the pictures of nature into ſuch inimitable perfection.

Pray, let us examine the moſt diſtinguiſhing features in this draught.——Not barely the works of his hand, or the words of his tongue, but the *imaginations of his heart*, are evil. The contagion has ſpread itſelf through the inner man. It has tainted the ſeat of his principles, and the ſource of his actions †.——Is there not, you will ſay, ſome mixture of good? No; they are *only* evil. There is no hopeful tendency. Not ſo much as a little leaven of piety, that may have a chance to diffuſe itſelf, and meliorate the whole lump.——But are there no lucid intervals? No happy moments, when virtue gains the aſcendency? None: he is only evil *continually*. The uſurpation of ſin is total, and its tyranny perpetual.

What I have advanced, therefore, is no libel upon the CREATOR's benignity: becauſe it is the very echo of his own determination.——Neither is it ſo properly diſcouraging, as humbling and alarming to our fellow-creatures. *Humbling*, to make us ſenſible of our ruin; *alarming*, to make us deſirous of a recovery.

Ther. Is not the deſcription which you have produced, peculiar to the men of that wicked generation; whoſe guilt was as unparallelled, as their puniſhment?

Aſp. It is applicable both to them and their ſucceſſors. The wiſdom of GOD *repeats* the charge, and fixes it upon the race, which ſurvived the flood ‡. The depravity of human nature continued, nor could the waters of an univerſal deluge purge it away. So deep, alas! is the ſtain, and ſo incorrigible the virulency, of original corruption, that it will yield to nothing;—to nothing will it yield, but to the *waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the* HOLY GHOST ‖. Till this takes place, every heart of man muſt wear the prophet's ſtigmatizing motto, *Deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked.*

Ther. This paſſage, I am informed, is not rightly tranſlated; eſpecially in the *laſt* expreſſion. The *Hebrew* original does not bear ſo hard upon the human character, as the *Engliſh* verſion.

Aſp. You allow then, that the heart is *deceitful*. And of this we have a glaring proof in the conduct of *Hazael*. He thought it impoſſible, that he ſhould ever perpetrate ſuch horrid barbarities, as the prophet foretaw. *Is thy ſervant a dog, that he ſhould do this great thing* §? Yes, *Hazael*; however thou mayeſt imagine thyſelf gentle as a lamb, thou art fierce as a dog, and ſavage as a tyger.——Which was moſt terribly demonſtrated by the event.

Suppoſe we tranſlate the other word ſomewhat more accurately. The little alteration will be of leſs ſervice to your cauſe. Inſtead of deſperately wicked, you may, if you pleaſe, read *deplorably diſordered* *. This is the exact import of the phraſe.——It is a metaphor derived from a very diſtempered body. In which, the whole head is ſick, and the whole heart faint. *From the crown of* whoſe *head*, *to the ſole of* whoſe *feet*, there is nothing but conſuming diſeaſe, and enfeebling languors †.—— The rules of civility may ſet a ſpecious varniſh on the converſation. But until grace, ſanctifying grace adminiſters the remedy, the moſt civilized heart will be like the pale emaciated cheek, that is poorly enlivened with paint.

Ther. What ſay the writers of the New Teſtament? Is not *their* way of thinking more liberal and benign?—If human nature were ſo *hideous* an aſpect, under the legal diſpenſation; ſince the coming of our LORD, and the publiſhing of his goſpel, one may expect an improved and more pleaſing face of things.

Aſp. Human nature in every period of time, and under every diſpenſation of religion, is ſtill the *ſame*. It was the SPIRIT of CHRIST who indited the Old Teſtament, and he cannot vary from himſelf, in the declarations of the New.

I am very much inclined to believe, that all the *bodily* diſeaſes, which our divine PHYSICIAN healed, during his abode on earth, were ſo many emblematical repreſentations of *ſpiritual* diſorders, which, like certain family-diſtempers, may be ſaid to run in the blood of all mankind.——Will you give me leave, *Theron*, to explain myſelf? I don't like to ingroſs the diſcourſe. Yet I would willingly enlarge upon this ſubject.

Ther. By all means. The laws of argument, ſeparate from the indulgencies of friendſhip, give you a warrant to urge, whatever may ſupport your cauſe.—Beſides, I ſhall be glad to hear your ſentiments upon a point ſo curious.

Aſp. The poor *leper*, covered with noiſome ſores, is the very picture of a *polluted ſinner*. Was the one, for his contagious impurities, ſeparated from the ſociety of of his fellow-citizens? So ſhall the other, for his abominable uncleanneſs, be baniſhed from the beatific preſence, unleſs he be cleanſed by the blood, and juſtified by the righteouſneſs of *JESUS*.

You pity the condition of that unhappy creature, who was born *blind*. His eyes rolled, but rolled in vain, to find the dawning ray. Such is the benighted ſtate of the human mind, till almighty *GOODNESS* command the ſcales of ignorance to fall off, and pour heavenly day through all the intellectual faculties. Then, and not till then, we begin to know the holineſs, the juſtice, the adorable excellencies of GOD.——We ſee the ſublime purity of his law, and the extreme depravity of our own hearts.——We are brought acquainted with the tranſcendent glories of our REDEEMER's perſon, and apprehend that moſt comfortable myſtery of his ſubſtitution in our ſtead. We diſcern the ineffable perfection of his merits, and the divinely-rich freeneſs of his grace ‡. Truths, incomparably more delightful to the ſoul, than all the delectable ſcenes of creation are to the ſight.

The paralytic's *enervated* limbs too truly repreſent the impotence of our nature. Was he unable to grind at a mill, to run in a race, or to turn himſelf on his bed?

* Gen. vi. 5.

† The original is very nice in its ſtructure, and no leſs emphatical in its meaning.—לב The *heart*, or grand principle—מחשבות the *thoughts* of the heart, or the various actings of that principle.—יצר the *imagination* of the thoughts, or the produce and reſult of thoſe actings; namely, deſires and affections, counſels and purpoſes.—Not one, a few only, or the greateſt part, but *all* theſe are evil.

‡ *Gen.* viii. 21. Where, I think, the particle כי is uſed in the *adverſative*, not the *cauſal* ſignification; and ſhould be rendered *though*, rather than *for*.—Where it ſeems likewiſe, that the forbearance of the righteous GOD, is aſcribed to the great atonement; typified by *Noah*'s burnt-offerings, and expreſſed by St *Paul* in his epiſtle to the *Epheſians*; who probably alludes to this paſſage. *The* LORD ſmelled a ſweet ſavour, *and the LORD ſaid in his heart, I will not again curſe the earth any more for man's ſake*, though *the imagination of man's heart be evil from his youth*, Eph. v. 2.

‖ Tit. iii. 5.

§ 2 Kings viii. 13.

* Jer. xvii. 3. שגיו

† *Iſ.* i. 6. Agreeable to this doctrine, and conſonant to this metaphor, is the confeſſion of our liturgy, *There is no health in us.*

‡ This, and the preceding particulars, are leſſons of the laſt importance in the *Chriſtian* ſchool. The knowledge of them deſerves to be moſt ſolicitouſly ſought, both by attentive contemplation, and by earneſt prayer. For to know them, is to be *truly wiſe*; to be influenced by them, is to be *ſubſtantially happy*.

bed? So unable are we to fight the good fight of faith, to exercise the graces of Christianity, or even to turn ourselves unto GOD.——Do not *you*, my friend, experience something of this inability? For *my* part, I must lay my hand on my breast, and daily, hourly, confess, "*The palsy is here.* Though not altogether dead in sin, "(blessed be CHRIST JESUS, and his quickening "SPIRIT!) yet how languid is my zeal, how enfeebled "my industry, in the great affair of everlasting salva- "tion!—I would fain believe, and with a full assurance "of faith, the promises of the unchangeable *JEHOVAH.* "But how often do I stagger through unbelief!——I "would fain love, and with the warmest gratitude, my "ever-merciful and most beneficent GOD. But oh! "what coldness benumbs my affections!——I wish to "be humble in every thought, heavenly in all my de- "sires, and wholly resigned to the divine will. But, alas! "my sufficiency for these things is like the *flaccid* sinew, "or the *withered* arm."

It would be endless to particularize all the maladies, which were emblems of our misery, and the triumphs of our LORD's power. Let me only remark,—That their bodies were afflicted with a *single* disorder; our souls labour under a *complication* of evils.——They *felt* their affliction, and were desirous, importunately desirous of relief. We are, till awakened from above, insensible of our calamitous case. We add, to all our other indispositions, a stupefying lethargy, or an extravagant delirium.

Ther. Such allegorical expositions of scripture are pretty enough. But I presume, you yourself cannot reckon them *demonstrative.* For my own part, I must appeal from the surmises of fancy, to the verdict of reason.

Asp. I cannot think, that the allegorical sense, when *soberly* introduced, is unworthy our regard, or without its weight. However, I have no design to preclude your appeal.——Will the avowed, will the reiterated decision of an apostle, satisfy my friend, and be admitted as the verdict of reason?—St *Paul* has declared of himself, *In me, that is, in my flesh*, or unrenewed nature, *dwelleth no good* *; no good temper, nor so much as any good desire.——Elsewhere he affirms, that *the carnal mind*, or unregenerate soul, *is not subject to the law of GOD*; nay, is an enemy, or rather *enmity* itself †,—against what? Against sin? That were a noble antipathy.——Against the world? That were a laudable disaffection.——No; but against GOD and his law. Amazing perverseness! to be enmity against GOD, who is boundless benignity, and consummate goodness. Enmity against his law, which is the transcript of his amiable perfections, and the faultless model of all virtue.

Ther. This, I suppose, is the character of *Saul* the *Pharisee*, not of *Paul* the apostle; descriptive of his condition, when he was "a blasphemer, a persecutor, "and injurious."

Asp. It relates not to himself alone, but is applicable to all who continue in a state of nature.—The blessed AUTHOR of our being, speaking of mankind in general, says, That *he is even flesh* ‡: mere flesh, altogether flesh; his very soul, and all its powers, are wholly inslaved to fleshly appetites.——The beneficent RESTORER of our happiness pronounces the same sentence, in the very same words: *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh* *; the faculties, which men receive by their natural birth, have a carnal bias; incline to nothing but sordid pleasures and ignoble pursuits.——Our SAVIOUR reinculcates the admonition, and illustrates it by a very remarkable allusion. You cannot forget his answer to a procrastinating disciple; *Let the dead bury their dead* †; intimating, that as many as are unsanctified by the *HOLY GHOST*, though possessed of an animal, are destitute of the divine life; are no more fit for the kingdom of heaven, for its converse or its joys, than a pale corpse in the coffin, or dry bones in the charnel-house, are qualified to transact any secular business.

St *Paul* sets the seal of heaven to this momentous truth, in various passages of his epistles. From a multitude let me select one, and recommend it to your serious consideration. *You that were sometime alienated and enemies*: the *Colossians*, and all mankind were alienated from the living *GOD*; had no true knowledge of him; and, what is worse, had no sincere desire after him. Nay, they were not only strangers, but enemies; in a state of hostility to his holy nature and heavenly will.——What can express a greater degeneracy? Nothing, unless it be the following clause: *by a mind intent upon wicked works* ‖; a mind, not only averse to all good, but passionately prone to all evil.

Ther. A few picked passages, of a figurative import, and artfully cogged by some dexterous interpretation, may seem to support your cause.

Asp. Ah! *Theron*, there is no need to use sleight of hand. He that runs, may read this doctrine in the sacred authors. It is interwoven with the whole series of their *historical*, and makes a professed part of their *practical* writings.

What is more common with the inspired penmen, than to express a profligate course of life, by *following our own imaginations, and walking in our own ways?* When immorality and licentiousness were predominant in *Israel*; knew no restraints, and kept no bounds; how does the unerring historian describe this horrible state of things? *Every one did that which was right in his own eyes* ‖. Nothing can more strongly imply the extreme depravity of mankind, than such a phraseology: which makes it one and the same thing, to pursue our *natural* inclinations, and to act the abandoned sinner.

St *Jude* cannot write a few lines, but he must touch upon this subject; must teach this humbling lesson. *Sensual* §, he says, *not having the SPIRIT.* According to *his* estimate, not to be actuated by the power of especial grace, is to remain under the dominion of sensuality. If we may credit this servant of CHRIST, *every* man, while unrenewed by the divine *SPIRIT*, is governed by flesh and sense. Can *any* man then pretend to be originally free from the influence of corruption?

St *Paul* exempts not himself, no, nor any of the highest saints, from the opprobrious charge: *We all walked according to the desires of the flesh and of the mind.* Which desires in *us*, as well as in the idolatrous *Heathens*, were base, sordid, and contaminating. Insomuch that we, who are *Jews* by birth, who are

* Rom. vii. 18. † Rom. viii. 7.

‡ *Gen.* vi. 3. The word *flesh*, by which the all-wise CREATOR characterizes man, signifies, in the sacred writings, whatever is *dishonourable* in itself, *provoking* to GOD, or introductory to the *ruin* of man.—The *works of the flesh*, are a compendium of all iniquity, *Gal.* v. 19, 20, 21.—To *walk after the flesh*, is the very reverse of walking in the SPIRIT; diametrically opposite to the divine law and true holiness, *Rom.* viii. 4.—To be *carnally minded*, or to have the influence, the savour, the relish of the flesh (φρονημα σαρκος) predominant in our minds, is the spiritual death of the soul; and a presage of eternal death, both in body and soul, *Rom.* viii. 6.

* John iii. 6. † Matth. viii. 22.

‡ *Col.* i. 21. Τη διανοια εν τοις εργοις τοις πονηροις, *mente malis operibus intenta.* An eminent critic would thus point and thus translate the words; and assigns, for his alteration, the following reason; *Mens enim dicitur* esse in *ea re, quam sedulo cogitat, ad quam cupidine fertur et inclinatur.* DAVENANT in loc.—Let the words be pointed and translated, either in *this* or the *received* manner, they speak the language, and confirm the sentiments, of this whole dialogue.

‖ Judg. xviii. 6.—*See also* Psal. lxxxi. 12. Eccl. xi. 9. Acts xiv. 16.

§ *Jude* 19. The original expression is ψυχικοι, and denotes persons, who have no higher a principle, than the *animal* life, and the *rational* soul.

ons of GOD by our new birth; even we were *by nature* *the children of wrath* *. And if liable to wrath, then, doubtleſs, ſubject to depravity, and chargeable with ſin.

Ther. What ſays St *James?* You have ſuppreſſed, and I had almoſt forget, his teſtimony; though it is ſo very pertinent to my purpoſe, and ſo very explicit in my favour. *Men, who are made after the ſimilitude of GOD.*—The ſimilitude of GOD ſignifies, in the ſacred books, thoſe moral endowments, which diſtinguiſh the poſſeſſor both from the brute and the devil. And if men are made after this image, if they are created with theſe endowments, *where* is your doctrine of original ſin?

Aſp. I began to flatter myſelf, that your objections were exhauſted. But, ſince I am miſtaken in this particular, ſurely it muſt be as great a miſtake to imagine, that our apoſtle would maintain an opinion, ſo repugnant to the aforementioned texts, and ſo contrary to univerſal obſervation.——Do not you perceive the very reverſe true, with regard to your own *children?* Why do you addreſs them with ſuch tender entreaties, ſuch warm exhortations, ſuch repeated arguments? Why do you allure them to duty by promiſes, and deter them from tranſgreſſion by threatenings? Is all this regimen, all this diſcipline, neceſſary for creatures that bear the holy image of GOD?

They *made after the ſimilitude of GOD!*—Then they have no need of the *renewing* influences of the HOLY GHOST, in caſe they live; and no need of the *atonement* of CHRIST's blood, in caſe they die. Would *James* the LORD's brother aſſert ſuch an egregious error, as not only oppoſes a ſingle article, but undermines the *whole* conſtitution of Chriſtianity? ſets aſide the ſanctification of the divine SPIRIT, and the propitiation of the REDEEMER's death?—Impoſſible for him to aſſert! impoſſible, I ſhould think, for us to ſuppoſe!

St *James* ſpeaks of a fact that is *paſt*; ſpeaks of men collectively, as they were all included in their firſt parent. The paſſage, I apprehend, ſhould be tranſlated, not, men that *are*, but, men that *were* † created, &c.—The ſcripture conſiders *Adam*, as the common parent of us all; nay more, conſiders us all as exiſting in our great progenitor. Which is ſo far from overthrowing, that it eſtabliſhes, the point in debate. For if we were all created after the ſimilitude of GOD, in and with *Adam*; it muſt follow, that we all fell from our conformity to GOD, in and with *Adam*. And if ſo—let me for once retort my friend's interrogatory—Where is not original ſin?

I am very ſure, it runs through our *liturgy*; is an eſſential part of our *articles*; and moſt ſtrongly delineated in our *homilies*. Shall I produce ſome of theſe teſtimonies, which are as clear, as they are copious?

Ther. No more of your teſtimonies, good *Aſpaſio*. Inform me rather, what *advantages* can accrue from your inculcating, or my adopting ſuch a doctrine. Suppoſe it were undeniably true, diſagreeable truths, like diſagreeable objects, ſhould be conſigned over to obſcurity, not obtruded upon our view.——On ſuch an occaſion, the reply of *Themiſtocles* ſhould be mine. One of the *literati* of *Greece* offered to communicate an elaborate and curious invention; by means of which, his memory ſhould be ſo wonderfully ſtrengthened, as to retain whatever he read or heard. "My friend," replied the hero, "you quite miſtake the way to ſerve me. I "want to learn the art, not of *remembering*, but of *for-*"*getting*."

Aſp. If to forget our diſeaſe, were a likely method to *reſtore* our health, I ſhould readily concur in your hero's way of thinking. As this will hardly be allowed, I cannot but judge it more adviſeable, to remember our diſeaſe, that we may inquiry after a remedy.

Ther. Where is this remedy to be had?

Aſp. Not on earth, but from heaven.——The ſchools of ſcience cannot diſcover it. The courts of kings are unable to procure it. The college of phyſicians, know not how to preſcribe it. But the goſpel of our ſalvation preſcribes, prepares, and diſpenſes it. The language of CHRIST in his holy word is, *I will bring her health and cure* *. And the beginning of our cure is, to be ſenſible of our diſorder.

Hence we are taught to be *humble*.——To review the catalogue of our actual tranſgreſſions, is a mortifying employ. But that which lays the ſoul in the loweſt abaſement, is the conviction of *inbred* iniquity. This ſtrikes at the root of human vanity, and cuts aſunder the very ſinews of ſelf-conceit. Blindneſs in the underſtanding; impotency in the will; diſorder in the affections; theſe are not *viſitants*, but † *inhabitants*; congenial with our frame, and ingrained in our conſtitution. How then—O! how can *we* be vain of our moral beauty, who have an hereditary defilement cleaving to all our faculties? Surely this muſt baniſh the *Phariſee* from our breaſt, and inſpire us with the ſentiments of that ſincere penitent, *Behold! I am vile* ‡! muſt teach us the language of the abaſhed leper, *Unclean! unclean* ‖!

Ther. I ſhould think, it would make us *melancholy*, rather than humble; ſerve to no other purpoſe, than to introduce an afflictive ſenſe of extreme wretchedneſs.

Aſp. Did we intend to reſt here, your apprehenſions would be juſt. But we urge the doctrine of original corruption, as a *preparative* for the redemption of CHRIST.

It is obſervable, that very few applied to the bleſſed JESUS in the days of his fleſh, but the ſons and daughters of affliction. The levee of that PRINCE of peace was crouded by the lame, the blind, the diſeaſed. Theſe, being ſenſible of diſtreſs, and longing for relief, fell as humble ſupplicants at his feet. While others who were firm in their health, and gay in their ſpirits, rejected him with contemptuous ſcorn.——When we perceive "the plague of our heart," and feel thoſe worſe than ulcerous ſores, which overſpread our nature; we alſo ſhall ardently ſeek to *the LORD our healer*. When we find ourſelves ſubject to the curſe of the law, in bondage to the tyranny of Satan, and liable to everlaſting damnation; *then* the divine PHYSICIAN, and the divine REDEEMER will be precious indeed.——Whereas, if we remain inſenſible of our miſery, the goſpel, which is *ſaving health* to the contrite ſoul, will be an unaffecting ſtory to our ears. We may hear it, we may read it, as an amuſing narrative; but ſhall not *receive* it, as a ſovereign remedy.

Ther. Not receive the goſpel, *Aſpaſio!* I hardly underſtand what you mean. I often ſtudy the goſpel; I believe it to be a divine revelation; and endeavour to follow its directions.—I look upon it, as containing the moſt refined ſyſtem of morality; as enforcing every virtue, by the ſtrongeſt motives; and recommending all, by the moſt perfect example.

Aſp. To which you ſhould add,—as revealing that great MEDIATOR, who has fulfilled all righteouſ-

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* *Eph.* ii. 3. *Hoc uno loco*, ſays BEZA, *quaſi fulmine, totus homo, quantus quantus eſt, proſternitur. Neque enim naturam dicit* læſam, *ſed* mortuam, *per peccatum: ideoque* iræ *obnoxiam.*

† *Jam.* iii. 9. That this is the preciſe ſignification of the participle γεγονοτας, may be gathered from 1 *Tim.* v. 9. where γεγονυιαι is tranſlated *having been*; and muſt neceſſarily refer, not to the *preſent*, but to the *paſt* condition of the widow.

* Jer. xxxiii. 6.

† Called therefore η οικουσα εν εμοι αμαρτια *ſin that dwelleth in me*, Rom. vii. 17.

‡ Job xl. 4. ‖ Lev. xiii. 45.

neſs, to effect our juſtification; who has alſo the fulneſs of the SPIRIT, to accompliſh our regeneration. Otherwiſe, what you mention, is infinitely ſhort of the *goſpel*.—It brings no glad tidings to fallen creatures. It adminiſters no ſuccour to ruined ſinners. It is like writing a copy for the blind, or ſetting a taſk to the diſabled; which would rather be an inſult on their impotence, than a relief of their diſtreſs.

The firſt particular I wave at preſent. Only let me aſk your opinion of the laſt; which is a grand doctrine, and a very diſtinguiſhing privilege of the goſpel. I mean the doctrine and the privilege of *ſpiritual regeneration*. Excluſive of which, all your endeavours to poſſeſs virtue and practice morality, will be no morality, will be no better than endeavours to fly without wings, or to run without feet.

While unimpreſſed with a ſenſe of our original depravity, we ſhall probably ſit contented with ſome *ſuperficial* reformation, and not aſpire after a renewal of the heart. *Civility* will paſs for ſanctity, and a *temperate* diſpoſition for a gracious habit.——Why is the new birth, why are all the ſaving operations of the bleſſed SPIRIT, diſregarded by ſome, derided by others? Becauſe theſe perſons are inſenſible of their utter inability to all good, and of their abject ſlavery to all evil. Therefore they ſee no reaſon for *this* divine agency, or for *that* univerſal change.

You alſo, my dear friend, while unacquainted with your natural corruption, cannot apprehend either the reaſonableneſs or the neceſſity of being *renewed in the ſpirit of your mind* *. But when experience has taught you the former, you will want no arguments to convince you of the latter.—Can creatures, who are *blind* in their underſtandings, diſcern the things which belong to their eternal peace?—Can creatures, who are *dead* in ſin, exerciſe the graces, or diſcharge the duties, of a Chriſtian life?—Can creatures, whoſe hearts are *enmity* againſt GOD, either delight to do his will here, or be meet for his beatific preſence hereafter?

Under the influence of ſuch convictions, that new birth, which the goſpel of *CHRIST* promiſes, which the SPIRIT of GOD produces, will appear as neceſſary for your ſtate, and be as welcome to your ſoul, as theſe gentle *dews* are neceſſary for the languiſhing herbs, and welcome to the thirſty ſoil.

Ther. The dews, though refreſhing to the flowers, may be too chilly for our conſtitutions. And ſee! the ſtar of evening, by proclaiming the approach of night, has given us a warning to quit our arbour.——Some other time we muſt reſume this inquiry. For I am by no means ſatisfied, that your theory agrees with experience.

Aſp. I fear, I have already kept you out too long. Let me juſt obſerve, as we go in,—that the doctrine, however diſagreeable in itſelf, is conducted to an *advantageous* iſſue. It is productive of a much more ſubſtantial conſolation, than hiſtory aſſigns to the great, but exiled *Marius*. When he fled, with his ruined circumſtances, to linger out the poor remains of life among the ruins of *Carthage*, what was his chief ſupport? "Contemplating," ſays my author, "that famous city "in the duſt, he was the leſs afflicted with his own "downfall *."

We have not been put off with ſuch cold comforts, ſuch *negative* benefits. The belief of original ſin has a tendency,—to make us *humble*,—to ſhew us our *need* of *CHRIST*,—to create in us a hunger and thirſt after the *renewing* influences of his SPIRIT, and the juſtifying merit of his righteouſneſs.——So that it muſt be owing to our own perverſeneſs, or our own negligence, if we do not levy a *tax* upon our *loſs*, and *riſe* even by our *fall*.

* Eph. iv. 23.

* *Inopem vitam in tugurio ruinarum Carthaginienſium tolerantem cum Mariut aſpiciens Carthaginem, illa intuens Marium, alter alteri poſſent eſſe ſolatio.* VELL. PATERC.

DIALOGUE XII.

THE ſun was fiercely bright, and the ſky without a cloud.——Not a breath fanned the woods, nor a gale curled the ſtream.——The fields, expoſed to all the fiery beams, were like a glowing hearth.——The little birds, overcome by the potent influence, loſt for a while their tuneful notes. Nothing was heard in the garden but the drowſy hum of bees, and the moan-like buz of winged inſects.——All nature ſeemed to *languiſh*. The flouriſhing meads looked ſickly; the gayeſt bloſſoms began to fade; the ſprightlieſt animals, if not repoſed under ſome cooling ſhelter, panted for breath, and hung their drooping heads, amidſt the all-ſurrounding blaze and the unſufferable heat.

Aſpaſio diſappeared ever ſince dinner, and none could tell whither he was gone.——*Theron*, as ſoon as the tea-equipage was removed, took his way to the *wood*. Deſirous of the thickeſt ſhade, he haſtened to the centre. A ſerpentine walk compoſed the avenue: which, after ſeveral windings, delivered him into a large circular area: not covered with a *Grecian* or *Roman* temple, unmeaning imitation of pagan idolatry; but ſurrounded with aged and princely oaks: the coalition of whoſe branches threw over the graſſy plat a majeſtic rural dome, and their unpierced foliage *imbrowned the noon-tide hours*.

In the midſt, and elevated on a ſquare baſe, was a ſtatue repreſenting the venerable *Elijah*,—on his bended knees,—with hands ſtretched out, and eyes lifted up to heaven. His attitude, his air, his every feature, were a moſt lively comment on thoſe ſtrong energetic expreſſions of ſcripture; *Take hold on GOD* *; *Wreſtle with the ALMIGHTY* †; *Pour out your hearts before him* ‡.—On one ſide of the pedeſtal, were engraven the prieſts of *Baal*, in frantic emotions calling upon their ſenſeleſs deity, and gaſhing themſelves with unavailing wounds.—On the other was exhibited, in baſſo-relievo, the adoring *Tiſhbite*'s altar; his victim burning with fire from the LORD, even while the water ran from every limb, and overflowed the trench below.

A remote caſcade tumbled from a craggy rock. The ſtream, after having waſted its ſilver foam in a winding progreſs, ſtraggled into this grand arbour. Here it juſt appeared, gliding down a gentle ſlope, with a flaunting air, and a prattling noiſe. Impreſſed, as it were, with the unexpected *ſolemnity* of the ſcene, it ſeemed to check its wanton waves, and turned aſide into a more ſequeſtered path. As ſome *heedleſs* trifler, who bolts unaware into the royal preſence, ſtands ſtruck with reverence and awe, or retires with precipitance and confuſion.

The deep gloom, ſhedding a kind of night, even

* Iſ. lxiv. 7.

† *Coloſſ.* iv. 12. Αγωνιζομενος υπερ ημων προσευχαις.

‡ Pſal. lxii. 8.

while

while the ſun glared in the ſky;—not a whiſper ſtirring, among ſo many millions of leaves; and all their warbling natives huſhed in ſilence;—the ſonorous *toll* of the diſtant caſcade, and the tinkling *chime* of the nearer rill;—the profound adoration, and fervent devotion, which lived in the lineaments of the impaſſioned ſtone:—all theſe circumſtances rendered the place prodigiouſly auguſt and ſtriking. Not much unlike the ancient *oratories* *, where holy people retired from the giddy ring, and the buſtling croud, to ennoble their minds, with ſublime contemplation; where they bid a temporary adieu to the tumultuous world, its gay impertinence and ſolemn dulneſs, in order to maintain a more uninterrupted communion with that mighty BEING, who *ſitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as graſhoppers* before HIM †.

Welcome to *Theron* was the ſhady bower; welcome the cool aſpect, and the muſical flow of the water; but more welcome than all was the ſight of his friend, who lay reclined at the foot of an oak, with a book half open in his hand, and his eye fixed upon the ſtatue.

Ther. I know not, *Aſpaſio*, whether I muſt make an apology, for breaking in upon your retirement; or call you to an account, for depriving the ladies of your company at the tea-table.

Aſp. Indeed, *Theron*, I have been ſo much delighted with the place, with the companion in my hand, and the noble object before me, that I ſcarce obſerved, how the time ſtole away. And I flatter myſelf, if you will take a ſeat by my ſide, and ſhare my entertainment; you will be more inclined to excuſe, than to aggravate my fault.

Ther. Is *Tully* then (for I obſerve his name on the volume) your companion? And can ſuch a devoted admirer of the *Bible* be ſo highly charmed with a *Heathen claſſic?*—St *Auguſtine* ſomewhere declares, that, though paſſionately fond, before his converſion, of *Tully*'s writings; yet, after that memorable change, he could no longer relish thoſe admired compoſitions; becauſe they were not ſweetened, as he expreſſes himſelf, with the *melliſluous* name of JESUS.

Aſp. I am far from pretending to ſuch an exalted pitch of devotion, as that ſeraphic father attained. I can ſpend a vacant minute on the delicate odes of *Horace*; and taſte a refined entertainment in *Virgil*'s beautiful poem. But when I hear a *ſermon*, or peruſe a *religious* treatiſe, which borrows neither dignity nor charms from that amiable and glorious name, I own myſelf extremely diſappointed. Without the offices, the merits, or the grace of CHRIST, the ſermon and the treatiſe appear as *defective*, as a body that is neither adorned with the head, nor enlivened with the heart.

Ther. I ſuppoſe then you cultivate an acquaintance with the *Grecian* and *Roman* authors, in order to improve your taſte, and poliſh your ſtyle.

Aſp. Theſe, and, I am apt to think, more conſiderable advantages than theſe, may be derived from an occaſional application to their works. They may ſerve as ſo many ſhades, to ſet off, with *heightened* luſtre, the beauty and glory of the ſacred oracles.

While I peruſe *Plato*'s ornamented page, or liſten to *Cicero*'s flowing periods, I am ſomewhat like the perſon who amuſes himſelf in a gallery of *painted* flowers. He is pleaſed with the curious creation of the pencil; but finds none of that *delicious* fragrance, none of thoſe *breathing* ſweets, which met him in the garden, and regale his ſenſe from the blooming parterre.——So here are brilliant ſentiments, and a florid diction; delicate touches of wit, and bold ſtrokes of deſcription. But no diſcovery of *CHRIST JESUS*,—no diſplays of his ineffable love,—no overtures of reconciliation with the bleſſed GOD. Nothing to yield us *ſolid* comfort in our preſent ſtate, or any *joyful* expectations with regard to the approaching eternity.

Beſides, when I converſe with thoſe celebrated geniuſes of antiquity, who were at once the moſt erroneous, and the moſt judicious;—the *moſt judicious* in their taſte of polite literature; the *moſt erroneous* in their apprehenſions of inviſible things; they ſhew me, what they never intended, the inexpreſſible need of *revelation*. They teach me to ſet a higher value on that ineſtimable gift. I bleſs the diſtinguiſhing goodneſs of Providence, which has caſt my lot *, not at *Athens*, but in *EMMANUEL*'s land. I ſay, with wonder and gratidude,—"Why "did not *my* exiſtence commence in thoſe æras of re-"ligious dotage? Why was not *my* portion confined to "thoſe regions of barbariſm and deluſion? Why am "not I burning incenſe to idols; paying ſenſeleſs adora-"tion to ſculptured ſtone; or worſhipping, with deteſt-"able ceremonies, a ſet of laſcivious, debauched, and "ſcandalous † deities?"—Surely, *Theron*, from every peruſal of thoſe volumes, attended with ſuch a reflection, we ſhall ſee the utmoſt reaſon to magnify *the tender mercies of our GOD; whereby the day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us* ‡, and brought us out of darkneſs into the marvellous light of the goſpel.

Permit me to mention another benefit, which may reſult from a correſpondence with thoſe maſterly writers.——The ſtreams may lead us to the inexhauſtible fountain; lead us to admire the *only wiſe* GOD our SAVIOUR,

* It is thought by ſome eminent critics, that, when our LORD continued all night ἐν προσευχῇ Θεῦ, Luke vi. 12. the phraſe denotes his continuance in *an oratory*; a place ſet apart for prayer, and a devout intercourſe with GOD.

That there were places of this kind among the *Jews*, is indiſputable; and that the opinion is ingenious, cannot be denied. But I very much doubt, whether it gives us the true meaning of the evangeliſt.—Having mentioned *a mountain*, it would hardly ſuit his conciſe manner, to be more particular with regard to the place; neither was the circumſtance ſo important, as to deſerve a ſecond mention.—I am apt to think alſo, that *ſuch a place* would have defeated the deſign of our SAVIOUR's retirement, which ſeems to have been privacy; and that *ſuch* a *title*, as GOD's place of prayer, was wholly appropriated to the temple.

I apprehend, we ſhall have a more *defenſible*, and, I am perſuaded, we ſhall have a more *exalted* ſenſe, if we ſuppoſe the expreſſion to ſignify,—the copiouſneſs and fervour of our LORD's devotion,—the vaſt importance, and the unequalled ſucceſs, of this his prolonged and ſolemn prayer: which could no way be more emphatically declared, than by the addition of the divine name: *He continued all night in* the prayer of GOD.—See *Aſpaſio*'s remark, p. 198.

† *Iſ* xl. 22. What a noble *image* is here, and what an exquiſitely-fine *contraſt!* GOD, the great GOD, ſitteth on thoſe lofty and immenſe heavens, which, at an inconceivable diſtance, ſurround this penſile globe. From that moſt ſublime and magnificent throne, he looks down upon the inhabitants of the earth: who,—in all their pomp and ſplendor,—amidſt all their admired works and boaſted acquiſitions,—are *mean* and *impotent* in his ſight: mean and impotent as the poor inſects, which wander over the parched heath for ſuſtenance; which ſpend all the day in idle inſignificant chirpings; and, at night, take up their contemptible habitation on a blade of graſs.

* Alluding to the ſtory of the philoſopher, who uſed to bleſs the gods for three privileges:—That he was made, not a *brute*, but a *rational* creature:—That he was born, not in *barbarous* climes, but in *Greece*:—That he lived, not in the more *uncultivated* ages, but in the time, and under the tuition of *Socrates*.

† This, I think, gives us the moſt deplorable and horrid idea of the *blindneſs* of our fallen nature. The Heathens, even amidſt all the politeneſs of their taſte, and notwithſtanding their ſuperior advancement in the ſciences, were haters of the true GOD, and robbed him of his honour: nay, what is unſpeakably worſe, they paid it to *monſters*;—monſters of lewdneſs and treachery, vice and immorality. Egregious, ſottiſh, almoſt incredible ſtupidity! to *worſhip* thoſe beings, which deſerved univerſal *abhorrence!* to *deify* thoſe characters, which could never be ſufficiently *deteſted!*

‡ Luke i. 78.

SAVIOUR, who has given such a shining vein of ingenuity to his rational creatures. As I read their works, and am charmed with their beauties, I would frequently reflect,—" If the essays of a finite mind, and the compo-" sitions of a moral pen, yield such *high satisfactions*; what " rapturous, what unknown delight must arise from an " uninterrupted communion with infinite Wisdom? To " stand,—not at the feet of *Homer*, and attend the flights " of his elevated imagination,—not in the presence of " *Socrates*, and hear the dictates of his sagacious soul;—" but to stand in the courts of the LORD, and before " the throne of the LAMB: there to contemplate, with-" out any interposing veil, the counsels of his unerring " providence; to have the mysteries of his redeeming love, " laid fully open to our view: and receive the brightest " manifestations of all his amiable, his adorable, his un-" speakable attributes!"

Ther. These are advantages truly desirable, and equally obvious. Methinks, it *surprises* me, that I should never so much as propose them; and *grieves* me, that I should so long be deprived of them. A view to such very superior improvements will, I hope, render my future intercourse with those favourite authors, still more agreeable, and abundantly more beneficial.

But let me ask, what passage was engaging your attention this afternoon?

Asp. The great orator's treatise concerning the *nature of the divine* BEING *: that part especially, which proves his existence and perfections, from the formation of the *human body*.

Ther. And don't you perceive, that he is almost as deficient in the knowledge of his subject, as he is mistaken in his ideas of the supreme CAUSE?—The exquisite contrivance and inimitable workmanship of the human frame, were, in those early ages, but dimly discerned. It was the *infancy* of anatomy; when the very professors had scarcely the qualifications of a modern pupil. Many of the received notions were childish, almost all of them superficial.

Asp. Will my *Theron* then entertain me with a more accurate description of this wonderful structure?

Ther. How could you take occasion, *Aspasio*, from the hint I dropped, to conceive any such expectation? It is one thing to *discover*, another to *correct*, what is amiss. Many spectators can point out an accidental defect in some celebrated statue, or a small indelicacy in some valuable piece of painting, who are absolutely incapable of retouching the one, or supplying the other.

Asp. Since we are fallen upon this point, you must give me leave to renew and urge my request. I shall be extremely glad to hear your remarks upon the subject; especially as you have made this branch of science, a part of your amusement; and not without the advantage of *anatomical* dissections. Whereas I have very seldom applied my thoughts to the former, and never had an opportunity of being present at the latter.

Let me also observe, that our very situation favours, or rather suggests such a topic of conversation. All the fine prospects of the country are excluded. We have scarce any thing left, but *ourselves*, to contemplate. And shall this be the only theme we neglect?

Ther. It is somewhat preposterous, I must confess, to pry into the archives of colleges; to ransack the cabinets of the *virtuosi*; to carry our search through the whole compass of external nature; and, at the same time, overlook the far more surprising curiosities which abound in the composition of our own bodies.

Since you insist upon it, my observations, crude and extemporaneous as they are, shall submit themselves to your judgment; provided you will be content to receive only a *few* of the *outlines*, and nothing like a *finished* draught.

Asp. Let me just hint, that the more *circumstantial* your account is, so much the more welcome will it be to your friend, and so much the more honourable to our common *CREATOR*. For I really think, that *Galen's* declaration upon this head is perfectly just; which I have read in my favourite commentator *Beza*, and which speaks to the following effect *.—" Such treatises as " display the excellencies of the great *CREATOR*, com-" pose one of the noblest and most *acceptable* hymns. " To acquaint ourselves with his sublime perfections; " and point out to others his infinite power, his un-" erring wisdom, and his boundless benignity; this is a " more *substantial* act of devotion, than to slay hecatombs " of victims at his altar, or kindle mountains of spices " into incense."—*Theron*, after pausing a few minutes, thus resumed the discourse.

Ther. When some master-builder undertakes to erect a magnificent edifice, he begins with the less decorated, but more solid parts; those which are to *support*, or those which are to *contain* the rest. This order, if you please, we will follow, in considering " the earthly house of " our tabernacle †."

First, you have a system of *bones*, cast into a variety of moulds, enlarged or contracted into a variety of sizes. All *strong*, that they may commodiously bear up the fleshly machine; yet *light*, that they may not depress the animal with an encumbering load.—*Bored* with an internal cavity, to contain the moistening marrow; and *perforated* with exceedingly-fine ducts, to admit the nourishing vessels.—Insensible themselves, they are *covered* with a membrane ‡ of exquisite sensibility: which warns them of the approach, and secures them from the annoyance, of any injurious friction; and, at the same time, preserves the muscular parts from being fretted in their action, by the hard and rough substance of the bones.—Their *figures* are always most precisely fitted to their uses. They are generally larger at the extremities, than in the middle; that they may be joined more firmly, and not so easily dislocated. The manner of their *articulation* is truly admirable ‖, and remarkably various; yet never varied, without demonstrating some wise design, and answering some valuable end. Frequently when two are united, the one is nicely rounded, and capped with a smooth substance; the other is scooped into a hollow of the same dimensions, to receive the polished knob; and both are lubricated with an unctuous fluid, to yield the readiest rotation in the socket.

The *feet* compose the firmest and neatest pedestal; infinitely beyond all that statuary or architecture can accomplish; capable of altering its form, and extending its size, as different circumstances require. Besides performing the office of a pedestal, they contain a set of the nicest springs; which help to place the body in a variety of graceful attitudes, and qualify it for a multiplicity of advantageous motions.—The

* *De naturâ deorum.*

* *Vid.* BEZ. Annot. ad *Rom.* i. 20.

† 2 *Cor.* v. 1. St *Paul* very pertinently compares the bodily structure to *a house*: and adds, in that strain of godly edifying, which runs through all his writings, our *earthly and tent-like* habitation, ἐπίγειος οἰκία τοῦ σκήνους. Referring to its *mean original*, as it was formed out of the dust; and to its *short continuance*, as it must soon return to dust again. Being, though commodious as a house, yet transitory as a tent: not like the *everlasting mountains*, which stand fixed and rooted to the centre; but like those *portable tenements*, which are set up in the evening, are taken down in the morning, and then their place is known no more.

‡ The *periosteum*.

‖ *Mirabiles commissuras habent.* CIC.

undermost

ndermoſt part of the heel, and the extremity of the ble, and, are ſhod with a tough, inſenſible, ſinewy iſtance. This we may call a kind of *natural ſcandal*. never wears out, never wants repair, and always pre- ents that undue compreſſion of the veſſels, which the eight of the body, in walking or ſtanding, might herwiſe occaſion.——The *legs* and *thighs* are like ſub- antial and ſtately columns *; articulated in ſuch a man- er, that they adminiſter moſt commodiouſly to the act f walking, yet obſtruct not the eaſy poſture of ſitting. The legs ſwell out, towards the top, with a genteel rojection; and are wrought off, towards the bottom, with neat diminutions. Which variation leſſens their ulk, at the ſame time that it increaſes their beauty.

The *ribs*, turned into a regular arch, are gently move- ble, for the act of reſpiration. They form a ſecure odgment for the lungs and the heart; which, being ome of the moſt diſtinguiſhed and important organs of ife, have their reſidence fortified by this ſtrong ſemicir- ular rampart †.——The *backbone* is intended, not only o ſtrengthen the body, and ſuſtain its moſt capacious tore-rooms; but alſo to bring down that communica- ion of the brain, which is uſually termed the *ſpinal mar- row*. As an open channel, it conveys, as a well-cloſed aſe, it guards this vital ſilver ‡; and, by ſeveral com- modious outlets, tranſmits the animating treaſure into ll the inferior parts. Had it only been large, ſtrait, nd hollow, it might have ſerved theſe ſeveral purpoſes. But then the loins muſt have been inflexible, and every man impaled (not by the executioner, but by nature) on a ſtake co-eval with his exiſtence. To avoid which, it conſiſts of very ſhort bones, cloſely knit together by intervening cartilages. This peculiarity of ſtructure prevents diſlocation; and gives the main pillar of our frame the pliancy of an *oſier*, even while it maintains the firmneſs of an *oak*.——By this means, it is a kind of continued joint; capable of various inflections, with- out bruiſing the ſoft medullary ſubſtance, which fills its cavity; without intercepting the nervous fluid, which is to be detached from this grand reſervoir; or diminiſh- ing that ſtrength, which is neceſſary to ſupport all the upper ſtories.——A formation ſo very peculiar in any other of the ſolids, muſt have been attended with great inconveniences. Here it is unſpeakably ſerviceable; is both, for workmanſhip and ſituation, a maſterpiece of creating ſkill, never enough to be admired.

The *arms*, pendent on either ſide, are exactly propor- tioned to each other; that the equilibrium of the ſtruc- ture may not be diſconcerted. Theſe, being the guards which defend ‖, and the miniſters which ſerve the whole body, are fitted for the moſt *diverſified* and *extenſive* ope- rations; firm with bone, yet not weighty with fleſh; and capable of performing with ſingular expedition and eaſe, all manner of uſeful motions. They bend in- wards, and turn outwards; they riſe upwards, and ſtoop downwards; they wheel about, and throw them- ſelves into whatever direction we pleaſe.—To theſe are annexed the *hands*; and all terminated by the *fingers*: which are, not like the arms, of the ſame length, and of an equal bigneſs; but in both reſpects different: which gives them a moſt graceful appearance, and a much greater degree of uſefulneſs. Were they all fleſh, they would be *comparatively* impotent; where they one entire bone, the would be *utterly* inflexible: but conſiſt- ing of various little bones, and a multitude of muſcles, what ſhape can they not aſſume? what ſervice can they not perform?—Being placed at the end of the arm, the ſphere of their action is exceedingly enlarged. This ad- vantageous ſituation realizes the fable of *Briareus*; and renders a pair of hands as ſerviceable as an hundred.— The extremities of the fingers are an aſſemblage of fine tendinous fibres, moſt acutely ſenſible *: which, not- withſtanding the delicacy of their texture, are deſtined to almoſt inceſſant employ, and frequently exerciſed among rugged objects. For this reaſon, they are over- laid with the *nails*, a ſort of horny expanſion; which, like a ferule, hinders the fleſh from being ungracefully flattened; and, like a ſheath †, preſerves the tender parts from injurious impreſſions.

In the miniſtry of the hands, and activity of the fingers, we poſſeſs a caſe of the *fineſt inſtruments*, or a col- lection of the *nobleſt utenſils*; qualifying us for the exe- cution of every work, which the projecting genius can deviſe, or the laviſh fancy crave.——To theſe we are obliged for the beautiful ſtatues, which have often en- tertained our eyes, in yonder ſolitary walks; and even for that melodious trumpet, which now addreſſes our ears, from the ſummer-houſe on the fiſh-pond.—Theſe raiſe the lofty column, and turn the ſpacious arch. Theſe ſwell the majeſtic dome, and adjuſt the commo- dious apartment. Architecture, with all her ſtriking beauties, and all her rich benefits, are the creation of the human hand.——Yielding to the ſtrength of the hand, the talleſt firs fall to the ground, and the largeſt oaks de- ſcend from the mountains. Faſhioned by the dexterity of the hand, they accommodate the ſailor with a *floating warehouſe*; and circulate, from *Britain* to *Japan*, the productions of nature, and the improvements of art.— Obedient to the human hand, metals aſcend from their ſubterranean beds; and compoſe the moſt ſubſtantial parts of that *curious machine* ‡, which tranſmits far and near, to the monarch's palace, and to the peaſant's hut, ſuch treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge, as *the gold and cryſtal cannot equal* ‖.

Among the *Egyptians*, the hand was the ſymbol of ſtrength; among the *Romans*, it was an emblem of fi- delity; and I think, it may, among all nations, be look- ed upon as the enſign of *authority*. It is the original and the univerſal ſceptre: that which not only repre- ſents, but aſcertains our dominion, over all the ele- ments, and over every creature.—Though providence has not given us the ſtrength of the horſe, the ſwift- neſs of the greyhound, or the ſagacious ſcent of the ſpaniel; yet, directed by the underſtanding, and enabled by the hand, we can ſubject them to our will; turn them to our advantage; and, in this ſenſe, make them all *our own*.—Theſe hands (ſurpriſing to relate!),

* Styled therefore by the ſacred philoſopher, *the ſtrong men*, Eccl. xii. 3.: and compared, by the ſame beautiful writer, to *pillars of marble*, Cant. v. 15.—As theſe are the ſtrongeſt parts of the body, and the ſupport of all the other, hence, I preſume, aroſe that *proverbial* expreſſion, which occurs in the hiſtory of *Samſon*, שוק על שוק Judg. xv. 8. rendered by the *Septuagint*, not very exactly, κνημην επι μηρον; by our *Engliſh* tranſlators, rather too vul- garly, *hip and thigh*. I believe, the word שוק ſignifies here, as it certainly ſignifies in many other places, what the *Latins* call *armus*; and that the image is taken from ſome robuſt and fierce animal, whoſe *ſhoulders* before, and whoſe *thighs* behind, are bro- ken in pieces. Then what miſchief can he do? what reſiſtance can he make? He is utterly diſabled. So that the expreſſion ſeems to denote, (and might perhaps, without violence to the original, be tranſlated) *a total overthrow*.

* *Thou haſt fenced me*, ſecured my inward and vital parts, *with bones, and ſinews*, Job. x. 11.—*Crates pectoris*, is *Virgil*'s expreſ- ſion.

‡ This is ſuppoſed to be the part, which *Solomon* deſcribes by *the ſilver cord*: and is indeed like a cord, on account of its *ſhape*; like ſilver, on accouut of its *colour*, Eccl. xii. 6.

‖ Called, in *Solomon*'s figurative but elegant ſketch of anatomy, *the keepers of the houſe*, Eccl. xii. 3.

* So very acute is the ſenſibility of theſe parts, that, I am in- formed, it furniſhes the *tribunal* of *inquiſition* with one of the moſt refined expedients in the *art* of *torture*. A ſtrong quill, ſharpened by the penknife, and dipped in ſome inflammable liquor, is thruſt deep between the nail and the finger. When the quill has cut its way through the ſhivering nerves; and ſtands planted, like a dagger, amidſt the guſhing blood; ſome barbarous hand ſets fire to the ex- tremity. The keen point, the ſlow flame, and both in the ſeat of the moſt lively ſenſation, put the miſerable ſufferer to the *moſt ex- cruciating* pain.

† *Digitis munimina*.

‡ The printing-preſs. ‖ Job xxviii. 17.

these *short* hands have found out a way, whereby they can dive to the bottom of the ocean; can penetrate the bowels of the earth; and reach from shore to shore. These *feeble* hands can manage the wings of the wind; can arm themselves with the rage of the fire; and press into their service the forcible impetuosity of the waters. ——How eminent is the dignity! how extensive the agency of the hand! it would require more eloquence, than your orator possessed, to display the former; and more pages, than your book contains, to describe the latter.——How greatly then are we indebted to our indulgent CREATOR, for accommodating us with this noble, this distinguishing, this invaluable member!

Above all, is the *head;* a majestic dome, designed for the residence of the brain. It is framed in exact conformity to this important purpose; ample, to receive it; strong, to uphold it; and firm, to defend it.——As the head resembles the *general*'s tent in an army, or the *monarch*'s palace in a city; it has a communication established with all, even the most inferior and remote, parts of the system; has outlets and avenues, for the ready dispatch of couriers to all quarters; and for the reception of speedy intelligence, on every interesting occasion. It is furnished with lodgments, wherein to post centinels of various characters, and appointed for various offices.—To expedite their operations; whether they are employed in reconnoitring what passes *without*, or examining what claims admittance *within;* the whole turns upon a curious pivot, most nicely contrived, to afford the largest and freest circumvolutions.

This stately capital is screened from heat; defended from cold; and at the same time very much beautified, by a copious growth of *hair:* which flows down from the parted forelock in decent curls; and hangs, mantling on the cheeks, clustering on the shoulders.——A decoration *, incomparably more *delicate*, than any or all the orders of architecture can supply; and so perfectly light, that it no way encumbers or incommodes the wearer.

While many animals creep on the ground; while all of them are prone in their posture, or their aspect; the attitude of man is *erect.*——Which is by far the most *graceful*, has an air of dignity, and bespeaks superiority. —It is by far the most *commodious;* fits us for the prosecution of every grand scheme, and facilitates the success of all our extensive designs.—It is likewise attended with the greatest *safety;* being, if not less than any other position exposed to dangers, yet more happily contrived to repel or avoid them.

Asp. May it not likewise be intended to remind us of our exalted orginal, and our sublime end? Our *original*, which was the breath of the ALMIGHTY, and the spirit of the MOST HIGH. Our *end*, which is, not the soil we tread on, or any of its low productions, but the heaven of heavens, and the *things that are above.*

But not to divert from our subject; which, in my friend's manner of handling it, is as entertaining, as it is instructive.—The bones (to carry on your own allusion) are only the *rafters*, the *beams*, the *shell* of the living edifice. You have raised the walls, and laid the floors; you have made the proper divisions, and left the necessary apertures. But, in every finished house, the roof is covered, and the rooms are wainscotted. The fashes are hung, and the doors turned upon their hinges. The grotes are fixed, and the stairs ascend. *Within*, the lodgings are furnished; *without*, the front is ornamented. All is rendered commodious for domestic use, and graceful to the external view.

Ther. This likewise is executed by the great, the divine ARTIFICER.—Here are *ligaments:* a tough and strong arrangement of fibres; to unite the several limbs, and render, what would otherwise be a disjointed unwieldy jumble, a well-compacted and self-manageable system.——*Membranes;* or thin and flexile tunicles, appointed to enwrap the fleshy parts; to form a connection between some, and make a separation between others *.

Arteries, the rivers of our little world †, or the aqueducts of the organized metropolis. Some of which ascend to the head; others spread themselves over the shoulders; some extend to the arms; some descend to the feet; and striking out, as they go, into numberless smaller canals, visit the streets, the alleys, and every *individual* apartment of the vital city.——These, being wide at their origin, and lessening as they branch themselves, check the rapid impetus of the blood. To sustain this shock, they are endued with uncommon strength; by performing this service, they oblige the crimson current to pass into the *narrowest defiles*, and distribute itself into all quarters.——The blood, thrown from the heart, dilates the arteries, and their own elastic force contracts them. By which means, they *vibrate*, in proper places, very perceivably against the finger; bring advices of the utmost importance to the physician; and very much assist him, both in discovering the nature of diseases, and prescribing for their respective cures.—The larger arteries, where-ever the body is formed for incurvation, are situate on the *bending* side; lest, being stretched to an improper length by the inflection, their dimensions should be lessened, and the circulating fluid retarded.—They are not, like several of the considerable veins, laid so near the surface, as to be protrusive of the skin; but are deposited to a *proper depth* in the flesh. This situation renders them more secure from external injuries. It conceals likewise those starts and resilitions of the pulse, which, if apparent, would discompose the most sedate, and disfigure the most comely countenance.——Could we cast our eye upon the river, which runs through the neighbouring meadow, we might observe several mills intersecting the stream. The waters at those places, if not entirely stopped, drain away very slowly. In consequence of this obstruction, the lower channels would be sunk dry, and the upper ones swelled into a flood. To obviate both these inconveniencies, *low-shots* are provided; which, carrying off the surcharge, prevent a glut above, and supply the banks below. In those parts of the body, which are most liable to pressure, much the same expedient takes place. The arteries *inosculate;* or, breaking into a new tract, they fetch a little circuit, in order to return and communicate again with the main road. So that, if any obstacle blocks up or straitens the direct passage; the current, by diverting to this new channel, eludes the impediment; maintains an uninterrupted flow; and soon regains its wonted course.

Veins are appointed to receive the blood from the

* *Absalom*'s hair was reckoned a distinguishing part of his beauty, 2 *Sam.* xiv. 26.—The amiableness of the church, in the exemplary conversation of true believers, is displayed by the same ornament, *Thy hair is as a flock of goats, that* are seen afar off, and *appear* in a pendent attitude *from* the summit of *mount Gilead;* most agreeably adorning the place, and detaining the spectator's eye. *Cant.* iv. 1. I prefer the exposition of *Arias Montanus*, שלשו *quæ pendent, quæ prominent:* as it takes in a circumstance, which corresponds with the *pensile* position of the hair; renders the comparison more *full* and *exact;* and is, according to the observation, of a most accurate judge, one of the chief *remarkables* in such a prospect;

Non ego vos posthac, viridi projectus in antro,
Dumosis pendere procul de rupe videbo. VIRG.

* The intestines are *fastened* to each other by the *mesentery*. The breast is *divided* into two cavities by the *mediastinum*. Both which are reckoned among the membranes.

† A human body was called by the ancients, the *microcosm*; that is, a little world, or the world in miniature.

arteries,

arteries, and reconvey it to the heart.——Small at their riſe, and enlarging as they advance, they are void of any pulſation. In theſe, the preſſure of the circulating fluid is not near ſo forcible as in the arterial tubes: for which reaſon, their texture is conſiderably ſlighter. Such an exact *œconomiſt* is nature, even amidſt all her *liberality* * !——In many of theſe canals, the current, though widening continually, and acquiring a proportionable increaſe of gravity, is obliged to puſh its way againſt the perpendicular. By which circumſtance, it is expoſed to the hazard of falling back, and overloading the veſſels, if not of ſuppreſſing the animal motion. For a ſecurity againſt this danger, *valves* are interpoſed at proper diſtances: which are no hindrance to the regular paſſage, but prevent the reflux, ſuſtain the augmented weight, and facilitate a progreſs to the grand receptacle. This auxiliary contrivance comes in, where the blood is conſtrained to climb; but is diſmiſſed where the ſteep aſcent ceaſes, and ſuch a precaution would be needleſs.

Here are *glands*, whoſe office it is to filtrate the paſſing fluid. Each of theſe glands is an aſſemblage of veſſels, complicated and intervolved, with ſeeming confuſion, but with perfect regularity. As ſome kind of ſieves tranſmit the duſt, and retain the corn; others bolt out the meal, and hold back the bran; ſo ſome of theſe glandulous ſtrainers draw off the fineſt, others the groſſeſt parts of the blood. Some, like the diſtiller's alembic, *ſublimate* †; others, like the common ſewers, *defæcate* ‡. Each forms a ſecretion, far more curious than the moſt admired operations of chemiſtry; yet all neceſſary for the ſupport of life, or conducive to the comfort of the animal.——*Muſcles*, wove in nature's niceſt loom; compoſed of the ſlendereſt fibres, yet endued with incredible ſtrength; faſhioned after a variety of patterns, but all in the higheſt taſte for elegance, convenience, and uſefulneſs.——Theſe, with their *tendons* annexed, conſtitute the inſtruments of motion. The former, contracting their ſubſtance, operate ſomewhat like the pulley in mechanics. The latter, reſembling the cord, are faſtened to a bone, or ſome partition of fleſh; and, following the muſcular contraction, actuate the part into which they are inſerted. This, and all their functions they execute, not like a ſluggiſh beaſt of burden, but quick as the lightning.——*Nerves*, ſurpriſingly-minute tubes; derived from the brain, and permeated by an exquiſitely-ſubtile fluid: which, gliding into the muſcles, ſets them on work; diffuſes the power of ſenſation through the body; or, returning upon any impreſſion from without, gives all needful intelligence to the ſoul.——*Veſicles*, diſtended with an unctuous matter, in ſome places, compoſe a ſoft cuſhion ‖ for nature; in other places, they fill up her vacuities, and ſmooth the inequalities of the fleſh. *Inwardly*, they ſupply the ſeveral movements of the active machine; *outwardly*, they render its appearance plump, well proportioned, and graceful.

The *ſkin*, like a curious ſurtout *, exactly fitted, is ſuperinduced over the whole. Formed of the moſt delicate net-work; whoſe meſhes † are minute, and whoſe threads ‡ are multiplied even to a prodigy.——The meſhes ſo *minute*, that nothing paſſes them, which is diſcernable by the eye; though they diſcharge, every moment, myriads and myriads of ſuperfluous incumbrances from the body. The ſteam ariſing from the warm buſineſs tranſacted within, is carried off by theſe real, though imperceptible funnels §. Which conſtitutes what we uſually call *inſenſible perſpiration*.——The threads ſo *multiplied*, that neither the point of the ſmalleſt needle, nor the incomparably-nicer ſpear of a gnat, nor even the inviſible lancet of a flea, can pierce any ſingle part, without cauſing an uneaſy ſenſation and a ſuffuſion of blood; conſequently, without wounding, even by ſo ſmall a puncture, both a nerve and a vein §.

The veins, either pervading or lying parallel with this fine tranſparent coat, *beautify* the human ſtructure; thoſe parts eſpecially, which are moſt conſpicuous, and intended for public view. The pliant wriſt, and the taper arm, they variegate with an inlay of living ſapphire. They ſpread vermilion over the lips ¶, and plant roſes in the cheeks. While the eye, tinged with gloſſy jet, or ſparkling with the blue of heaven, is fixed in an orb of poliſhed cryſtal. Inſomuch that the earthly tabernacle exhibits the niceſt proportions, and richeſt graces; ſuch *nice proportions*, as afford the moſt correct model for ſtatuary; ſuch *rich graces*, as the canvaſs never bore, as painting imitates in vain.

Aſp. How juſt in itſelf, and how pertinent to our purpoſe, is that well-known acknowledgment of the ſacred and royal anatomiſt; *I am curiouſly wrought* ‡ !

* A parallel inſtance of frugality is obſervable in the arteries: whoſe coats are ſpun *thinner*, as the diameter of the veſſels becomes *ſmaller*, and the preſſure of the blood *weaker*.

† The glandulous ſubſtance of the *brain*, which ſecretes the animal ſpirits.

‡ The *liver* and *kidneys*. The former of which ſeparates the *gall*; the latter drains off a *fluid*, which, being ſufficiently known, need not be named. I could wiſh, it had not been ſo explicitly and coarſely mentioned in our tranſlation of the beſt of books; but that we had rendered the original, in 1 *Kings* xiv. 10. *Every male*, in *Iſ.* xxxvi. 12. *Eat and drink their own excrements*.

‖ The *calf* of the *leg*, for inſtance: whoſe large collection of muſcles, intermingled with fat, is of ſingular ſervice to thoſe important bones. It ſtanks and fortifies them, like a *ſtrong baſtion*. It ſupports and cheriſhes them, like a *ſoft pillow*. And what is no leſs pleaſing to obſerve, it accommodates and defends them on that very ſide, where they moſt frequently reſt their weight, and where they are leaſt capable of being guarded by the eye.

* *Thou haſt clothed me with ſkin and fleſh*, Job x. 11.—The word *ſurtout* is uſed according to the *French* etymology; ſignifies a garment, coming *over the whole* body; and is moſt beautifully expreſſed by our LORD's ἀμφιεσμον, Matth. vi. 30.

† The pores of the *cuticula*.

‡ The nervous fibres, and other veſſels of the *cutis*.—Nature is ſomewhat like *Solomon*'s virtuous woman: *who is not afraid of the ſnow for her houſehold, becauſe her houſehold are clothed in ſcarlet*; or, as it may be rendered, are clothed *with pairs*, have two coats a-piece, *Prov.* xxxi. 21. (See *Gen.* vi. 19, 20. where the word כפל occurs in this ſignification.)—The body alſo is accommodated with a double covering. The *outermoſt* is that ſoft whitiſh tegument, which riſes in the puſtule of a bliſter. The *innermoſt* is that reddiſh and exquiſitely-tender part, which appears when the bliſter is broke, and the dead ſkin taken off.—The firſt is void of ſenſe, and intended to ſcreen the ſecond, not only from the ſtroke of injuries, but even from the impreſſions of the air, which, mild as it may feel to the *ſheathed* would be too rough and ſharp for the *naked* nerves.

There ſeems to be an alluſion to this particular in that remarkable expreſſion, *Skin for ſkin*, עור בעד עור Job ii. 4. *Skin even unto ſkin*; the very innmoſt ſkin, which cannot be taken away without the greateſt loſs, and ſevereſt pain. Yet, even this *loſt* a man would ſuffer, this *pain* he would endure in order to preſerve *precious* life.

‖ Theſe are ſomewhere prettily ſtyled *cutaneous chimneys*; and no wonder they are imperceptible, if, as Mr *Lewenhoeck* affirms, a ſingle grain of ſand will cover no leſs than 125,000.

§ A *blood-veſſel* at leaſt. Compared with theſe veſſels, the fine *filmy threads*, which, on ſome bright autumnal morning, float in the air, or hang on the ſtubble, muſt be *large* as a bell-rope, or *bulky* as a cable.——Such tubes, one would think, ſhould *burſt* at every breath we draw, or even *break* with their own fineneſs. Yet they are the conduit-pipes, which convey the vital fluid from and to the grand reſervoir. And ſo exquiſite, ſo admirable is their texture, that they will outlaſt the ſtrength of lead, or the heart of oak; *theſe* wearing away, *thoſe* growing ſtronger, by uſe!

¶ *Thy lips are like a thread of ſcarlet*, Cant. iv. 3. Like a *thread*, for their delicate *ſhape*; like a thread of *ſcarlet*, for their glowing *colour*.

‡ The original רקמה ſignifies *finely wrought*, or *elegantly flouriſhed with a needle*.—The tranſlation adopted by our liturgy is, in this place, flat and inexpreſſive. The *Engliſh* word *faſhioned*, has juſt the ſame inferiority to the beautiful *Hebrew* phraſe;

"There is a variety, a regularity, and an elegance, in "the texture of my body; in the formation and arrange- "ment of theſe bones and muſcles, theſe veins and arte- "ries;—reſembling, ſhall I ſay?—rather, infinitely ſur- "paſſing, the moſt coſtly and admired pieces of em- "broidery."

It is one of the fineſt ſimilitudes, which the whole circle of polite arts could afford. Yet every compariſon, fetched from the performances of mankind, muſt neceſſarily debaſe the noble ſubject. All the enrichments, which the needle can give, or the moſt *ſplendid ſilks* receive, are rude, are coarſe, are mere ſackcloth, when ſet in oppoſition to the exquiſite delicacy of the fleſhly web. As indeed all the celebrated *palaces*, *amphitheatres*, *temples*, which ever adorned the moſt magnificent cities in the world, are but a heap of confuſion, if compared with the ſymmetry and beauty of the bodily fabric.——And, what is beyond meaſure marvellous, all theſe wonders of mechaniſm and decoration aroſe,—not from the purer elements,—not from the more refined parts of the creation,—but from the *duſt* of the ground *. How eaſily, *Theron*, can that ſtupendous ARTIFICER *renew* our hearts, and transform our ſouls into his own image, who could raiſe ſuch delicate and ſtately edifices from particles—deſpicable particles of the trodden ſoil!

I could not forbear interpoſing this remark: becauſe it tends to manifeſt our CREATOR's glory, to encourage our hopes, and ſtrengthen our faith. Otherwiſe, I ſhould be angry with myſelf, for interrupting your diſcourſe.——Pray go on with your deſcription of the animal œconomy. Only let me obſerve, that ſuch a courſe of inceſſant action muſt *exhauſt* the fluids; muſt *waſte* the ſolids; and, unleſs both are ſupplied with proper recruits, muſt gradually weaken, and at length totally deſtroy, the machine.

Ther. For this reaſon, it is furniſhed with the organs, and endued with the powers of *nutrition*.—*Teeth*; the foremoſt, thin and ſharp; fitted to bite aſunder the food, or cut † off ſuch a portion, as the mouth can conveniently manage. The hindermoſt, broad and ſtrong; indented like the ſurface of a milſtone ‡, with ſmall cavities, and jagged with little aſperities: which qualify them to grind in pieces whatever is tranſmitted to their operation.—Were the teeth, like our other bones, covered with the uſual membrane, the act of *chewing* would always occaſion great uneaſineſs; and when any hard ſubſtance is eaten, might even lacerate the tender tegument. Were they left without any ſort of covering; they would ſuffer from the inclemencies of the air, and be liable to the penetration of liquors. In which caſe they muſt ſoon become ſoft and unfit for ſervice, or be corrupted, and entirely periſh. To guard againſt theſe diſadvantages, they are curiouſly *glazed*, or overlaid with a neat *enamel*; as white as ivory, and harder than the bone itſelf; which renders them an ornament to the mouth ‖; ſecures them from various injuries; and exempts them from pain in the office of maſtication.

As the rims and cuſhions of a billiard-table, keep the ball from flying off; and ſend it back into the green area, for repeated eſſays of ſkill; ſo the *lips* prevent the food from ſlipping out of the mouth; and, aſſiſted by the tongue, return it to the renewed attrition of the grinders.——While the lips, in concert with the cheeks, are employed in this work, their motion compreſſes the circumjacent glands; and, from innumerable little orifices, a thin *pellucid liquor* exſudes: which moiſtens the attenuated food, and prepares it for more eaſy digeſtion. ——When the mouth remains inactive, theſe fountains of ſpittle are, in a manner, cloſed. But when it is exerciſed, either in ſpeaking or eating, their moiſture then being peculiarly neceſſary, they never fail to give out a ſufficient quantity.

When the ſoldier charges his carbine, the cartridge could not make its way to the bottom, without the proſtruſion of the rammer *. Neither would the food, which we receive at the mouth, deſcend by the force of its own weight, through a narrow and clammy channel, into the ſtomach. To effectuate therefore, and expedite its paſſage, muſcles, both *ſtrait* and *circular*, are provided. The former enlarge the cavity of the throat, and afford a more eaſy admittance; the latter, cloſing behind the deſcending aliment, preſs it downwards, and finiſh the deglutition.——Before the food enters the gullet, it muſt of neceſſity paſs over the orifice of the *windpipe*; conſequently, muſt be in very imminent danger of falling upon the lungs. Which would, if not entirely obſtruct the breath, yet occaſion violent coughing †, and great inconveniencies. To obviate this evil, the all-foreſeeing CONTRIVER has placed a *moveable lid*, or hung a *cartilaginous drawbridge* ‡: which, when any the ſmalleſt particle of food advances to enter the ſtomach, is pulled down and ſhut cloſe; but the very moment the morſel is ſwallowed, it is ſet looſe and ſtands open. By this twofold artifice, the important paſſage is always barred and made ſure, againſt any noxious approaches; yet is always left free for the neceſſary acceſſion of air, and commodious for the purpoſes of reſpiration.

When the maltſter prepares his grain for the tranſmutations of the brewhouſe; he ſuffers it to lie ſeveral hours, ſteeping in the ciſtern, before it is fit to be ſpread upon the floor, or dried on the kiln. The

* This, and the other ſimilitudes, are undoubtedly *too mean* for the noble occaſion. Neither do they, in *every* circumſtance, quadrate with the functions deſcribed. The motion of the muſcles, which miniſter to the act of deglutition, is different from the perpendicular protruſion of the rammer. And it is mentioned, only to demonſtrate the neceſſity of *ſome propelling* force, in order to convey the aliment into the proper receptacle.

When we deſcant upon a ſubject of ſuch extenſive contrivance, and ſuch finiſhed perfection, as the human ſtructure; it is ſcarce poſſible to find ſimilitudes, that will correſpond in *all* particulars, or that can riſe to the *dignity* of the original. Yet if they tend, in any tolerable degree, to explain its formation, to diſplay its uſes, and render its wonderful œconomy ſomewhat more intelligible, perhaps they may be allowed to take place.

I hope, it will be remembered that *Theron* ſpeaks, not as an adept in the ſcience, but as one whoſe higheſt pretenſions are, to admire the work, and adore the ARTIFICER. Which acknowledgment may entitle him to ſome candid indulgence, in caſe he ſhould offend againſt the *preciſe anatomical* exactneſs, either of ſentiment, or expreſſion.

* The LORD GOD *formed man of the duſt of the ground*, Gen. ii. 7.

† Called therefore, *inciſivi*.

‡ Styled accordingly, *molares*.—We find neither of theſe kinds in the new-born babe. As milk is, for a conſiderable time, its appointed food, teeth would be of no ſervice to the infant itſelf. As it is to preſs the tender nipple for this milky ſuſtenance, teeth would be painful and prejudicial to the nurſe. Therefore nature has *poſtponed* the formation of theſe fine implements, till they become both neceſſary and beneficial.

‖ This ornamental furniture of the mouth, is, in the grand *oriental* manner, deſcribed by *Solomon*; *Thy teeth are like a flock of ſheep, that are even ſhorn which come up from the waſhing*, Cant. iv. 2. Growing, not ſingle, like the noſe; not in pairs, like the eyes; but in rows conſiderably numerous, *like a flock*.——None riſing higher than the other; none ſtanding unduly prominent beyond another; but all ſet as true, as if they were ranged by the compaſs; and making as regular an appearance, as the flocks *that are even ſhorn*.—They are clean alſo as the fleeces which have no ſpot, and white as the colour of the pureſt wool, like the flocks *juſt come up from the waſhing*.

† This is what we experience, when, in eating or drinking, any thing goes (as is commonly, and not improperly ſaid) *the wrong way*.

‡ Called the *epiglottis*.

meat

meat and drink likewiſe muſt remain a conſiderable time in the *ſtomach*, before they are of a proper conſiſtence and temperature, either for the tender coats, or the delicate operation of the bowels. For which purpoſe, that great receiver is made—ſtrong to bear,—capacious to hold,—and ſo curiouſly contrived, as to lay a *temporary embargo* * upon its contents. Here they are lodged in the very centre of warmth, and concocted by the moſt kindly combination of heat and humidity. Here they are ſaturated with other fermenting or diluting juices; and are kneaded, as it were, by the motion of the ſtomach, and compreſſion of the neighbouring parts. So that every the minuteſt fragment is ſeparated; the whole is reduced to a *tenuity*, abundantly finer than the exacteſt grinding could effect; and all is worked up into the ſmootheſt, moſt *nicely mixed* pulp imaginable.——From hence it is diſlodged by a gently-acting force; and paſſes, by a gradual tranſition, into the cavity of the inteſtines.

Near the entrance, punctual as a porter in his lodge, waits the *gall-bladder* †; ready to transfuſe its acrimonious, but ſalutary juices, on the advancing aliment: which *diſſolve* its remaining viſcidities; *ſcour* the paſſage of the inteſtines; and keep all its fine apertures clear.—This bag, as the ſtomach fills, is elevated by the diſtention; as the ſtomach empties, is proportionably depreſſed. The former poſture brings on a diſcharge, the latter occaſions a ſuppreſſion of the *bile*. It is furniſhed alſo with a valve, of a very peculiar, but moſt convenient form ‡; through which the deterſive liquid cannot haſtily pour, but muſt gently ooze.——Admirable conſtruction; which, without any care or conſciouſneſs of ours, prohibits an *immoderate* effuſion, yet aſcertains the *needful* ſupply.

Sufficiently charged with this adventitious fluid, the nutritive maſs purſues its way through the *inteſtines*. Whoſe wonderful meanders are incomparably more curious, than the mazes of the *Dædalean* labyrinth. They are actuated with a worm-like or undulatory motion ‖; which protrudes the received aliment, and forces its fine milky particles into the *lacteal veſſels*. Theſe are a ſeries of the moſt delicate *ſtrainers;* ranged, in countleſs multitudes, all along the ſides of the winding paſſage. Each ſo nicely framed, as to admit the nutrimental balmy juices, and reject the groſs excrementitious dregs.—— Had the inteſtines been *ſtrait* and *ſhort*, the food might have gone through them, without reſigning a ſufficient quantity of its nouriſhing particles. Therefore this grandeſt of all the vital ducts, is artfully convolved, and greatly extended; to afford nature an opportunity of *ſifting* more thoroughly whatever paſſes, and of detaining whatever may ſerve her purpoſes.—Leſt ſuch lengths of entrails ſhould be entangled among themſelves, or be cumbrous to the wearer, they are packed into the neateſt folds, and lie within a narrow compaſs. They are at leaſt ſix times longer § than the body which contains them. Yet are they *lodged*, not *crouded;* in a *part*, not in the *whole* region of the lower belly; and, amidſt this ſmall ſpace, have ſufficient room to execute the niceſt and moſt important functions.——Though the alimentary ſubſtance can never miſtake its way; yet it may, through ſome accidental impediment, attempt to return backward. In this caſe, a valve intervenes; and renders what would be extremely pernicious, almoſt always impracticable.——As the whole proceeds in this ſerpentine courſe, it is perpetually ſending off detachments of *nutritious* juices. In conſequence of which, it would loſe its ſoft temperature; might become rugged, and pain the tender parts; perhaps, be hindered from ſliding on to its final exit. To prevent ſuch an obſtruction, glands are poſted in proper places *, and diſcharge a *lubricating* fluid, which aids the progreſs of the maſs, and renews the ſecretion of the chyle. Till all that remains of the one, is clean drawn off; and the other—But here you muſt excuſe me; and for my neglect of farther particularity, your author ſhall make an apology; *Quemadmodum autem reliquiæ cibi depellantur, tum aſtringentibus ſe inteſtinis, tum relaxantibus, haud ſane difficile dictu eſt: ſed tamen prætereundum eſt, ne quid habeat injucunditatis oratio* †.

The *chyle*, drawn off by all the ſecretory orifices, is carried along millions of the fineſt ‡ ducts, and lodged in ſeveral *commodious cells* ‖. As a traveller, by baiting upon the road, and taking proper refreſhment, is better qualified to purſue his journey; ſo the chyle, diverting to thoſe little inns, is mixed with a thin, diluting, watery ſubſtance, which renders it more apt to flow, and more fit for uſe.——From hence it is conveyed to one *common receptacle* §, and mounts through a perpendicular tube. When proviſion or ammunition is tranſmitted to an army, it generally paſſes under an eſcort of able troops. As this is the immediate ſupport, and principal nouriſhment of the whole ſyſtem, its conveyance is guarded and aſcertained with peculiar caution. The *perpendicular tube*, not having ſufficient force of its own, is laid contiguous to the great artery; whoſe ſtrong pulſation drives on the creeping fluid; enables it to overcome the ſteep aſcent, and unload its precious treaſure at the very door of the heart.——Here it enters the trunk of a large vein, moſt conveniently opened for its reception. It enters in a *ſlanting* or *oblique* direction. By this method of approach, it avoids thwarting, and coincides with the purple ſtream; which, inſtead of obſtructing its admiſſion; expedites its paſſage; and, inſtead of being a bar to exclude it, becomes a vehicle to waft it. ——Its entrance is farther ſecured by a valve, admirably conſtructed, and moſt happily ſituate: which *ſhuts* the aperture againſt the refluent blood, in caſe it ſhould offer to obtrude itſelf; but *opens* a free, ſafe, and eaſy avenue, to introduce this milk, this manna of nature.

* Which is quite *contrary* to the œconomy of the gullet; tho' they are not only contiguous to each other, but a continuation of the *ſame* tube.

† The *gall-bladder* is ſituate upon the lower margin of the liver; and to ſecrete the *bilious* juice, is ſuppoſed to be the principal uſe of that largeſt of glands.

‡ A *ſpiral* form.

‖ Styled *vermicular* or *periſtaltic*.

§ According to this calculation, they muſt meaſure, in a pretty tall man, more than *thirty-ſix feet*.—The ſubſtance of the bowels, though *thin* to a delicacy, is *ſtrong* to a wonder. The ſkin of an ox-gut, I am told, will endure the blows of the gold-beater's hammer, for many months, nay for ſeveral years.

* In the bowels, which lie neareſt the ſtomach, theſe glands are *ſmaller* or *fewer*; becauſe in thoſe parts the aliment is copiouſly furniſhed with moiſture. Whereas, in the bowels, which are more remote from the ſtomach, and receive the food drained of a conſiderable quantity of its chyle, the lubricating glands are either *multiplied* or *enlarged*. A moſt admirable proviſion! apparently diverſified, according to the ſeveral changes of the aliment, yet exactly adapted to the exigencies of the animal.

† Cicero *de nat. Deor.*—As *Theron* avoids meddling with a ſubject, which is become uſeleſs and putreſcent, I think myſelf obliged to imitate his *delicacy*. Only I would add one remark in the notes, and ſhall beg leave to expreſs it in *Greek*: that if it ſhould prove, in any degree, diſguſtful; it may have, at leaſt, the *negative* merit, not to offend *many* readers. Ενια δε των αποχωρηματων δυσχερη, απεστρεψε τους τε των οχλων η φυσις, ω απαντεχειν η δυναμις, προσωπαλιν απο των ακοντων. Socrat. Memorab.

‡ Fine indeed! ſince their *orifices*, through which they admit the chyle, are not diſcoverable even by the very *beſt microſcopes*. To this prodigiouſly-nice conſtructure it is owing, that nothing enters the ſubſtance of the blood, but what is ſmaller than the ſmalleſt arteries in the ſyſtem; and thereby fitted to paſs through the fineſt capillary veſſels, without cauſing any obſtruction.

‖ The glands of the meſentery.

§ The *receptaculum chyli*; a reſervatory placed near the left kidney.

The *blood*, through every ſtage of its ample circuit, having ſuſtained great expences; being laid under contribution, by every gland in the whole ſyſtem; and having ſupplied myriads of the capillary veſſels with matter for inſenſible perſpiration; muſt be very much impoveriſhed; but is moſt opportunely recruited by this acceſſion of chyle.——Yet though *recruited*, it is not *refined*. In its preſent crude ſtate, it is abſolutely unqualified to perform the vital tour, or carry on the animal functions. Therefore, by a grand apparatus of muſcular fibres, it is waſted into the *lungs*; and pours a thouſand, thouſand rills into either lobe.——In the cells, the ſpongy cells of this *amazing laboratory*, it imbibes the influences of the external air; its heterogeneous parts are thoroughly incorporated; and its whole ſubſtance is made cool, ſmooth, and florid.——Thus improved, thus exalted, it is tranſmitted to the left ventricle of the HEART; a *ſtrong, active, indefatigable* * muſcle; placed in the very centre of the ſyſtem. Impelled by this beating engine, part ſhoots upward; and ſweeps, with a bounding impetus, into the head. There it impregnates the prolific fields of the brain; and forms thoſe *ſubtile ſpirituous* dews †, which impart ſenſe to every nerve, and communicate motion to every limb. Part flows downward; rolls the reeking current through all the lower quarters; and diſpenſes the nutrimental ſtores, even to the meaneſt member, and the minuteſt veſſel.

Obſerve, how the ſtately *Thames*, and the rapid *Rhine*, refreſh the foreſts and the groves; water the towns, which croud their banks; and make the meadows they interſect, laugh and ſing. So, only with an incomparably-*richer* fluid, and with infinitely *more numerous* ſtreams, this human river laves the ſeveral regions of the body; transfuſing vigour, and propagating health, through the whole.

But how ſhall a ſtream, divided into myriads of channels, and pervading innumerable tracts, how ſhall this be brought back again to its ſource? Should any portion, like your *lake-waters* after a land-flood, deviate from their courſe, or be unable to return,—putrefaction would take place,—a nuiſance would ariſe,—death might enſue. Therefore the all-wiſe CREATOR has connected the extremity of the arteries, with the beginning of the veins. So that the ſame force, which *darts* the crimſon wave through the former, *drives* it through the latter. Thus it is reconducted, without the leaſt extravaſation, to the great ſalient ciſtern ‡. There played off afreſh, it renews and perpetuates the vital functions.

Where two *oppoſite* currents would be in danger of claſhing, a fibrous excreſcence interpoſes *; which, like a projecting pier, breaks the ſtroke of each, and throws both into their proper receptacle.——When the waſture is to be *ſpeedy*, the channels either forbear to wind in their courſe †, or to leſſen in their dimenſions ‡. When the progreſs is to be retarded, the tubes are twined into various convolutions ‖, or their diameter is contracted into a narrower ſize.—Modelled by theſe judicious rules, guarded by theſe wiſe precautions, the living flood never diſcontinues its interchangeable tide; but, night and day, whether we ſleep or wake, ſtill perſeveres to ſally *briſkly* through the arteries, and return *ſoftly* through the veins.

Such aſtoniſhing expedients are uſed, to elaborate the chyle,—to blend it with the blood, and to diſtribute both through the body; by means of which, the animal conſtitution is maintained. In youth, its bulk is increaſed; in age, its decays are repaired; and it is kept in tenantable condition for the ſoul, during the ſpace of ſeventy or eighty years.

Theſe are a few, and but a *very few* inſtances of that contrivance, regularity, and beauty, which are obſervable in the human frame. Attentive inquirers diſcover *deeper* footſteps of deſign, and *more refined* ſtrokes of ſkill; diſcover them, not only in the grand and moſt diſtinguiſhed parts, but in every limb, and in every organ; I may venture to add, in every fibre that is extended, and in every globule § that flows.

Aſp. What a *various*, but *uniform* ſyſtem, is the body! I ſee the greateſt multiplicity of parts, yet the moſt perfect harmony ſubſiſts between them all. No one hinders, but each aſſiſts, the operation of another; and all conſpire to the benefit and preſervation of the whole.—Moſt judiciouſly has the great apoſtle touched this ſubject; and moſt happily applied it, to illuſtrate the reaſonableneſs, and enforce the practice, both of *perſonal* and *ſocial* duties, of private content and of public concord ¶.

The body, he obſerves, *is not one member, but many*. To each of which ſome peculiar and needful office is aſſigned. So that the *foot*, though placed in the loweſt order, and deſtined to ſerve on the very ground, has no reaſon to reckon itſelf a worthleſs outcaſt; or to ſay, *Becauſe I am not the head, I am not of the body*. Neither has the *head*, in its exalted ſtation, and amidſt its honourable functions, any cauſe to deſpiſe the inferior limbs; or to ſay with contempt and ſelf-ſufficiency, *I have no need of you*.——If there were no feet, what would become of the locomotive faculty? Or how could the body convey itſelf from one place to another? If there were no hands, what ſhould we do for the inſtruments of action? or how could the animal frame be defended and accommodated? —Nay, the parts, *which ſeem to be leſs honourable*, are neceſſary. Even thoſe which form the ſediments, or throw off the dregs, are of the laſt importance to life

* *Indefatigable.*—This is a very *diſtinguiſhing*, and no leſs *amazing* property of the heart. The large muſcles of the arm, or the much larger of the thigh, are ſoon wearied. A day's labour, or a day's journey, will exhauſt their ſtrength. But the muſcle, which conſtitutes the heart, works through whole weeks, whole months, whole years, and never becomes weary; is equally a ſtranger to *intermiſſion* and *fatigue*.

† Theſe are, what we call, *the animal ſpirits*: and it is generally ſuppoſed, that ſenſation is cauſed by the *undulatory* motion of this nervous fluid.—Though ſome imagine it is performed by the *vibratory* motion of the nerves themſelves.—Others think, that neither of theſe opinions will comport with the texture of thoſe fine tubes, or with the nature of the fluid they contain.—It is, I believe, one of thoſe *myſteries* in the material world, which may reconcile *thinking* and *unprejudiced* minds to the myſteries of the *Chriſtian* revelation. Why ſhould any one wonder, to find ſome doctrines in the BIBLE, that ſurpaſs the reach of human underſtanding; when there are ſo many operations in the body, confeſſedly and abſolutely inexplicable by the moſt acute anatomiſt?

‡ *Solomon* makes uſe of this ſimilitude—*Or ever the pitcher be broken at the fountain; or the wheel broken at the ciſtern.* The two *ventricles* of the heart, repleniſhed with blood, are fitly repreſented by a *ciſtern*; and the *contractile* force of their fibres, acts like the *water-wheel* in hydraulics.——The *pitcher*, which receives the water at the ſpring-head, and conveys it away for the owner's ſervice, may probably ſignify the *aorta*, and the *pulmonary* artery; whoſe functions correſpond with the uſes of ſuch a veſſel, *Eccl.* xii. 6.

* In the point, where the ſtreams, from the *vena cava* and *vena aſcendens*, meet.

† In the great artery, that deſcends to the feet.

‡ In every interval, between all the ramifications.

‖ In the veſſels, which carry the blood to the brain; which form the viſcous ſecretions; and indeed which conſtitute all the glands.

§ The extreme *minuteneſs* of the globules, which form the *red* part of our blood, is one exemplification of this remark; if, as Mr *Lewenhoeck* computes, every globule be 125,000 times ſmaller than the ſmalleſt grain of ſand.

¶ See 1 *Cor.* xii. 12. *&c.*

and

and its comforts. Should those be obstructed in their action, the most raging torment ensues; should the obstruction continue, death is the inevitable consequence. —By this wise adjustment, *there is no schism in the body*; no separate or interfering ends are pursued by the members; but the safety and support of each are the one undivided care of all.

Thus should it be among men, and among Christians; in the civil community, and in the catholic church. There is in both a *subordination* of persons, but a *concatenation* of interests. For which reason, a general agreement should take place, and a mutual subserviency to each other's welfare.——The *meanest* have no cause to be dissatisfied with their condition; but to acquiesce in the unerring disposal of Providence, and chearfully contribute their share to the common good.——The *highest* should condescend to men of low estate; and maintain a regard to the wellbeing of the poorest, as that which is intimately connected with their own.—In a word, *each* should feel a tender concern for all; rejoicing in their happiness, and studying to establish it; sympathizing with their miseries, and endeavouring to heal them.

I am sure, my *Theron* will be pleased with this fine comparison, used by the apostle; and adapted to purposes, at once so noble and so benevolent. Especially, as it receives additional propriety and force from his own observations.——But I have one more inquiry to make.

Your system, though *organized*, though endued with a principle of *motion*, and furnished with the powers of *nutrition*, is still destitute of *sense*.—The creation abounds with objects fitted to yield the most refined entertainment. The sun impurples the robe of morning, and stars bespangle the curtains of night. Flowers of silver whiteness, and of golden lustre, enamel the ground. Fruits of all radiant hues, and of every delicious taste, hang amiably dangling on the boughs.

> ——*Airs also, vernal airs,*
> *Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune*
> *The trembling leaves.*

But we hear of no capacities formed for the *enjoyment* of these various delights. Without which, the breath of fields must lose its reviving fragrance; the whispering grove must degenerate into sullen silence; and nature's book of knowledge, all fair and instructive, be no better than a vast unmeaning blank.

Ther. Therefore the great CREATOR, profusely gracious to mankind, has made us a present, an inestimable present, of the *senses*; to be the inlets of innumerable pleasures, and the means of administering the most valuable advantages.

High in the head, bright and conspicuous as a star in the brow of evening, is placed the *eye*. In this elevated situation, like a centinel posted in his watch-tower, it commands the most enlarged prospect.——Consisting only of simple fluids, inclosed in thin tunicles, it conveys to our apprehension all the graces of blooming nature, and all the glories of the visible heavens.——How prodigiously wonderful! that an image of the *hugest* mountains, and a transcript of the most *diversified* landscapes, shall enter the small circlet of the pupil!—How surprisingly artful! that the rays of light, like an inimitable pencil, should paint on the optic nerves; paint in an instant of time; paint in their *truest* colours, and *exactest* lineaments, every species of external objects!

The eye is so tender, that a slight accident, scarce perceivable by some other parts of the body, would be very injurious to its delicate frame. It is guarded therefore with remarkable circumspection, and the most solicitous care; with a care evidently proportioned to its nice texture, and extensive usefulness. It is *intrenched* deep in the head; and *barricaded*, on every side, with a strong fortification of bones.——As the incursion of the smallest fly would incommode the polished surface, it is farther defended by two substantial *curtains*, hung on a most slender cartilaginous rod: which secure it, not barely from blows, and from any hurtful attrition, but also from every troublesome annoyance. In sleep, when there is no occasion to exercise the sense, but an absolute necessity to protect the organ, these curtains *spontaneously* close, and never fail to lie shut. At any time, they will *fly* together with a motion quick as the alarm of fear, I had almost said, quicker than thought itself. At all times they are lined with an extremely-fine sponge *, wet with its own *native dews*; which lubricate the eyeball; oil, as it were, its wheels; and fit it for a course of unwearied activity.——At the end of this skinny mantelet (if I may use the military style) is planted a range of bristly *palisadoes* †: which keep out the least mote; ward off even the straggling atom; and moderate the otherwise too potent impressions of the sunbeams ‡.

The *brows* are a kind of natural *pent-house*, thatched and arched with curious wreaths of hair. The thatch is intended to divert the sweat from trickling into the eyes, and offending them with its brine. The *arches* are so finely coloured, and so elegantly turned, that they set off the whiteness of the forehead, and bestow additional grace on the whole countenance.——Because, in our waking hours, there is almost an incessant call for those little orbs, they run upon the finest *casters*; rolling upwards or downwards, to the right hand or to the left, with the utmost speed, and with equal ease. Which circumstance, added to the flexibility of the neck, renders our *two* eyes as useful, as if the whole body, like the living creatures in St *John*'s vision, was *full of eyes before and behind* ‖.

The *ear* consists of an outward porch and inner rooms, with tools of the most admirable contrivance and finished workmanship. The contrivance and the workmanship incomparably nicer than the designs of *Palladio*, or the architecture of *Solomon*'s temple; though the former were drawn from the magnificent monuments of *Rome*, though the latter was built in the taste of *heaven*. Yea, so consummately nice is the structure of this organ, that GOD, the only wise GOD, is not ashamed to be called its artificer. *He that planted the ear* §, is to be found among the titles of the exalted JEHOVAH.——In one very remarkable peculiarity, this minute fabric resembles that sa-

* The *glandula lachrymalis* and its ducts; opening on the inner part of the eyelid, and secreting the fluid, which *Theron* calls its oil; because it irrigates the eyeball, and facilitates its motion.

† The hairs, which arise upon the extremities of the eyelash, grow only to a certain convenient length, and never stand in need of cutting.——They are not flaccid and pendulous, like those of the head; but *stiff* and *prominent*, like bristles. The first sort would be troublesome, the last is beneficial.——Add to this, that their points stand out of the way; those of the upper eyelid being bent upwards, and those of the lower downwards.——So nice is nature, even in such small matters!

‡ The incessant, the more than fatherly care, which the *LORD GOD ALMIGHTY* takes of his people, is represented in scripture by this extraordinary provision made for the security of the eye; which is one of the *finest* images, that fancy can form; and one of the most *consolatory* truths, that faith can believe. *He kept him as the apple of his eye*, Deut. xxxii. 10.—*He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*, Zech. ii. 8.—The reader will easily see, that the comparison, every way beautiful, is carried to the *highest* pitch of energy and beauty, by the sacred writers. Not barely the eye, but the *apple* or *pupil* of the eye; the tenderest part even of the most tender member.

‖ Psal. xciv. 9. § Rev. iv. 6.

cred

cred edifice, the porch being loftier * than any other part of the building.

The *porch* I call that ſemicircular lodge, which ſtands ſomewhat prominent from the head; and is—not *ſoft* and *ſinking* as fleſh, leſt it ſhould abſorb the ſound, rather than promote the repercuſſion; not *hard* and *ſtubborn* as bone, leſt it ſhould occaſion painful inconveniencies, when we repoſe our ſelves on either ſide;—but of a *cartilaginous* ſubſtance, covered with a tight expanſion of ſkin, and wrought into irregular bends and hollows: which, like circling hills, or ſurrounding rocky ſhores †, collect the wandering undulations of the air; and tranſmit them, with a vigorous impulſe, to the finely-ſtretched membrane of the tympanum ‡.——The *avenue*, or narrow entry, is ſecured from the inſinuating attempts of little inſects, by a *moraſs* (ſhall I ſay?) of bitter and viſcous matter; diſguſtful to their taſte, and embarraſſing to their feet.——The *hammer* and the *anvil*; the *ſtirrup* and the *drum*; the winding labyrinths ‖, and the ſounding galleries; theſe, and other pieces of mechaniſm, all inſtrumental to the power of hearing, are beyond deſcription curious.

Amazingly-nice muſt be the formation, and inconceivably-exact the tenſion, of the auditory nerves; ſince they correſpond with the ſmalleſt tremors of the atmoſphere, and eaſily diſtinguiſh their moſt ſubtile variations. With the gentle gales that fan us, or even with the ruder blaſts that aſſault us, theſe delicate ſtrings are but little affected. Whereas they are perfect *uniſons* with thoſe fine, thoſe *ſignificant* agitations of the air, which the acuteſt touch is unable to diſcern. Theſe living chords, tuned by an almighty hand, and diffuſed through the echoing iſles, and ſonorous cells,—theſe receive the impreſſions of ſound, and propagate them to the brain. Theſe § give exiſtence to the charms of muſic, and reciprocate the rational entertainments of diſcourſe. Theſe treat my *Aſpaſio* with the melody of the woodland choirs, and afford *me* the ſuperior pleaſure of my friend's converſation.

The eye perceives only the objects that are *before* it; whereas the ear warns us of tranſactions, that paſs above us, behind us, all around us.—The eye is uſeleſs, amidſt the gloom of night, and cannot carry its obſervation through the bolted door, or the cloſed window-ſhutter. But the ear admits her intelligence, through the *darkeſt* medium, and the *minuteſt* cranny.——The eye is upon duty, only in our walking hours; but the ear is always expanded, and always acceſſible *; a courier which never tires; a centry ever in his box.——To ſecure a reſource, in caſe any misfortune ſhould diſable *one* of the hearing or ſeeing organs, our all-gracious MAKER has given us *duplicates* of each.

As there are tremulous concuſſions impreſſed upon the air, diſcernable only by the inſtruments of hearing; there are alſo *odoriferous* particles, wafted by the ſame aereal vehicle, which are perceivable only by the *ſmell*. ——The noſtrils are wide at the bottom, that a large quantity of effluvia may enter; narrow at the top, that, when entered, they may cloſe their ranks, and act with greater vigour.——Fine, beyond all imagination, are the ſteams which exhale from fetid or fragrant bodies. The very beſt microſcopes, which diſcover *thouſands* and *thouſands* of animalcules in a drop of putrefied water, cannot bring *one* individual, among all theſe evaneſcent legions, to our ſight. They fail, in numberleſs ſquadrons, cloſe to our eyes, cloſe by our ears; yet are ſo amazingly attenuated, that they elude the ſearch of both. Nevertheleſs, ſo judiciouſly † are the *olfactory* nets laid, and ſo artfully their meſhes ſized, that they catch theſe vaniſhing fugitives. They catch the roaming perfumes, which fly off from the opening honeyſuckle; and take in the ſtationed ſweets, which hover round the expanded roſe. They imbibe all the balmy fragrance of ſpring, all the aromatic exhalations of autumn, and enable us to banquet even on the *inviſible* dainties of nature.

Furniſhed with theſe ſeveral organs,

——*Not a* breeze
Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud *imbibes*
The ſetting ſun's effulgence, not a ſtrain
From all the tenants of the warbling ſhade
Aſcends, but whence our ſenſes *can partake*
Freſh pleaſure ‡.

Another capacity for frequent pleaſure, our bountiful CREATOR has beſtowed, in granting us the power of *taſte*. By means of which, the food that ſupports

* Compare 1 *Kings* vi. 2. with 2 *Chron.* iii. 4.

† Alluding to thoſe expreſſive lines, where *echo* ſeems to live in the ſound, as well as in the ſenſe;

——*Vocemque incluſa volutant*
Littora, pulſati colles clamore reſultant. VIRG.

‡ So called, becauſe it reſembles a *drum*, both in figure and uſe. Being a fine ſkin, expanded upon a circle of bones, and over a poliſhed reverberating cavity.—It is affected by the vibrations of the external air, as the covering of the war-drum is by the impreſſions of the ſtick.—It is alſo furniſhed with *braces*, which ſtrain or relax it at pleaſure; and accommodate its tenſion either to loud or languid ſounds.

‖ Of this kind is the auditory tube, intended to *ſoften* and *qualify* the ruſhing ſound. Leſt, if the incurſion were direct, it might be too impetuous, and injure the delicate expanſe of the tympanum.—While this is deſigned to moderate, the concavities of the inner ſtructure are prepared to *heighten* and *invigorate* the ſound, by calling in the auxiliary force of an echo.—Such intentions, ſo *varying*, may ſo *oppoſite*, concur to form this admirable organ!

§ Elegantly ſtyled, *the daughters of muſic*. For this phraſe may refer, as well to the organs which *diſtinguiſh*, as to thoſe which, *form*, the harmonious accents. *Eccl.* xii. 4.——Methinks, I am always deſirous to add any appoſite expreſſion, or parallel paſſage from the BIBLE. As I find, writers of taſte and politeneſs are ſtudious to embelliſh their works, with quotations from the *claſſics*. And I perſuade myſelf, the reader will allow me to gratify this favourite inclination; becauſe every portion of that ineſtimable book, however minute, is like the filings of gold, or the ſparks of a diamond; is ſure, when properly applied, to add *worth*, and impart *beauty*.

* *Auditus autem ſemper patet. Ejus enim ſenſus etiam dormientes egemus. A quo, cum ſonus eſt acceptus, eitam e ſomno excutimur.* De nat. Deor.

† The *keenneſs* and *ſagacity* of this ſenſe, furniſhed the evangelical prophet with a beautiful metaphor, to diſplay the *accuracy* of the MESSIAH's judgment in ſpiritual things, *Iſ.* xi. 3. ‏והריחו implies his faculty or ſenſe of *ſmelling*; which expreſſion is accommodated to our language, and properly enough tranſlated, *ſhall make him of quick underſtanding*. q. d. "He ſhall judge, "not according to external appearance, but according to the ſtate "of the inner man. Unfeigned ſelf-abaſement, affiance in a "REDEEMER's righteouſneſs, and faith purifying the heart; "theſe endowments, though not obſerved, or, if obſerved, not "valued by the world; *theſe* ſhall be the teſt of his approbation, "and the objects of his eſteem. Theſe conſtitute, what is called "in the next words, *the fear of the* LORD.

"In determining the reality of theſe qualities, he ſhall be *unerringly* exact, and *infallibly* true. Let Hypocriſy put on every "maſk, and practiſe all her wiles, they ſhall avail nothing before "the ROOT and OFFSPRING of *David*. (ver. 1.) As thoſe "extremely ſubtile effluvia, which eſcape the inquiſition of every "other ſenſe, are eaſily and perfectly diſtinguiſhed by the *ſmell*; "ſo thoſe receſſes of the breaſt, and thoſe ſecrets of the heart, "which lie too deep for all human diſcernment; even they are "naked and open, are obvious and palpable, to *his* divinely ſagacious underſtanding."

‡ See that very elegant poem, *The pleaſures of imagination*, book III.

our body, feasts our palate; first, treats us with a pleasing regale; then, distributes its beneficial recruits.——The razor, whetted with oil, becomes more exquisitely keen. The *saliva*, flowing upon the tongue, and moistening its nerves, quickens them into the livelier acts of sensation.——This sense is circumstanced, in a manner peculiarly benign and wise; so as to be a standing, tho' silent plea for *temperance*. Without recurring to the vengeance of GOD, or the terrors of eternal judgment, it is a powerful dissuasive from irregular and excessive indulgencies. Because the exercise of sobriety sets the finest edge on its faculties; and adds the most *poignant* relish to its enjoyments. Whereas riot and voluptuousness *pall* the appetite; blunt its sensibility; and render the gratifications extremely languid, if not perfectly insipid.——The sight, the smell, the taste are, not only so many separate sources of delight, but a joint security to our health. They are the *vigilant* and *accurate* inspectors, which examine our food, and inquire into its properties, whether it be pleasant or disagreeable, wholesome or noxious. For the discharge of this office, they are excellently qualified, and most commodiously situate. So that nothing can gain admission through the mouth, till it has undergone the scrutiny, and obtained the passport of them all.

To all these, as a most necessary and advantageous supplement, is added the sense of *feeling*: which renders the whole assemblage complete.——While other senses have a particular place of residence, this is diffused throughout *the whole* body. In the palms of the hands, on the tips of the fingers, and indeed through all the extreme parts of the flesh, it is most quick and lively; as the advanced guards, or scouts upon the frontiers, are or ought to be peculiarly attentive and wakeful.—Scouts did I say? The whole army of *Xerxes*, drawn out in battle array, with his *millions* of supernumerary attendants *, were but like a few *gleaners* straggling in the field, if compared, either in number or order, with those nervous detachments, which pervade the texture of the skin, and minister to the act of feeling.—How happily is this sense tempered between the two extremes! Neither so *acute*, as the membranes of the eyes; nor so *obtuse*, as the callus of the heel. The former would expose us to continual pain; render our cloaths galling, and the very down oppressive. The latter would quite benumb the body, and almost annihilate the touch.—Nor this alone, but *all* the senses are most exactly adapted to their respective offices, and to the exigencies of our present state. Were they *strained* to a much higher tone, they would be avenues of anguish. Were they *relaxed* into greater insensibility, they would be so many useless incumbrances.

Asp. How admirable and gracious is this provision, which the blessed GOD has made, to accommodate us with delightful sensations, and instructive ideas!—The taste, the touch, and the smell, are somewhat *straitened* in the extent of their operations. The ear carries on a correspondence with a *larger* circle of objects. But the sight most amply supplies whatever is wanting in all the other senses. The sight spreads itself to an *infinite* multitude of bodies, and brings within our notice some of the *remotest* parts of the universe.—The taste, the touch the smell, perceive nothing but what is brought to their very doors. Whereas the eye extends its observation, as far as the orbit of *Saturn*; nay glances, and in an instant of time, to the inconceivable distance of the stars. The compass of the earth, and the immensity of the skies, are its unlimited range.

From this remarkable variety, with regard to the *sphere* and *activity* of the senses, St *Paul* forms one of the finest, boldest, and most important comparisons in the world. By this he illustrates the difference between the wisdom which is derived from the word of divine revelation, and the wisdom which is acquired by dint of human application.—In his oration to the *Athenians*, speaking of their most celebrated sages, he says, *If so be, they might* feel after, *and find HIM* *. In his epistle to the *Hebrews*, speaking of the man *Moses*, our author observes, that *he endured as seeing him who is invisible* †. Writing to his *Corinthian* converts, he adds, as a farther heightening of the contrast, *We all*, beholding, *with open face the glory of the LORD* ‡.——The knowledge of the *philosopher*, is like that obscure and scanty information, which is to be obtained by groping with the hand in a dark night. The knowledge of the *Christian*, is like that copious influx of clear and enlarged ideas, which we receive by the mediation of the eye, amidst the shining of a bright day.

Tully, we find, has, in the book before us, hit upon some of the most general and obvious uses, to which the several parts of the body are adapted. Yet how *superficial* and *deficient* appears his penetration, when we take in the much deeper discoveries, and the much higher improvements of our modern anatomy! Thus, and abundantly more defective, is his knowledge of moral duties and divine doctrines; when compared with what is taught us in the *plain* sermon on the mount, and the unstudied epistles of the *Jewish* tent-maker!

Therefore, though I would bless the beneficent GOD, for the ministration of all the senses, and particularly for the noble organs of vision; I would be more especially thankful for that light of the world, CHRIST JESUS and his glorious gospel; as well as for that *spiritual eye* ‖, by which the one is understood, and the other seen,—a *lively faith*. I would also long for that place of beatific enjoyment, where our views of the adorable GODHEAD, and our acquaintance with the sublimest truths, will as much transcend all our present apprehensions, as the most enlightened *saint* exceeds the benighted *Gentile*.

Ther. The crowning gift,——that which improves the satisfaction, and augments the beneficial effects, accruing from all the senses, is *speech*.—Speech makes me a gainer from the eyes and ears of other people; from the ideas they conceive, and the observations they make. And what an admirable instrument, for articulating the voice, and modifying it into speech, is the *tongue!*—The tongue has neither bone nor joint; yet fashions itself, with the utmost volubility, into every shape and every posture, which can express sentiment, or constitute harmony. This little collection of muscular fibres, under the conducting skill of the CREATOR, is the artificer of our words §. By this we communicate the *secrets* of the breast, and make our very thoughts audible. By this we instruct the ignorant, and comfort the distressed; we glorify GOD,

* The soldiers and attendants of *Xerxes*, amounted to five millions two hundred and eighty thousand. Another army, so large and numerous, occurs not in all the records of history. *Vid.* HERODOT. lib. VII.

* *Acts* xvii. 27. Ει αρα γε ψηλαφησειαν αυτον.

† Heb. xi. 27. ‡ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

‖ *Luke* xxiv. 45. *Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.* Διηνοιξε is the word used in this place, and the word used by the evangelical historian, when he relates that *supernatural* act, which gave sight to the blind.

§ I am sensible that the *glottis* has a considerable share, in modulating the sound, and forming the voice. But, as the nature and office of this most *curious aperture*, are very little known by the generality of people; we chuse to follow the popular opinion, so neatly described by the poet,

——*Dædala lingua,*
Lingua figuratrix verborum, opificxque loquelæ.
Anti-Lucret.

and edify each other*; the academic explains the abſtruſeſt ſciences, and the eccleſiaſtic preaches the everlaſting goſpel.——This is likewiſe the efficient of *muſic*. It is ſoft as the lute, or ſhrill as the trumpet; it can warble as the lyre, or reſound like the organ. Connecting the ſacred anthem with its tuneful ſtrains, we ſoothe the cares, and beguile the toils of life; we imitate the angelic choirs, and anticipate, in ſome degree, their celeſtial joys.——As the tongue requires full ſcope, and an eaſy play, it is lodged in an ample cavity; and ſurrounded with reſervoirs of ſpittle, always ready to diſtil the lubricating dews. It moves under a concave roof, which ſerves as a ſounding-board to the voice; giving it much the ſame additional vigour and grace, as the ſhell of a violin adds to the language of the ſtrings.

Wiſe,—wonderfully wiſe, and eminently gracious, is the regulation both of *ſpontaneous* and *involuntary* motion. Was this regulation reverſed, what deplorable inconveniencies would take place; nay, what unavoidable ruin muſt enſue! *Deplorable inconveniencies;* if the diſcharges of the bowels, or evacuations of the bladder, were quite independent on our leave. *Unavoidable ruin;* if the action of the heart required the co-operation of our thoughts, or the buſineſs of reſpiration waited for the concurrence of our will.

The will, in ſome caſes, has not ſo much as a ſingle vote. In others ſhe *determines* and *commands*, like an abſolute ſovereign; nor is there a monarch upon earth ſo punctually obeyed, as this queen of the human ſyſtem. If ſhe but intimate her pleaſure, the ſpirits run, they fly, to execute her orders; to ſtretch the arm, or cloſe the hand; to furrow the brow with frowns, or dimple the cheek with ſmiles.——How *eaſily*, as well as *punctually*, are theſe orders carried into execution! to turn the ſcrew, or work the lever, is laborious and weariſome. But we move the vertebræ, with all their appendent chambers; we advance the leg, with the whole incumbent body; we riſe from our ſeat; we ſpring from the ground; and though much force is exerted, though a very conſiderable weight is raiſed, we meet with no difficulty, we complain of no fatigue.

That all this ſhould be effected without any toil, and by a *bare act* of the will, is very ſurpriſing. But that theſe motions ſhould be made, renewed, continued, even while we remain *entirely* ignorant of the *manner* in which they are performed, is beyond meaſure aſtoniſhing.—Who can play ſo much as a ſingle tune upon the ſpinnet, without learning the difference of the keys, or ſtudying the rudiments of muſic? Impoſſible! Yet the mind of man touches *every* ſpring of the human machine, with the moſt maſterly ſkill; though ſhe knows nothing at all concerning the nature of her implements, or the proceſs of her operations.——We walk, we run, we leap; we throw ourſelves into a variety of poſtures, and perform a multitude of motions; yet are utterly unable to ſay, which nerve ſhould be active; which muſcle ſhould ſwell; or which tendon approximate.

Put a *German* flute into the hand even of a ſenſible perſon: without a maſter to inſtruct him, he is at a loſs to make the inſtrument ſpeak; much leſs is he able to ſink and ſoften the ſound, to exalt and extend it, juſt as he pleaſes.——Yet we are ſelf-taught in the method of *forming*, *regulating*, and *varying* the voice. Naturally, and with unpremeditated fluency, we give it the languiſhing cadence of ſorrow, or the ſprightly airs of joy; the low faultering accents of fear, or the elevated tone and rapid ſallies of anger.

The eye of a ruſtic, who has no notion of optics, or any of its laws, ſhall *lengthen* and *ſhorten* its axis, *dilate* and *contract* its pupil, without the leaſt heſitation, and with the utmoſt propriety; adapting itſelf, even with mathematical exactneſs, to the particular diſtance of objects, and the different degrees of light. By which means, it performs ſome of the moſt curious experiments in the improved *Newtonian* philoſophy, without the leaſt knowledge of the ſcience, or ſo much as any conſciouſneſs of its own dexterity.

I can never ſufficiently admire this multiplicity of animated organs; their finiſhed form, and their faultleſs order. Yet I muſt confeſs myſelf ſtruck with greater admiration at the power, the *truly-myſterious* power and ſway, which the ſoul exerciſes over them. Ten thouſand reins are put into her hand; ſhe is not acquainted with their office, their uſe, or their name; ſhe has not learned ſo much as to diſtinguiſh one from another; nevertheleſs ſhe manages all, conducts all, without the leaſt perplexity or the leaſt irregularity; rather with a promptitude, a conſiſtency, and a ſpeed, which nothing elſe can equal!

Upon the whole—great reaſon had *Euripides* to call the human body,

Σοφα τεκτονος καλον ποικιλμα.

I believe, the preceding obſervations will juſtify us, if we give a fuller meaning to the poet, and tranſlate his words—*the infinitely-varied, and inimitably-fine workmanſhip of a great, ſupreme, unerring ARTIST.* Or, as *Virgil* ſpeaks, with a pertinency and a ſpirit, which epitomizes all I have ſaid, and expreſſes all I would ſay; this bodily ſtructure is indeed—*non enarrabile textum* *.

Aſp. Wonderfully, I perceive, *and fearfully are we made*†!—Made of ſuch complicated parts, each ſo correctly faſhioned, and all ſo exactly arranged ‡; every one executing ſuch curious functions, and many of them operating in ſo myſterious a manner; as may juſtly render us *a wonder to ourſelves.*—Since health depends upon ſuch a numerous aſſemblage of moving organs: ſince a ſingle ſecretion ſtopped, may deſtroy the ſalutary temperature of the fluids; or a ſingle wheel clogged, may put an end to the vital motion of the ſolids: with what holy *fear ſhould we paſs the time of our ſojourning here below* ||? truſting, for continual preſervation, not merely on our own care, but on that omnipotent hand, which formed the admirable machine: that the ſame hand which formed it, may ſuperintend its agency, and ſupport its being §.

When we conſider the extenſive contrivance, and delicate mechaniſm,—what plans of geometry have been laid; what operations of chemiſtry are performed; in a word, what miracles of art and elegance are executed, in order to furniſh us with the neceſſary recruits, and the ſeveral delights of life;—is there not abundant reaſon to cry out, with the ſame inſpired writer, "*How dear are thy counſels unto me, O GOD!* "Thy counſels of creating wiſdom! thou haſt not

* The articulating tongue is called *our glory*, Pſal. lvii. 8. And ſuch indeed it is, when devoted to *theſe* purpoſes. It is then a diſtinction, not only of man from the brutal herd, but of the righteous from the congregation of the ungodly. It is then like *choice ſilver*, or as *a tree of life*.

Who would not bleſs for this the gift of ſpeech,
And in the tongue's beneficence be rich?

* That is, a ſtructure, not barely correct, or highly finiſhed, but (as *Theron* has elſewhere expreſſed it) *beyond deſcription curious*.

† Pſal. cxxxix. 14.

‡ St *Paul*'s language on the ſubject is exceedingly beautiful and expreſſive, Συναρμολογουμενον και συνβιβαζομενον. Eph. iv. 16. The ſeveral parts moſt nicely *adapted* to each other, and moſt perfectly *harmonizing* with the whole. All *aſſociated* with that propriety, and *connected* with that firmneſs which are the very foundation of ſymmetry, vigour, and agility.

‖ 1 Pet. i. 17.

§ Agreeable to that philoſophical maxim, *Creatio et conſervatio eadem eſt actio*; and to thoſe ſcriptual acknowledgments, *It is GOD who holdeth our ſoul in life; he is the length of our days; his viſitation prolongeth our ſpirit.*

"been ſparing, but even laviſh of thy indulgent de-
"ſigns. Thou haſt omitted no expedient, which might
"eſtabliſh my eaſe; enlarge my comforts; and pro-
"mote, yea complete my bodily happineſs!" And is not this a moſt endearing obligation *to glorify the bleſſed GOD, with our bodies, as well as with our ſpirits* *?

Ther. Our ſpirits! Ay; what is this manſion of fleſh, though ſo exquiſitely wrought, compared with the noble and immortal inhabitant, which reſides within?

——That intellectual being;
Thoſe thoughts, which wander through eternity †!

This conſideration inclines me to think, that, if the *caſket* be ſo highly poliſhed, the *jewel* cannot be ſo exceſſively coarſe, as my *Aſpaſio*'s doctrine of original corruption ſuppoſes.

Aſp. I perceive your aim, *Theron;* but muſt beg leave, at preſent, to decline all overtures for a diſpute. If my arguments have failed, your deſcription has anſwered its end.——I cannot ſuffer my thoughts to be diverted from a ſubject, which is ſo very engaging, yet ſo rarely diſcuſſed. I have ſuch a ſtrong deſire to recollect and retain what has been obſerved, that even *your* converſation will, at this juncture, loſe its reliſh. Here therefore I put a period to our diſcourſe, and muſt break away from your company, in order to ruminate and digeſt my notions, in ſome ſequeſtered lonely walk. Unleſs you will permit me, before I retire, to make one remark.——And let it not ſtartle my friend, if I venture to ſay, That, amidſt all his curious obſervations, he has forgot the principal circumſtance of *honour* and *excellence*, which dignifies the human body.

Ther. I have omitted many fine and admirable properties I confeſs. But ſure I have not forgot the *principal* and moſt diſtinguiſhing.

Aſp. You need not be diſpleaſed with yourſelf. It argues no defect in your diſſertation. The circumſtance I have in my view, could never be diſcovered, by following the diſſecting knife. It is learned, not from *Cheſelden*'s draughts, or the tables of *Albinus;* but from the word of revelation. What I mean, is this:—The human body was exalted to a moſt intimate and *perſonal union* with the eternal SON of GOD. He who decorated the heaven with ſtars, and crowned the ſtars with luſtre; *HE vouchſafed to be made fleſh* *, *and was found in faſhion as a man* †.——Nay, this is, even *now*, the apparel of that divine and adorable PERSON. He is cloathed with our nature; he wears our very limbs; and appears in the dreſs of humanity, even at the right hand of GOD, and at the head of all the heavenly hoſts.

What think you of another privilege, mentioned by the apoſtle? *Your bodies are the temple of the* HOLY GHOST ‡. Not your ſouls only, but your very bodies are the ſhrine, in which *the high and holy* ONE, *that inhabiteth eternity*, condeſcends to dwell. HE, who ſitteth between the cherubim, and walketh in the circuit of the ſkies, is pleaſed to ſanctify theſe earthly tenements, for his own habitation. And is not this a *much grander* embelliſhment, than all their matchleſs contrivance and maſterly workmanſhip? Juſt as the *rod* which budded, and the *manna* which was miraculouſly preſerved; the ſacred *oracle* of *Urim* and *Thummim*, with the *cloud* of glory covering the mercy-ſeat; were a much higher diſtinction to *Solomon*'s temple, than the moſt heightened beauties of architecture.

Nor muſt I omit the dignity,—the tranſcendent and amazing dignity,—which is reſerved for theſe ſyſtems of fleſh, at the *reſurrection* of the juſt. They will then be refined and improved into the moſt perfect ſtate, and the moſt beauteous form; ſurpaſſing whatever is reſplendent and amiable in the moſt ornamental appearances of material nature. They will be purer than the unſpotted firmament; brighter than the luſtre of the ſtars; and, which exceeds all parallel, which comprehends all perfection, they will *be made like unto CHRIST's glorious body* ‖; like that incomparably-glorious body, which the bleſſed JESUS wears, in his celeſtial kingdom, and on his triumphant throne.

When we add all theſe *magnificent prerogatives*, which are revealed in ſcripture, to all thoſe *inimitable niceties*, which are diſplayed by anatomiſts, what thankfulneſs, what admiration, can equal ſuch a profuſion of favours?

When all thy mercies, O my GOD,
My riſing ſoul ſurveys,
Tranſported with the view, I'm loſt
In wonder, love, and praiſe!

* 1 Cor. vi. 20. † Milton. * John i. 14. † Phil. ii. 8. ‡ 1 Cor. vi. 19. ‖ Phil. iii. 21.

DIALOGUE XIII.

THE morning had been wet. At noon the rain ceaſed. But the heavens ſtill continued gloomy. ——Towards evening, a gentle eaſtern gale ſprung up; which diſſipated the dead calm, and cleared the face of the ſky.—The ſun, which had been muffled in clouds, dropped the veil. Diſengaged from the duſky ſhroud, he ſhone forth with *peculiar ſplendor*. His beams, endeared by their late ſuſpenſion, were doubly welcome, and produced unuſual gaiety.

At this juncture, *Theron* and *Aſpaſio* walked abroad. They walked alternately on the terraces; one of which was oppoſite to the country, the other contiguous to the parterre.——Where the gales, impregnated with the *freſheſt* exhalations of nature, breathed the ſmell of meads, and heaths, and groves.—Or elſe ſhaking the cluſters of roſes, and ſweeping the beds of fragrance, they flung *balm* and *odours* through the air.

At a diſtance, were heard the bleatings of the flock, mingled with the lowings of the milky mothers. While more melodious muſic warbled from the neighbouring boughs, and ſpoke aloud the joy of their feathered inhabitants;—and not only ſpoke their joy, but ſpread an *additional* charm over all the landſcape. For, amidſt ſuch ſtrains of native harmony, the breathing perfumes ſmell more ſweet, the ſtreaming rills ſhine more clear, and the univerſal proſpect looks more gay.

Then was experienced, what *Milton* ſo delicately deſcribes;

If chance the radiant ſun with farewell ſweet
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Atteſt their joy, that hill and valley rings.

With wonder and delight our friends obſerved, both the exquiſite beauty, and the immenſe magnificence of things.——They were ſtruck with the moſt profound veneration

veneration of that almighty MAJESTY, who hung the ſun in vaults of azure, and clothed his orb with robes of luſtre: whoſe *right hand ſpanneth the heavens* *, *and ſtretcheth them out as a tent*, for innumerable creatures, worlds, ſyſtems *to dwell in* †.——Charmed they were at the conſideration of the CREATOR's boundleſs beneficence: who lifts up the light of his countenance, and joy is ſhed; who opens his munificent hand, and plenty is poured, throughout all the regions of the univerſe. Inſomuch, that even inanimate beings ſeem to ſmile under a ſenſe of the bleſſings: and though they find not a tongue to praiſe, yet ſpeak their acclamations by their *gladdened* looks.

Ther. How very different, *Aſpaſio*, is this delightful appearance of things, from your ill-favoured doctrine of original guilt, and original depravity! Your doctrine is a contradiction to the language of nature. Nature ſays, through all her works, "That GOD is *good*, and "men are made to be *happy*." Whereas your opinion would turn the whole world into a vaſt hoſpital, and make every individual perſon, a *leper* or a *Lazarus*.

Aſp. I join with my *Theron*, and with univerſal nature, in bearing witneſs to the goodneſs of our GOD. And nothing, I am perſuaded, diſplays it more, nothing manifeſts it ſo much, as the doctrine of our *fall* in *Adam*, connected with our *recovery* in CHRIST.——Only in one particular I am obliged to diſſent. It is not my opinion that *would make*, but the ſin of our forefather which *has made*, the whole world an infirmary, and every individual perſon a leper.

Ther. At this rate, you would croud into that *ſingle* act of diſobedience, evils more numerous, and more fatal, than the plagues which were lodged in *Pandora*'s box, or the troops which were ſtowed in the *Trojan* horſe.

Aſp. Far more numerous, and infinitely more pernicious.——The fable of *Pandora*'s box ſeems to have been a ſhred of the doctrine, picked up by the Heathen wits, and faſhioned according to their ſportive fancy. This would, if there was any occaſion for ſuch weak aſſiſtance, bring in the *Pagan* theology, as a ſubſidiary evidence to our cauſe.——The *Trojan* horſe poured ruin upon a ſingle city; but the primitive tranſgreſſion entailed miſery upon all generations.

Ther. You have advanced this heavy charge pretty ſtrenuouſly, I muſt confeſs; but without deſcending to facts, or appealing to experience. All the invectives are *general* and *declamatory*, none pointing and particular.

Aſp. It is eaſy, my dear friend, too eaſy to draw up a particular bill of indictment; and not only to *ſpecify* the facts, but to *demonſtrate* the charge. Experience, ſad experience will furniſh us with a cloud of witneſſes, and prove my remonſtrances to be more than invectives.

Were we to diſſect human nature, as, in our laſt conference, you treated the animal ſyſtem, we ſhould find the leproſy of corruption, ſpreading itſelf through our whole frame. For which reaſon, it is ſtyled, by an inſpired writer, "the old man ‡."——*Old*; becauſe, in its commencement, it was early as the fall; and in its communication to individuals, is co-eval with their being.—*Man*; becauſe it has tainted the body, infected the ſoul, and diſordered the whole perſon.

St *Paul*, deſcribing a profligate converſation, ſpeaks in this remarkable manner; *fulfilling the deſires of the fleſh, and of the mind* ‖. By the deſires of the fleſh, he means thoſe irregular inclinations, which correſpond with the *animal* part of our conſtitution. By the deſires of the mind, he denotes thoſe evil propenſities, which are more immediately ſeated in the *intellectual* faculties. And by both, he very ſtrongly expreſſes the *total* depravation of our nature.

* Iſ. xlviii. 13. † Iſ. xl. 22.
‡ Rom. vi. 6. ‖ Eph. ii. 3.

Ther. What you call evil propenſities, I am apt to think, are not really ſinful, but appointed for the *trial* of our virtue.——Nay, ſince they are confeſſedly *natural*, they cannot be in themſelves evil: becauſe, upon this ſuppoſition, GOD, who is the author of our nature, would be the author alſo of our ſin.

Aſp. Then you imagine, that propenſities to evil are void of guilt. This is the *Popiſh* notion, but neither the *Moſaic* nor the *Apoſtolic* doctrine.——In the law of *Moſes* it is written, *Thou ſhalt not covet* *. The divine LEGISLATOR prohibits, not only the iniquitous practice, but the evil deſire.—The apoſtle gives it in charge to the *Coloſſians*, *Mortify you members, which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection, and* which is the ſource of all, *evil concupiſcence* †. Now, can *that* be free from guilt, which we are commanded to mortify? which, if not mortified, denominates us children of obedience, and ſubjects us to the wrath ‡ of GOD.

Though theſe propenſities are confeſſedly natural, they may be evil notwithſtanding. The ſacred writers oppoſe what is natural, to what is ſpiritual. Inſtead of commending it, as innocent; they condemn it, as *fooliſh* §, *baſe* §, and *criminal* ¶.——Neither does this make the AUTHOR of our nature, the author of our ſin. But it proves, that our nature has ſuſtained a deplorable loſs; that it is quite different from its original ſtate; that what is ſpoken of the *Iſraelitiſh* people, is applicable to the *human* race; *I planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right ſeed; how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a ſtrange vine* †?

However, let us obſerve your propoſal; dwell no longer on general hints, but deſcend to a particular examination. As our examination will chiefly reſpect the ſoul, let me inquire, what are her principal faculties?

Ther. The *underſtanding*, the *will*, and the *affections*. Theſe are the moſt diſtinguiſhing powers, which that queen of the human œconomy retains in her ſervice.—Theſe, like the ſeveral diſtributions of ſome ample river, run through the whole man; to quicken, fertilize, and enrich all his converſation.——But you repreſent them bitter, as the waters of *Marah*; unwholeſome, as the ſtreams of *Jericho*; noxious, as the pottage prepared for the ſons of the prophets.

Aſp. Nor is this a miſrepreſentation. For ſuch they really are, till divine grace, like *Moſes*'s wood +- like *Eliſha*'s ſalt ++, or the meal = caſt in by that holy man of GOD, *ſweeten* them, *heal* them, and render their operations *ſalutary*.

The underſtanding claims our firſt regard.——This, however qualified to ſerve the purpoſes of civil life, is unable to diſcover the truths, in which *wiſdom* conſiſts; or to form the tempers, from which *happineſs* flows.

Let us take our ſpecimen, not from the uncultivated ſavages of *Afric*, but from the politeſt nation in *Europe*.—The *Grecians* piqued themſelves on their intellectual accompliſhments. They termed all the reſt of mankind *barbarians*. Yet even theſe ſons of ſcience, *profeſſing themſelves wiſe, were*, in fact, egregious *fools* ~.—Not to enumerate the ſhocking immoralities, which the poets aſcribed to their deities; not to inſiſt upon the groſs idolatries, which the common people practiſed in their worſhip: even their *philoſophers*, the moſt improved and penetrating geniuſes, were unacquainted with the very *firſt principle* ⁂ of true religion.——

* Exod. xx. 17. † Col. iii. 5.
‡ Col. iii. 6. ‖ 1 Cor. ii. 14.
§ 2 Pet. iii. 12. ¶ Eph. ii. 3. † Jer. ii. 21.
+- Exod. xv. 25. ++ 2 Kings ii. 21. 22.
= 2 Kings iv. 41. ~ Rom. i. 22.
⁂ *The firſt of all the commandments is, Hear, O Iſrael, The LORD our GOD is* ONE *LORD; and thou ſhalt love the LORD,*

even they could not pronounce, with an unfaltering tongue *, "That GOD is ONE."

Ther. With regard to the philoſophers, the prejudices of a wrong education might pervert their judgment; or, in compliance with the prevailing mode, they might adopt cuſtoms, and aſſent to notions, which they did not thoroughly approve.

Aſp. A poor compliment this to their integrity! Had I been their advocate, methinks, I would have given up the ſagacity of my clients, rather than their fidelity to the cauſe of GOD and truth.

With reference to the *ſupreme GOOD*, they were equally at a loſs.——There's not one among all the inferior creatures, not even the crawling worm, or the buzzing fly, but perceives what is *beneficial*, and purſues it; diſcerns what is *pernicious*, and avoids it. Yonder caterpillar, whoſe nouriſhment is from one particular ſpecies of vegetables, never makes a wrong application to another: never is allured by the fragrance of the auricula, or dazzled by the ſplendor of the tulip; but conſtantly diſtinguiſhes, and as conſtantly adheres to the leaf, which affords her the proper food. So *ſagacious* are the meaneſt animals, with relation to their reſpective happineſs! While the moſt celebrated of the Heathen ſages were, on a ſubject of the very ſame import, mere *dotards*.—*Varro* reckons up no leſs than two hundred and eighty-eight different opinions concerning the true good; and not one of them derives it from the true ſource; I mean a conformity to the ever-bleſſed GOD, and an enjoyment of his infinite perfections.

If, on theſe *leading* points, they were ſo erroneous; no wonder, that they were bewildered in their other reſearches.

Ther. We are not inquiring into the circumſtances of this or that particular nation; but into the ſtate of mankind in general.

Aſp. Caſt your eye, *Theron*, upon thoſe ſwallows. They ſhoot themſelves, with ſurpriſing rapidity, through the air. I ſhould take them for ſo many living arrows, were it not for their ſhifting, winding, wan-

LORD, &c. Mark xii. 29. From which it appears, that the *unity* of the GODHEAD is the foundation of all the divine commandments, and of all human worſhip.

* *Unfaltering*, for though, in Plato's book of laws, we meet with ὁ Θεος—τῳ Θεῳ—τον Θεον again and again; yet he ſoon departs from this *ſound ſpeech*, and relapſes into the language of idolatry.

A learned and ingenious friend would fain have Socrates exempted from this charge.—I wiſh, I could gratify his benevolent temper, and ſpare that amiable philoſopher. But, however juſtly he may expreſs himſelf on ſome occaſions, at other times he wavers; he evidently revolts; and is moſt pitiably inconſiſtent with himſelf.——Even in his excellent conference with Ariſtodemus, where he argues admirably well for the *exiſtence*, he cannot readily adhere to the *unity*, of the GODHEAD.——Nay, in his laſt ſolemn apology before his judges, he publicly *renounces* the truth; declares that he worſhipped thoſe gods, which were acknowledged by his country; worſhipped them, and no other; on the ſame feſtivals, at the ſame altars, and in the ſame *ſidolatrous* manner.—*No other*: theſe are his words; Οὐ γαρ εἶναι ἀλλους, ἢ ἡρας, ἢ των συν τουτοις θεων, ἀλλ' θυων τισι καιτοις Δαιμοσιν, οὐδ' ὀμνυων, ἀλλ' ὀμνυειν ἀλλους θεους ἀνεπιφθονα. SOCRAT. Memorab. lib. I. i. ſect. 11. 24.

Let none conclude from this or any other paſſage, that we would conſign over all the Heathens to damnation. This is as far from our intention, as it is foreign to the argument. We are only like witneſſes, ſummoned to give in our evidence. From which it appears, that the very beſt among the Gentiles were ignorant of the true GOD; or, if *they knew him* in any degree, *they glorified him not as* GOD; *but became vain in their imagination*, and vile in their worſhip.—*Whether* they ſhall obtain mercy, or *which* of them ſhall be objects of divine clemency, is left *ſolely* to the determination of their ſupreme, unerring, righteous JUDGE.

— *Non noſtrum eſt tantas componere lites.*

ton motions.——Are not theſe what you call *birds of paſſage?*

Ther. Theſe, and ſome other of the feathered race, are our conſtant viſitants in ſummer; but leave us, at the approach of winter. As ſoon as the weather becomes cold, they aſſemble themſelves in a body, and concert meaſures for their departure. *Who* convenes the aſſembly,—*what* debates ariſe,—or *how* they communicate the reſolution taken,—I do not preſume to ſay. This is certain, that not one of them diſlodges, till the affair is ſettled, and the proclamation has been publiſhed. Not a ſingle loiterer is to be ſeen, when the troops are preparing for their decampment; nor a ſingle ſtraggler to be found, when they have once begun their march.—— Having finiſhed their journey through the land, their wings become a ſort of ſails *; and they launch, not into, but over the ocean. Without any *compaſs* to regulate their courſe, or any *chart* to make obſervations in their voyage, they arrive ſafely at the deſired ſhore. And what is ſtill more extraordinary, they always find the readieſt way, and the ſhorteſt cut.

Aſp. The ſtork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the ſwallow, obſerve the time of their coming: but my people know not the judgment of their GOD †. The young ones of thoſe birds perceive, how abſolutely neceſſary it is, to forſake the land of their nativity, and travel in queſt of milder climes.——But our offſpring, even when their minds begin to open, *are brutiſh in their knowledge* ‡. Born they are, and too long continue, *like the wild aſs's colt* ‖: not only quite deſtitute of heavenly wiſdom, but ſtupid to apprehend it, and averſe to receive it. *As ſoon as they are born, they go aſtray*, and——

Ther. Go aſtray—To what is this owing, but to the *bad examples* they behold? They catch the wayward habit from the irregular converſation of others.

Aſp. Is not this a confirmation of my point? Why are they *yielding* clay to each bad impreſſion? *caſe-hardened* ſteel to every edifying application?—From imitating unworthy examples, you can hardly with-hold them by the tighteſt rein. But if you would affect them with a ſenſe of divine things, or bring them acquainted with GOD their Maker, *line muſt be upon line, line upon line; precept muſt be upon precept, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little* §.—What farther coroborates my ſentiment, is, that all theſe tender toils of erudition are generally unwelcome, are too often unſucceſsful, nay, will always be ineffectual, without the concurrence of almighty grace.

* *Remigio alarum.* VIRG.

† Jer. viii. 7. ‡ Jer. x. 14.

‖ Job xi. 12. How keenly is this compariſon pointed!—Like the *aſs*'s, an animal remarkable for its ſtupidity, even to a proverb.—Like the *aſs*'s *colt*, which muſt be ſtill more egregiouſly ſtupid than the dam.——Like the *wild aſs*'s *colt*, which is not only blockiſh, but ſtubborn and refractory; neither poſſeſſes valuable qualities by nature, nor will eaſily receive them by diſcipline.—The image, in the original, is yet more ſtrongly touched. The comparative particle "like" is not in the Hebrew; "born a "wild aſs's colt;" or, as we ſhould ſay in Engliſh, "a mere "wild," &c.

§ A great critic has laid down the following rule, to be obſerved in fine writing;

"'Tis not enough no harſhneſs gives offence,
"The ſound muſt be an echo to the ſenſe."
POPE's *eſſay on criticiſm.*

Never was this delicate maxim more nicely exemplified, than in the above-cited paſſage of Iſaiah, chap. xxxiii. 13——Another inſtance of the ſame kind occurs in the ſeventh verſe; where the language ſeems to mimic the *reeling, ſtruggling, giddy* motions of a drunkard; while it iterates and reiterates the idea; expreſſes the ſame thing, in a different and ſtill different manner; with an apparent, and, in this caſe, a ſignificant *circumrotation* of words.

Beſides, *Theron*, if this propenſity to evil be obſervable in *all* children, it ſeems more than probable that the unhappy bias is derived from their parents, rather than catched from their neighbours; and owing, not to the influence of external examples, but to a principle of internal corruption *.——Neglect the education of children, and you are ſure to have their manners evil, their lives unprofitable. Nay, only remit your endeavours, and they loſe what has been gained; they ſtart aſide like a broken bow. And wherefore this? Why do they not, without the rules of diſcipline or leſſons of inſtruction, *ſpontaneouſly* addict themſelves to the exerciſe of every virtue? juſt as the cygnets in yonder canal, ſpontaneouſly take to the element of water, and the act of ſwimming.

That bed in the garden before us, will ſuggeſt the reaſon. It has been digged and dreſſed this very day. It now lies ſmooth and clean. Not a ſingle weed appears on its ſurface. Yet how certainly will it, in a very little time, produce a plenteous growth of thoſe vegetable nuiſances?—Whence can this proceed? No hand will ſow them. No wiſh will invite them. But the *ſeeds*, though unperceived by any eye, are *already* there. Diſſeminated by the winds, they have mixed themſelves with the mould, and are ſunk into the ſoil.——So, juſt ſo it is with our children. The ſeeds of iniquity are *within* † them; and unleſs proper diligence be exerted by us, unleſs gracious aſſiſtance be vouchſafed from above, they will aſſuredly ſpring up, over-run their ſouls, and diſhonour their lives.

Ther. Let us leave the children, and make *men* the ſubject of our inquiry.

Aſp. In this reſpect, *Theron*,

Men are but children of a larger growth.

We may leave the veſt or hanging-ſleeve coat, but we ſhall ſtill find the follies of the child. In *youth*, what low ambition and fondneſs for deſpicable pleaſures.—In *manhood*, what a keen purſuit of tranſitory wealth, yet what a cold inattention to GOD and holineſs?—Men, and men too of the greateſt abilities, whoſe penetration on other ſubjects is piercing as the eagle's ſight, are, on the moſt important points, *blind* as the incaverned mole.

Ther. What! is the underſtanding like the moſt *dim-ſighted* animal, when lodged in her darkeſt retirement? that ſublime faculty of the ſoul; which lends her eye to all the reſt; ſits at the helm, and directs their motions!

Aſp. You remember, I preſume, that beautiful paſſage in *Milton* ‡; which Mr *Addiſon* ſo highly admires, and ſo judiciouſly illuſtrates. The paſſage I mean, where the archangel *Michael* comes down, to advertiſe *Adam* of future events, and to execute the ſentence of divine juſtice.

Ther. I remember it perfectly well.—In the eaſt, the great light of day lies under an eclipſe. In the weſt, a bright cloud deſcends; filled with an hoſt of angels, and more luminous than the ſun itſelf. The whole theatre of nature is darkened, that this glorious machine may appear in all its magnificence and beauty.——From this radiant chariot the *Potentate* of *heaven* alights, and advances with a majeſtic ſtateline's to meet *Adam*.

Aſp. Should you ſee ſuch an auguſt perſonage, alighting from ſuch a ſplendid chariot, and walking amidſt the thronged ſtreets of a city? ſhould you behold every one intent upon his buſineſs or diverſions, ſtruck with no *awe*, paying no *reverential* regard to this celeſtial viſitant; what would you think?

Ther. I ſhould certainly ſuſpect, that ſome ſuperior power had drawn a veil over their ſight, and hid this wonderful ſpectacle from their view.

Aſp. Such is really the caſe with all mankind by nature, and with the generality of people, during their whole life.——GOD, the infinitely-great GOD, is in every place. Yet how few *advert* to his preſence?—All nature exhibits him to their ſenſes; yet perhaps he is not in any of their thoughts.

The ſun clothed in tranſcendent brightneſs, moſt illuſtriouſly diſplays his MAKER's glory. The moon, though dreſſed in fainter beams, has luſtre enough to ſhew us the adorable DEITY, and his marvellous perfections. The ſtars, fixed as they are at an unmeaſureable diſtance, and *leſſened* almoſt to a point, come in with their evidence, and *magnify* their CREATOR to a gazing but unaffected world.

The air *whiſpers* his clemency in the gentle, the refreſhing gales of ſpring. If we take no notice of this ſoft perſuaſive addreſs, the tone is elevated; the majeſty of JEAOVAH *ſounds aloud*, in roaring winds, and rending ſtorms. Yet *both* expedients fail. Man is like the deaf adder, that ſtoppeth her ears. He refuſeth to hear the voice of the charmers, charm they never ſo ſweetly, never ſo forcibly.

Each flower, arrayed in beauty and breathing perfume, courts our affections for its infinitely-amiable AUTHOR.——Not a bird that warbles, nor a brook that murmurs, but invites our praiſe, or chides our ingratitude.——All the claſſes of fruit depoſit their atteſtation on our palates, yet ſeldom reach our hearts. They give us a proof of the divine benignity, a proof as *undeniable* as it is pleaſing, and too often as *ineffectual* alſo.

In ſhort, the whole creation is like a kind of magnificent embaſſy from its almighty LORD; deputed to proclaim *his excellencies*, and demand our homage. Yet who has not diſregarded the former, and with-held the latter?—How few walk, as ſeeing HIM that is inviſible, or have fellowſhip with the FATHER of ſpirits? tho' to walk before him, is our *higheſt* dignity; and to have fellowſhip with him, is our *only* felicity?

Ther. This is owing to *inattention*, rather than to any blindneſs or defect in man's underſtanding. The many works of genius, which have been produced in various ages, are an abundant proof of his intellectual capacity.——Have not the ſeas been traverſed, and the ſkies meaſured? Has not the earth been diſembowelled of its choiceſt treaſures; while its ſurface is beautified with towns, cities, palaces innumerable?—What fine arts are invented and exerciſed; and to what a pitch of perfection are they carried? Arts that ſeem, if not to exceed, at leaſt to *rival* nature.—It was the underſtanding, which formed all theſe great deſigns. It was the underſtanding, which contrived the means, and conducted the execution.—And are not theſe unqueſtionable evidences of her very ſuperior abilities?

Aſp. Then ſhe is like ſome great empreſs, who conquers half the world, but is unable to rule *herſelf*; who extends her regulations into foreign climes, while her domeſtic affairs are involved in confuſion.——Do you doubt the reality of this remark? Set yourſelf to meditate upon the moſt intereſting truths. How *deſultory*, how *incoherent* are your thoughts?——Charge them to be collected. They diſobey your orders.——Rally the undiſciplined vagrants. Again they deſert the

* St *Paul* confeſſes, that he and his fellow-ſaints were in their unconverted ſtate, depraved: and this, not διὰ τὴν ἕξιν, by *cuſtom*, or *habit*, but φύσει, by *nature*. Eph. ii. 3.

† Whoever chuſes to examine the ſeeds, the poiſonous ſeeds, which are lodged in this nurſery of all evil, may ſee a ſample of them in our LORD's deſcription, Mark vii. 20. 21. 22. 23; where he characterizes the heart, not barely of the hypocritical Phariſee, or the abandoned publican, but of mankind in general.—After ſuch an authority, ſhall I mention the teſtimony of Seneca? We are allowed to glean the grapes, when the vintage is gathered. In ſuch a view I would introduce the philoſopher after the SAVIOUR. *Omnia in omnibus vitia ſunt; ſed non omnia in ſingulis extant.* De Benef. lib. IV.

‡ Book XI. 203. &c.

the taſk.—Exert all your power, and keep them cloſe to their buſineſs. Still they elude your endeavours.

The other day, I could not forbear ſmiling at a little adventure of your youngeſt ſon's. Some *quick-ſilver*, which happened to be ſpilt upon the floor, parted into ſeveral globules. The ſhining balls looked ſo prettily, he longed to make them his own. But when he offered to take them up, they ſlipt from his hand. As ſoon as he renewed the attempt, ſo often he met with a diſappointment. The cloſer he ſtrove to graſp them, the more ſpeedily they eſcaped from his fingers. He ſeemed at firſt to be amazed, then became quite angry, that the little *fugitives* ſhould ſo conſtantly *baffle* his repeated efforts.——Thus unmanageable I very often find my own thoughts. If yours are under no better regimen, this may convince us both, that all is not according to the original creation.

We apply ourſelves to converſe with the everlaſting GOD in *prayer*. Here one would expect to have the thoughts all clearneſs, and all compoſure. But here *we are not ſufficient of ourſelves to think any thing as of ourſelves* *. All thoſe holy ideas, which create reverence, or ſtrengthen faith, or quicken love, come from the FATHER of lights. Should HE withdraw his influence, all will be dull, and dark, and dead.——It may be we are ſomewhat enlivened in this ſacred exerciſe; before we are aware, perhaps in the very midſt of the ſolemn office, our attention is *diſſipated*; and not diſſipated only, but *ſcattered* to the ends of the earth. The GOD of all glory is forſaken, and the devotion paid to ſome ſenſeleſs foppery. A malefactor, begging his life at the knees of his ſovereign; and diſcontinuing his ſuit, in order to careſs a *lap-dog*, or purſue a *butterfly*; is but a faint image of the vanity which attends our devotional ſervices.—Reaſon, which ought to correct theſe irregularities, is treated like the incredulous lord; who, inſtead of controlling the unruly multitude, was overborne by their impetuoſity, and trodden under foot †.

Since then the reins are ſtruck out of our hands, and we have loſt the rule over our own faculties; ſurely we are in a ſtate different, very different from our primitive conſtitution.

Ther. However inſenſible to *refined* ſpeculation, the underſtanding, when *intereſt* is in the caſe, is apprehenſive enough.

Aſp. In temporal ‡, not in ſpiritual affairs.——Your younger brother, *Theron*, is a merchant. We will ſuppoſe him at the ſea-ſide; within a ſmall diſtance of the veſſel, on which a conſiderable part of his ſubſtance is embarked.—We will ſuppoſe the veſſel in the utmoſt diſtreſs, ready to founder with her leaks, or to ſtrike upon the rocks.——If he diſcovers no ſign of concern, calls in no aſſiſtance from the country, makes no effort to *ſave* the crew, and *ſecure* the cargo; would you not think him bereaved of his underſtanding, or deprived of his ſight?—Could you conceive a more favourable opinion of his eyes or his intellect; if, inſtead of trying every method to prevent a ſhipwreck, he ſhould amuſe himſelf with picking *ſhells* from the ocean, or drawing *figures* on the ſand?

We, and every one of our fellow-creatures, have an intereſt in jeopardy, unſpeakably more precious, than all the rich lading of a thouſand fleets. Our ſouls our immortal ſouls, are expoſed, every day, every hour, to the peril of *everlaſting deſtruction*. Every temptation is threatening to their endleſs welfare, as a ridge of craggy rocks to a ſhip that drives before the ſtrongeſt gale.——Yet how unconcerned are mankind? Where is their holy fear? where their godly jealouſy? where their wakeful circumſpection? Rather what a *gay inſenſibility* is obſervable in their behaviour? Or elſe, what a *lifeleſs formality* prevails in their ſupplications? their ſupplications to that almighty BEING, who alone is able to ſave and to deſtroy?—Was not the human underſtanding both darkened and benumbed, we ſhould ſee our neighbours, we ſhould feel ourſelves awakened, into much the ſame earneſt ſolicitude, as the diſciples expreſſed, when, perceiving the waves boiſterous, and their bark ſinking, they cried, *LORD! ſave us! we periſh!*

But alas! in things of an unſeen nature, though of eternal conſequence, *intereſt*, that habitual darling of every heart, loſes its engaging influence. Nay, when eternity, all-important eternity is at ſtake, even *ſelf-preſervation* is ſcarce any longer a governing principle.—— What can be more deplorable! and if we admit not the doctrine of original corruption, what ſo unaccountable?

Ther. This, I muſt confeſs, is true with regard to the unthinking rabble. To them may be accommodated the remark of *Auguſtus*; who, when he ſaw ſome foreign females, carrying apes in their arms inſtead of infants, ſaid to one of his courtiers, "Have the women of thoſe "countries *no children*, that they are ſo fond of ſuch "deſpicable animals?"—The vulgar are ſo immerſed in ſecular cares, that one might indeed be tempted to aſk, "Have thoſe people *no ſouls*, that buying and ſelling, "eating and drinking, ingroſs their whole concern?"— But perſons of rank and education think in a more exalted manner.

Aſp. Do you then imagine, that an elevation of circumſtances ſets the affections on things above? or that it is the peculiar infelicity of the *vulgar*, to *grovel* in their deſires?—Gold, I believe, is more likely to increaſe, than to diſſipate the fog on the mind. Abundance of poſſeſſions inſtead of diſengaging the heart, faſten it more inſeparably to the earth. Even ſuperior attainments in learning, if not ſanctified by grace, ſerve only to render the owner ſomewhat more refined in his follies. —But compariſons between the various claſſes of mankind, are as uſeleſs as they are invidious. None, in either condition, attend to the things which make for their peace, till they are *awakened* from their lethargy, by the quickening SPIRIT of CHRIST. And even then we cannot but obſerve evident indications of much *remaining* blindneſs.

How apt are ſuch perſons to miſtake the way of ſalvation? to place their own works for a foundation of hope inſtead of *CHRIST* the Rock of ages? thinking by their own performances to *win*, not ſeeking from unmerited grace to *receive*, the inheritance of eternal glory. Which is more abſurdly vain, than to offer toys as an equivalent for thrones, or to dream of purchaſing diadems with a mite.——They are alſo prone to miſapprehend the nature of holineſs; are zealous to regulate the *external* conduct, without attending to the renovation of the *heart*; in outward forms elaborate; with reſpect to inward ſanctity, leſs if at all exact. A labour juſt as prepoſterous, as to ſkin over the ſurface of a wound, while it feſters at the bottom, and conſumes the bone.

Give me leave to aſk, *Theron*; When our LORD declares, *Unleſs a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven* *; when he ſpeaks of *eating his fleſh* and *drinking his blood* †, when you hear or read of union with the bleſſed JESUS, or communion with the moſt high GOD: is there not a cloud, if not total darkneſs, on your mind ‡?—How errone-

* 2 Cor. iii. 5. † 2 Kings vii. 17.

‡ Called therefore by the apoſtle, *fleſhly wiſdom*, and oppoſed to the grace of GOD, 2 Cor. i. 12.

* John iii. 3. † John vi. 54.

‡ With regard to the myſteries of CHRIST, the greateſt proficients are but *obtuſe acute*, dull even in their acuteneſs.—— What ſays the wiſe *Agur*? an invaluable fragment of whoſe works is preſerved in the book of *Proverbs*. *Surely I am more bruiſh than any man, and have not the underſtanding of a man*;

even

ous was the *pſalmiſt* himſelf, in his judgment concerning the divine diſpoſals? *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, even as it were a beaſt*, or as the veriеſt beaſt, *before thee* *.——The voice of experience therefore will atteſt, what the word of revelation has averred, That *the natural man*, be his intellectual abilities ever ſo pregnant, or ever ſo improved, *cannot know the things of the* SPIRIT *of* GOD †: he has no ſight to diſcern their beauty, no taſte to reliſh their ſweetneſs. Nay, though they are the pureſt light, and the moſt perfect wiſdom, to him they appear, not only dark and obſcure, but even *fooliſhneſs* itſelf.

Would this be the caſe, if the underſtanding was not greatly depraved? Should it be difficult for your ear, to diſtinguiſh the diverſity of ſounds; or for your eye, to diſcern the variety of colours; would you not conclude, that the organs were very much *impaired?*

Ther. I think, you have treated the underſtanding, as *Zopyrus* ſerved his own body ‡, when he went over to the enemy.——Do you intend to mangle the other faculties, at the ſame unmerciful rate?

Aſp. That nobleman *made* the wounds, which diſfigured his fleſh. I have only *probed* the ſores, which were found in the underſtanding. If I have touched the quick, and put the patient to pain, it is only to facilitate the operation of medicine, and make way for a cure.——But permit me to aſk, Wherein does the excellency of the human *will* conſiſt?

Ther. In following the guidance of reaſon, and ſubmitting to the influence of proper authority.

Aſp. The will, I fear, rejects the government of reaſon; and it is undeniably certain, that it rebels againſt the authority of GOD.

Caſt your eye upon that *team* of *horſes*, with which yonder countryman is ploughing his fallow-ground. No leſs than five of thoſe robuſt animals are linked together, and yield their ſubmiſſive necks to the draught. They have more ſtrength than twenty men, yet are managed by a *ſingle lad*. They not only ſtand in awe of the laſh, but liſten to the voice of their driver. They turn to the right hand or to the left; they quicken their pace, or ſtop ſhort in the furrow; at the bare intimation of his pleaſure.—Are *we* equally obedient to the calls, to the exhortations, the expreſs injunctions of our heavenly LORD? The bleſſed JESUS ſpoke at the beginning, and the world was made. He ſpeaks by his providence, and the univerſe is upheld. When he ſhall ſpeak at the laſt day, the heavens will paſs away, and the earth be diſſolved. Yet he ſpeaks to us in his divine word, and we turn a deaf ear to his addreſs. He ſpeaks in tender expoſtulations, and no melting of heart enſues. He ſpeaks in precious promiſes, and no ardent deſires are enkindled.——The will, which, in theſe caſes, ought to be turned as *wax* to the *ſeal*, is unimpreſſed and inflexible as an *iron ſinew*.

Ther. The human will is conſtantly inclined to preſerve, accommodate, and make its poſſeſſor happy. Is not this the right *poſition*, in which it ſhould always ſtand? or the moſt deſirable *direction*, that can be given to its motions?

Aſp. I ſhould be glad, if fact bore witneſs to your aſſertion. But fact, I apprehend, is on the contrary ſide.——I took notice, as we came along, of ſome *ants* buſily employed on a little hillock. Have you made any obſervations, *Theron*, on this reptile community?

Ther. It is a little *republic* *. They inhabit a kind of oblong city, divided into various ſtreets. They are governed by laws, and regulated by politics, of their own. Their magazines are commodiouſly formed, and judiciouſly guarded againſt the injuries of the weather. Some are defended by an arch made of earth, and cemented with a peculiar ſort of glue. Some are covered with rafters of ſlender wood, and thatched with ruſhes or graſs. The roof is always raiſed with a double ſlope, to turn away the current of the waters, and ſhoot the rain from their ſtore-houſes. They all *beſtir* themſelves, with *inceſſant* aſſiduity, while the air is ſerene; while the roads are good and abundance of looſe grain lies ſcattered over the fields.——By theſe precautions, they live ſecure, when ſtorms embroil the ſky; they want no manner of conveniency, even when winter lays waſte the plains.

Aſp. Do *we* improve, ſo diligently, our preſent opportunities? This life is the ſeed-time of eternity. Do we huſband the precious moments like perſons ſenſible of their unſpeakable importance? ſenſible, that if we trifle and are indolent, *they* will be irrecoverably gone, and *we* irretrievably ruined?

Sickneſs, we know not how ſoon, may invade us, pain may torment us, and both may iſſue in our final diſſolution. Are we duly aware of theſe awful changes, and properly ſolicitous to put all in order for their approach?—We walk (alarming thought!) upon the very brink of death, reſurrection, and judgment. Do we walk like *wiſe virgins*, with our loins girt; with our lamps trimmed; in a ſtate of continual readineſs, for the heavenly BRIDEGROOM's advent?

Thoſe ants *have no guide, overſeer, or ruler. Yet they prepare their meat in the ſummer, and gather their food in the harveſt* †. We have all theſe, yet neglect the time of our viſitation.——We have GOD's unerring word, to guide us; GOD's ever-watchful eye, to overſee us; GOD's ſovereign command, to rule and quicken us. Notwithſtanding all theſe motives, is not the ſpeech of the ſluggard, the very language of our conduct? *A little more ſleep, a little more ſlumber, a little more folding of the hands to ſleep* ‡. The moſt ſupine indifference, where all poſſible diligence is but juſt ſufficient!—This, you muſt allow, is the true character of mankind in general. And does this demonſtrate the *rectitude* of their will?

Ther. The underſtanding may be ſaid to carry the torch, the will to hold the balance. Now, the perfection of a balance conſiſts, in being ſo nicely poiſed, as to incline at the *leaſt* touch, and preponderate with the *ſlighteſt* weight. This property belongs, without all diſpute, to the human will.

even though the following verſes beſpeak the very ſingular elevation and extent of his knowledge. *Prov.* xxx. 2.—Conformably to the experience of this excellent man, I have always obſerved, that the more enlightened people are, the more they lament their ignorance; the more they pant after a continual progreſs in heavenly knowledge; and pray for clearer, ſtill clearer manifeſtations of the incomprehenſible GOD.

* I queſtion whether *Aſpaſio*'s tranſlation comes fully up to the emphaſis of the original. The comparative particle is omitted in the *Hebrew*. *As* ſoftens and palliates the matter. Therefore the *pſalmiſt*, to expreſs the deepeſt ſenſe of his ignorance, ſays, *I was a beaſt*, yea, *the veriеſt braſt*, בהמות Pſal. lxxiii. 22.

† 1 Cor. ii. 14.

‡ *See* ROLLIN's *ancient hiſt.* vol. III. *p.* 46.

* See *Nat. Diſpl.* vol. I.

† Prov. vi. 7.

‡ There is, if I miſtake not, a nice gradation, in this ſpeech of the ſluggard; ſuch as very naturally *mimics* the manner of that lazy creature.—He pleads, firſt, for ſome conſiderable degree of indulgence, *A little ſleep.*—If that is too much to be granted, he craves ſome ſmaller toleration of his ſloth; *A little ſlumber.*—If the taſkmaſter ſtill rings in his ear, ſtill goads his ſide; one almoſt ſees him, rubbing his heavy eyes, and yawning out his laſt requeſt; *A little folding of the hands* at leaſt *to lie down*, מעט תכף ידים לשכב Prov. vi. 10.—When ſuch is our conduct with regard to *eternal* intereſts, how juſtly may we apply that ſpirited expoſtulation of the poet;

Tantæne rem tam negligenter!

Aſp.

Aſp. What? If one of your ſcales ſhould deſcend to the ground, though charged with trifles, that are light as air? if the other ſhould kick the beam, though its contents be weightier than talents of gold?—Is not this an exact repreſentation of our will, when the *fleeting* pleaſures of ſenſe, or the *puny* intereſts of time, excite our wiſhes; even while the ſolid delights of religion, and the immenſely-rich treaſures of immortality, can hardly obtain our attention?—However, let us quit the metaphor, and examine fact. Suppoſe I make it appear, that, inſtead of chuſing the moſt eligible objects, the will is ſo deplorably vitiated, as to *loath* what is ſalutary, and be *fond* of what is baneful.

Ther. If you prove this to be univerſally the caſe, you will prove your favourite point with a witneſs.

Aſp. When Providence is pleaſed to thwart our meaſures, or defeat our endeavours; to bring us under the cloud of diſgrace, or lay upon us the rod of affliction; what is our behaviour?——Do we bow our heads in *humble* reſignation? Do we open our mouths in *thankful* acknowledgments?——Obſerve the waters in that elegant octangular baſon.——They aſſimilate themſelves, with the utmoſt readineſs, and with equal exactneſs, to the veſſel that contains them. *So* would the human will, if it were not extremely froward and fooliſh, conform itſelf to the divine; which is unerringly wiſe, and, of all poſſible contingencies, incomparably the beſt *.——Yet how apt are we to fret with diſquietude; and ſtruggle under afflictive diſpenſations, *as a wild bull in a net!*

Ther. This is a very imperfect proof, *Aſpaſio*, and correſponds only with part of your accuſation. We may diſlike what is wholeſome, eſpecially if it be unpalatable, yet not be fond of our bane.

Aſp. Should you ſee a perſon, who thirſts after the putrid lake, but diſreliſhes the running fountain; who longs for the *empoiſoned* berries of the nightſhade, but abhors the *delicious* fruit of the orchard; would you applaud the regularity of his appetite?—I don't wait for your anſwer. But I more than ſuſpect, this is a true picture of all unregenerate people. How do they affect dreſs and external ornament; but are unwilling, rather than deſirous, to be *clothed with humility* †, and *to put on CHRIST* ‡! Amuſement will engage, play animate, and diverſion fire them: but as to the worſhip of the living GOD, O! *what a wearineſs is it* ‖! This is attended, if attended at all, with languor, and a liſtleſs inſenſibility. Frothy novels, and flatulent wit, regale their taſte; while the marrow and fatneſs of the divine word are as "their ſorrowful meat §." What is all this, but to loath the ſalutary, and long ¶ for the baneful?

Let me, from the ſame compariſon, propoſe one queſtion more, which may be applicable both to the will and to the underſtanding.—Should you hear of another perſon, the ſtate of whoſe ſtomach was ſo diſpoſed, that it turned the moſt nouriſhing food into phlegm; and derived matter of *diſeaſe*, from the moſt ſovereign ſupports of *health*; what would you think of this conſtitution?

Ther. I ſhould certainly think it very much diſtempered.

Aſp. Without the grace of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, our ſouls turn *every* occurrence into an increaſe of their ſinful depravity. Our very table is a ſnare; and inſtead of exciting us to gratitude, is a provocative to gluttony.——How difficult is it, when we flow in plenty, not to be elated; when we are preſſed with poverty, not to repine!—Have we buſineſs in the world? It cumbers our thoughts, or tempts us to avarice. Have we no buſineſs to manage? We ſink into ſloth, and ſettle on the lees of voluptuouſneſs.—If our ſchemes are proſperous, it is odds but they attach us to the intereſts of time. If they prove unſucceſsful, we too often are chagrined with the diſappointment, and ſin againſt meekneſs.——Even the holy commandment, inſtead of reſtraining ſin, or producing obedience, irritates the inbred depravity; and renders it more reſtleſs, more impetuous, more ungovernable *.——Thoſe very *things, which ſhould have been for our welfare* (ſo malignant and raging is our corruption!) *are* converted into *an occaſion of falling*.

Ther. The will is under no *neceſſity* of miſemploying her powers. She is *free* to act in this manner or in that; and, if a ſpendthrift, is not a ſlave.

Aſp. In actions which relate to the *animal* œconomy, the will is unqueſtionably free. She can contract the forehead into a frown, or expand it with a ſmile.—In the *ordinary* affairs of life, ſhe is under no controul. We can undertake or decline a journey, carry on or diſcontinue an employ, juſt as we pleaſe.——In the *outward* acts of religion alſo, the will is her own miſtreſs. We can read the word of GOD, or go to the place of divine worſhip, without any extraordinary aid from above.——But in matters which are more intimately connected with our ſalvation, the caſe is different. Here, as our liturgy expreſſes it, "we are *tied* and *bound* "with the chain of our ſins."

Would you have a perſon delight himſelf in the LORD; take pleaſure in devotion; ſet his affections on things above?—All this is both his duty and his happineſs. But alas! *he is alienated from the life of* GOD. His inclinations gravitate quite the contrary way. His will is in the condition of that diſtreſſed woman, who was *bowed down with a ſpirit of infirmity, and could in no wiſe lift up herſelf* †. Corruption, like a ſtrong bias influences, or rather like a heavy mountain oppreſſes his mind. Neither can he ſhake off the propenſity, or ſtruggle away from the load, until grace, almighty grace, interpoſes for his releaſe.—— *Where the SPIRIT of the LORD is, there* and there alone *is liberty* ‡; that ſacred and glorious liber-

* This ſeems to be the meaning of the prophet, לִנְתִ֥יק מישרים Iſ. xxvi. 7. Not—*The way of the juſt is uprightneſs*——This ſenſe, in the preſent connection, is hardly conſiſtent with humility; is by no means proper, to introduce a devotional addreſs to the great JEHOVAH. Rather—*GOD's way to the juſt is uprightneſs*: or, ſtill more emphatically, *uprightneſſes*: is in *all* reſpects irreprovable, excellent, admirable; ſuited, perfectly ſuited, to every ſacred attribute of wiſdom, goodneſs, and truth.

† 1 Pet. v. 5. ‡ Rom. xiii. 14. ‖ Mal. i. 13. § Job vi. 7.

¶ The reader may ſee this unhappy contraſt drawn in the ſtrongeſt colours, by the royal preacher, and by the mourning prophet.—*Becauſe I have called, and* ye refuſed; *I have ſtretched out my hand, and* no man regarded; *but ye have* ſet at nought *all my counſel, and* would none *of my reproof.* What a croud of words! emphatically declaring the moſt incorrigible perverſeneſs; which is proof againſt every method of reformation, againſt all the arts even of divine perſuaſion. *Prov.* i. 24. 25.—*The hoſt of heaven, whom they have* loved, *and whom they have* ſerved, *and after whom they have* walked, *and whom they have* ſought, *and whom they have* worſhipped. What a heap of expreſſions! ſignificantly deſcribing that impetuous ardor, which no prohibitions can reſtrain; and that inſatiable avidity, which never knows when to ſay "It is "enough." *Jer.* viii. 2.

If I beg leave to add another example of this kind, it is chiefly for the ſake of clearing up an obſcure paſſage in the *Pſalms*; which ſeems to have been miſtaken by the authors of *both* our verſions.—*David*, to ſet forth the barbarous aſſiduity of his perſecutors, ſays, *They wander up and down.* They pry into every corner; they ſearch the city, and examine the country; וְלִנ֣וּ not *for meat*; which, in this connection, is a ſenſe quite foreign to the ſubject, and very jejune indeed; but *to devour*; to devour me the deſtined victim of their rage. *And if they are not ſatisfied*, if they cannot compaſs their deſign by day, *will they grudge?* No; but *they will continue all night*, in the proſecution of their purpoſe. Neither cold nor darkneſs can retard them; neither hardſhips nor dangers can divert them; but their attempts are as *indefatigable*, as their malice is *implacable.* Pſal. lix. 15.

* Rom. vii. 8. † Luke xiii. 11. ‡ 2 Cor. iii. 17.

ty, which is not the common privilege of all men, but the high prerogative of the children of GOD.

Would you have a perſon apply to the great REDEEMER; apply with a real ardor of deſire; as *Bartimæus* of old, or the *Syrophœnician* mother?—His will is like the withered arm; cannot ſtretch forth itſelf to the all-gracious *SAVIOUR*: cannot hunger and thirſt after his everlaſting righteouſneſs and infinite merit; till the *SAVIOUR* himſelf ſpeaks power into the *enfeebled*, the *perverted* faculty.——If you think otherwiſe; try the experiment. Perſuade men to this neceſſary practice. Urge the moſt weighty arguments; deviſe the moſt pathetic expoſtulations; let zeal ſummon all her force, and rhetoric employ all her art. Without being a prophet, I dare venture to foretel the iſſue. Diſappointments, repeated diſappointments, will convince you, that our divine *MASTER* knew what he ſaid, when he ſolemnly declared, *No man can come to me, except the FATHER, which hath ſent me, draw him* *.—— Our church, in conformity to this and other ſcriptures, has taught us to pray, *Turn thou us, O good LORD*; for nothing but thy omnipotent agency is capable of doing it; *and ſo ſhall we be turned*.

Ther. Are we ſlaves then? Will *Chriſtianity* ſend us to ſeek our brethren, in the mines or in the galleys?

Aſp. Chriſtianity does not *ſend*, but *find* us there. There, or in a worſe ſlavery †.——It is doubtleſs a moſt abject ſtate, to wear the yoke, and truckle in chains. Yet ſuch, I apprehend, is the ſtate of our minds by nature. To prove this, we need not go down to the loweſt ranks of life. *Theſe*, you might ſay with the prophet, *are poor; theſe are fooliſh; they have not known the way of the LORD, nor the judgment of their GOD.*——*I will get me* therefore *to the great men* ‡, and examine their diſpoſition.

Have you not known perſons of the greateſt intrepidity, and firmeſt reſolution, hurried away by their luſts, as "a rolling thing before the whirlwind ‖?" Perhaps, they were bold enough to face danger, and defy the ſword, in the field of battle; yet were no more able to withſtand the wanton allurements of beauty, or the ſoft ſolicitations of pleaſure, than the *moth* can forbear fluttering about the flame, even though it ſinges her wings, and is ſcorching her to death.—— Others, poſſeſſed of a refined imagination, diſdain the groſs indulgencies of ſenſuality; yet are ſlaves to their own *domineering* paſſions. They are blown into the moſt intemperate rage, and puſhed on to the moſt extravagant actions, by every little ruffling accident. They ſee the *meanneſs*, which ſuch an ungovernable ſpirit argues; they feel the *miſery*, which ſuch internal tempeſts create; nay, they reſolve to ſuppreſs the impetuoſity of their temper: yet are bore away by the torrent; and, upon the very firſt provocation, are as furiouſly reſentful as ever.—Will you call *theſe* perſons free, becauſe their taſk-maſters and their tyrants are lodged within *? becauſe the fetters are forged, not for the meaner, but for the immortal part of their nature?

Ther. Let us paſs to the *affections*. Theſe are to the ſoul, what wings are to the eagle, or ſails to the ſhip. Theſe always ſtand ready to receive the gales of intereſt, and to ſpring at the ſignal of reaſon.

Aſp. O! that they did!—But, if the wings are clogged with mire; if the ſails are diſproportioned to the ballaſt; what advantage will accrue, either to the animal, or to the veſſel?—The one will, probably, be overſet in the voyage; the other will lie grovelling on the ground.

Ther. Deſire ſeems to be the firſt, which "opens the "mouth, or moves the wing, or peeps †." Deſire is active as a flame, and ever in purſuit of happineſs.

Aſp. What if your flame, inſtead of ſhooting upwards, ſhould point its *inverted* ſpires to the earth? Would not this be ſtrange, and a ſign of great diſorder?—GOD is the centre of perfection, and the ſource of felicity. All that is amiable in itſelf, is comprehended in GOD. All that is beneficial to us, proceeds from GOD. Do our deſires uniformly *tend* to this ſuper-excellent being? Do our wiſhes *terminate* in the enjoyment of his ever-glorious Majeſty? Alas! we are naturally eſtranged from him: we covet no communion with him. We are wedded to trifles, and dote upon vanity: but *to GOD we ſay*,—it is evidently the language of our conduct,—*Depart from us; we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways* ‡.

If deſire is the firſt-born among the affections, obſerve it in children. There it appears in its dawn, and has moſt of pure nature.——See, how thoſe *flies*, exulting in the ſunny gleam, vibrate with all the rapidity of motion their little wings ‖. So prompt and expedite are the deſires of children to any corrupting diverſion.—— See, how ſluggiſhly that *ſnail*, crawling forth amidſt the refreſhing moiſture, drags her ſlow length alone. So dull, if not reluctant, are the diſpoſitions of our children to any improving exerciſe. Rewards will hardly win them to the latter; the rod can hardly deter them from the former.——And none, none but GOD, "by his "*ſpecial* grace preventing them, can put into their minds "good deſires §."

Is our *love* under better regulation?—How eaſily are we captivated with a fair complexion and graceful form, eſpecially when ſet off with the decorations of dreſs! but but how little affected with the beauty of internal character; with the ornaments of virtue, and the graces of *Chriſtianity*? Can it be ſuppoſed, that the pulſe of the ſoul beats regularly, when there is ſuch a *paſſionate fondneſs* for fading embelliſhments, and ſuch a *cold indifference* for the moſt ſubſtantial endowments? How ready are we to be enamoured with well-proportioned clay, often to our apparent prejudice, ſometimes to our utter ruin! yet how backward to love that infinitely loving and lovely REDEEMER, who would die himſelf, rather than we ſhould become a prey to death! Tinder we are, perfect tinder to the ſparks of irrational and diſſolute affection; harder than adamant, colder than ice, to this heavenly flame.

Ther. If our love is blind, our *fear* has not loſt her eyes. Fear is quick of apprehenſion; and, inſtead of

* *John* vi. 44. It is not ſaid, The FATHER *drives* but *draws*: not by violent, irrational, compulſive means; but by clear conviction, ſweet perſuaſion, and inducements ſuited to a reaſonable being. *Thoſe* are the cords of a beaſt, *theſe* of a man. So that we are not acted upon as clock-work, or influenced as mere machines, but *made willing* in the day of his power, *Pſal.* cx. 3.

† St *Paul* ſays of *Chriſtians*, and reckons himſelf in the number, that naturally they *ſerved* (not διακονοῦσι, but δουλευον, were abſolute ſlaves to) *divers luſts and pleaſures*, Tit. iii. 3. The whole verſe is very remarkable, and nothing can be more appoſite to *Aſpaſio*'s purpoſe. It ſhews us, what *they* were by nature, who through grace became living images of the bleſſed GOD.

This mortifying doctine is often acknowledged by our church. Thus begun one of her public ſupplications; *Almighty GOD, who alone canſt order the unruly wills and affections of ſinful man.* It ſeems, we cannot determine our own wills, nor regulate our own affections. What is this but bondage?

‡ Jer. v. 4. 5. ‖ Iſ. xvii. 13.

* ——*Inordinate deſires*
And upſtart paſſions catch the government
From reaſon, and to ſervitude reduce
Man, till then free. MILT.

† Iſ. x. 14. ‡ Job xxi. 14.

‖ The wings of a fly are ſuppoſed to have the *quickeſt* motion of any material ſubſtance which lives. And if they make, as naturaliſts imagine, ſome hundreds of vibrations in a ſecond of time, I think, there can be no competition in the caſe.

§ *Collect for Eaſter-day.*

being

being ſtupidly inſenſible, is ready to "riſe up at the "voice of a bird *."

Aſp. The paſſion of fear is ſufficiently active, but deplorably *miſapplied*.——We fear the reproach of men. But are we alarmed at the view of that *everlaſting ſhame*, which the LORD, the righteous Judge, ſhall pour upon the ungodly? We ſhudder at the drawn dagger, and ſtand appalled at the headlong precipice. But how often have we defied the ſword of almighty vengeance, and ſported upon the brink of irretrievable perdition?

Sin is the moſt pernicious of all evils. Sin violates the divine command, and provokes the divine MAJESTY. Sin offers deſpite to the bleſſed SPIRIT, and tramples upon the blood of JESUS. For ſin, the tranſgreſſor is baniſhed from the bliſsful preſence of GOD, and doomed to dwell with inextinguiſhable burnings. Do we dread this *grand deſtroyer* of our happineſs? dread it more than any calamities, more than all plagues?—Take one of thoſe fine may-dukes, which glow with ſo beautiful a ſcarlet on yonder eſpalier. Offer it to the *blackbird*, that ſerenades us from the neighbouring elm. The creature, though fond of the dainty, will fly from your hand, as haſtily as from a levelled fowling-piece. He ſuſpects a deſign upon his liberty; and therefore will endure any extremity, will even ſtarve to death, rather than taſte the *moſt tempting* delicacy in ſuch hazardous circumſtances.——Are we equally fearful of an infinitely-greater danger? Do we fly, with equal ſolicitude †, from the deluſive but deſtructive wiles of ſin? Alas! do not we too often *ſwallow* the bait, even when we plainly diſcover the fatal hook? Do we not *ſnatch* the forbidden fruit, though conſcience remonſtrates, though GOD prohibits, though death eternal threatens?

Ther. Conſcience then, according to your own account, has eſcaped the general ſhipwreck. Conſcience is GOD's vicegerent in the ſoul, and executes her office faithfully. Even the Gentiles *ſhew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their thoughts the mean while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another* ‡.

Aſp. If there be any remains of the divine image, perhaps, they are to be found in the conſcience. But even this is not exempt from the common ruin.—Conſider its *light*. It is like a dim taper, feebly glimmering, and ſerving only to make the darkneſs viſible. Or, if it diſcovers any thing, it is an obſcure ſomething, we know not what: which, inſtead of informing, fantalizes us, and inſtead of guiding, bewilders us. As falſe and deluſory lights on the ſhore, put a cheat upon the mariner, and lead him on to ruin ‖.——Conſider its *operations*. It is either dumb or dead, or both. *Dumb*; or elſe how vehemently would it upbraid us, for our ſhocking ingratitude to the ſupreme omnipotent BENEFACTOR? How loudly would it inveigh againſt our ſtupid neglect of ſpiritual intereſts, and eternal ages? *Dead*; otherwiſe how keenly would it ſmart, when gaſhed with wounds,—*numerous*, as our repeated violations of the divine law,—*deep*, as the horrid aggravations of our various iniquities?

Ther. Do you call this an anſwer to my objection, *Aſpaſio?* If it be an anſwer, it reſembles, in point of ſatisfactory evidence, the light which you aſcribe unto the conſcience.

Aſp. The *Gentiles*, you allege, ſhew the *work*, but not the *love* of the law, written on their hearts. Some leading notices of right and wrong they have; ſome ſpeculative ſtrictures of good and evil; but without a *real abhorrence* of the one, or a *cordial delight* in the other: which, far from ennobling their nature, far from vindicating their practice, argues the exceeding depravity of the former, and renders the latter abſolutely without excuſe.

No; you ſay, conſcience *excuſes* the Heathens. Rather, their conſcience *bears witneſs* to the equity of the law, while their thoughts *make ſome* weak *apology* * for the tenor of their conduct. This is far from acquitting, far from juſtifying them.——Beſides, theſe weak attempts to excuſe, are always founded on *ignorance*. Did they know themſelves, their duty, or their GOD, conſcience would, without the leaſt heſitation, bring in her verdict, *Guilty*.——The apoſtle aſſures us, that, till faith, which his a divine principle, takes place in our breaſts, *both the mind and conſcience are defiled* †: here, and elſewhere, very plainly intimating, that the conſcience is evil, and ever will be evil, till it is *ſprinkled with the blood of CHRIST* ‡.

It *accuſes* ſome, I acknowledge; and it ought to accuſe, yea, to condemn all. But even here it evidences itſelf to be corrupt. For its accuſations are ſometimes *erroneous* ‖, and no better than falſe witneſs; ſometimes *partial* §, and ſuborned by appetite; and very, very often *ineffectual*.——Nay, when they do take effect, they produce no fruit that is truly good. They work not a genuine humiliation, or an unfeigned repentance; but either a ſlaviſh dread of GOD, as a ſevere judge; or hatred of him, as an inexorable enemy.

Ther. Hatred of GOD—Aſtoniſhing impiety! Is it poſſible for the human heart to admit ſuch enormous, almoſt incredible wickedneſs?

Aſp. You may well be aſtoniſhed, *Theron*; and GOD may juſtly demand; *What iniquity have my people found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity* ¶? "I created you out of nothing, "and endowed you with an immortal ſoul. As a fa"ther, I have provided for you. As a nurſe, I have "cheriſhed you.——I have conſigned over to your poſ"ſeſſion the earth, and the fulneſs thereof. All my

* Eccl. xii. 4.

† The *inſtigating* admonition, tranſmitted to *Brentius* by an anonymous letter, when the Papiſts had formed a plot againſt his life, ſhould be the rule of our conduct on ſuch an occaſion; *Fuge! fuge! cito—citius—citiſſime!*

‡ *Rom.* ii. 15. Methinks, I would not tranſlate the word μεταξυ, *the mean while*, but *alternately* or *interchangeably* accuſing or excuſing; ſometimes one, ſometimes the other; in conformity to the different circumſtances of their temper and behaviour.

‖ This ſeems to have been the caſe with the bulk of the *Heathen* world.—Conſcience arraigned, and found them guilty. This put them upon practiſing their *abominable*, ſometimes their *inhuman* idolatries.—Nay, this induced them to give the moſt ſcandalous and impious miſrepreſentations of the DEITY. That they might *ſheath* the ſting of conſcience, and find ſome *ſalve* for their own iniquities, they made even the objects of their worſhip, the *patrons* and the *precedents* of their favourite vices.

* The word is απολογουμενων, not επιμαρτυρουντων, not συναισθανομενων.

† Tit. i. 15. ‡ Heb. x. 22.

‖ *Erroneous*—What elſe was that grand article in the accuſations of conſcience, mentioned, with ſuch particular diſtinction, by *Virgil?*

——Phlegyaſque miſerrimus omnes
Admonet, et magna teſtatur voce per umbras,
Diſcite juſtitiam moniti, et non temnere divos.

For men to *deſpiſe* ſuch dunghill, worſe than dunghill deities, had been their *virtue* if done, and was their *duty* to do.—What elſe was that voice of conſcience, mentioned by our LORD, *John* xvi. 2. or that confeſſed by the apoſtle, *Acts* xxvi. 9.

† *Partial*—Otherwiſe, how could the moſt celebrated among the ancient heroes applaud and practiſe that execrable, unnatural crime, *ſelf-murder?* How could their firſt-rate hiſtorians extol and almoſt conſecrate that diabolical principle of action, *pride?* And how could their ableſt teachers of morality, not only tolerate, but eſtabliſh the error, by neglecting to find ſo much as a name for that amiable virtue, *humility?*

¶ Jer. ii. 5.

" creatures

"creatures do you ſervice, and even my angels miniſter "unto your good.——Do you deſire greater demonſtra- "tions of my love? I have given what was dearer to me "than all angels, than all worlds. I have given my SON "from my boſom, to die in your ſtead.——Would you "have farther evidences of my tender, my diſtinguiſhed "regard? Behold! I touch the mountains, and they "ſmoke: I look upon the earth, and it trembles: I caſt "even the princes of heaven, when they break my law, "into chains of darkneſs. But to you, O men, I con- "deſcend to act as a ſupplicant. Though highly in- "jured, and horribly affronted, I *beſeech* you, again and "again I *beſeech* you to be reconciled."

To hate* *ſuch* a GOD, is indeed the moſt deteſtable impiety. Yet man, fooliſh man, practiſes this impiety, whenever, for the ſake of a vile luſt, an ignoble pleaſure, or an unruly paſſion, he tranſgreſſes the command of his CREATOR.

Shall I exemplify the doctrine, in another of the affections?

Ther. In truth, *Aſpaſio*, I begin to be ſick of the ſubject. If human nature is ſo ulcerated, the leſs you touch it the better.——However, let us not quite omit the *iraſcible* appetite.

Aſp. Of this we have already taken a ſide-view; if you chuſe to ſee it in fuller proportion, make your obſervation on *Fervidus*.—*Fervidus* comes home in a rage. His cheeks are pale, and his lips quiver, with exceſs of paſſion. Though he can hardly ſpeak, he vows revenge, and utters imprecations.——What is the cauſe of all this wondrous ferment? A neighbour, it ſeems, has dropt ſome reflecting hint, or a ſervant has blundered in ſome trifling meſſage. Such uſage, *Fervidus* ſays, is intolerable; and ſuch negligence unpardonable.——This ſame *Fervidus* has offered numberleſs affronts to his MAKER; he has moſt ſcandalouſly neglected the will of his almighty LORD; yet feels no indignation againſt *himſelf*.—He is all fury, when his own credit is touched. But when the intereſt of CHRIST is wounded, he can ſit unconcerned, or paſs it off with a laugh.——Anger, I acknowledge, is ſometimes becoming and uſeful. But is *this* its right temperature? *this* its proper application?

Ther. This is the practice only of ſome few turbulent ſpirits. To ſaddle *their* qualities upon *every* perſon, is a procedure juſt as equitable, as the madman's † calculation was reaſonable, who took an account of every ſhip which entered the harbour, and ſet it down for his own.

Aſp. The latter part of my charge, I fear, is applicable to more than a few.——However, let us conſider the moſt *calm* and *ſedate* minds. How are they affected under injuries? Do they never aggravate failings into crimes? Do they find it eaſy to abſtain from every emotion of ill-will! eaſy to love their enemies, and do good to thoſe who hate them? Theſe godlike tempers, if our nature was not degenerated, would be the *ſpontaneous* produce of the ſoul. But now, alas! they are not raiſed, without much difficulty; ſeldom come to any conſiderable degree of eminence; never arrive at a ſtate of true perfection. An undoubted proof, that they are *exotics*, not *natives* of the ſoil.

Now we are ſpeaking of plants, caſt your eye upon the kitchen-garden. Many of thoſe herbs will perfume the *hard* hand which cruſhes them, and embalm the *rude* foot which tramples on them. Such was the benign conduct of our LORD. He always overcame evil with good. When his diſciples diſregarded him in his bitter agony, he made the *kindeſt* excuſe for their ungrateful ſtupidity *. When his enemies, with unparalleled barbarity, ſpilt his very blood; he *pleaded* their ignorance, as an extenuation of their guilt †.——Is the ſame ſpirit in us, which was alſo in our divine MASTER? Then are our paſſions rightly poiſed, and duly tempered. But if reſentment kindles, and animoſity rankles in our hearts; this is an infallible ſign, that we ſwerve from our SAVIOUR's pattern; conſequently, are fallen from our primitive rectitude.

Ther. What ſay you of the *fancy*? This ſure, if no other, retains the primitive rectitude. What pictures does ſhe form, and what excurſions does ſhe make! She can dive to the bottom of the ocean, can ſoar to the height of the ſtars, and walk upon the boundaries of creation.

Aſp. That the fancy is lively and excurſive, I readily grant. It can out-travel the poſt, or outfly the eagle. But if it travel, only to pick *ſhells*; or fly abroad, to bring home *miſchief*; then, I apprehend, though you ſhould admire the faculty, you will hardly be in raptures with its agency.——This is the real truth. Our fancy, till divine grace regulate and exalt its operations, is generally employed in picking painted ſhells, or culling venomous herbs: *weaving* (as the prophet very elegantly, and no leſs exactly deſcribes the caſe) *the ſpider's web, or hatching cockatrice-eggs* ‡: buſied in the moſt abſurd impertinencies; or acting in ſpeculation the vileſt iniquities. That which ſhould be *a garden incloſed, a fountain ſealed* ‖, for the PRINCE of peace, is the thoroughfare of vanity.——And even when we are renewed from above, O! how neceſſary is it to keep an inceſſant watch, and exerciſe a ſtrict diſcipline, over this volatile, variable, treacherous *vagrant!*

The *memory*, as well as the fancy, is impaired; or, if not impaired, is debauched. Why elſe does it ſo firmly *retain* the impreſſions of an injury, but ſo eaſily *let ſlip* the remembrance of a benefit? Any idle fopperies, which ſooth our vanity, and increaſe our corruption, cleave to the thoughts, as the vexatious bur to our cloaths. While the noble truths of the goſpel, and the rich mercies of a gracious GOD, ſlide away from the mind, and leave no laſting trace behind them. This double perverſeneſs is very emphatically and too truly repreſented by *Jeremiah; Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me, days without number* §.—If we hear a looſe hint, or read an immodeſt expreſſion, they are almoſt ſure to faſten themſelves on our memory. If ſhaken off, they follow us with a troubleſome importunity. If excluded, as unwelcome viſitants, they force themſelves, again and again, upon our imagination. They dog us to the cloſet; they haunt our moſt retired hours; and too often diſturb our very devotions.—Tell me now, can that faculty be upright and uncorrupted, which is a *perforated ſieve*, to tranſmit the beneficial; but a *thirſty ſponge*, to imbibe the pernicious ¶?

Ther. Well, my friend, whatever guilt I or others have contracted, *flattery*, I dare be poſitive, is none of yours. Human nature has received no heightening or adulatory touches from your pencil. You have pourtrayed her *fooliſh*, and *beaſtly*, and every thing bad but *deviliſh*.

* Hatred of GOD is ſo *ſhocking* an expreſſion, that one would almoſt wiſh never to hear or read it. But it occurs in our unerring book; is too often exemplified in common life; and is engraven by corrupt nature on every human heart. See *Rom.* i. 30. *Exod.* xx. 5. *John* xv. 25. *Rom.* viii. 7.

† *Thraſylus*, an *Athenian*.

* Matth. xxvi. 41. † Luke xxiii. 34.

‡ If. lix. 5. ‖ Cant. iv. 12. § Jer. ii. 32.

¶ This, I think, ſuggeſts an unanſwerable confutation of that ſpecious argument, frequently uſed in behalf of ſome *faſhionable* but *diſſolute* diverſions. "They are interſperſed," ſay their admirers, "with ſentiments of virtue, and maxims "of morality."—Should we admit the truth of this plea; yet the depraved diſpoſition of mankind is pretty ſure to drop the morality, and carry away the ribaldry.

Aſp.

Asp. And this, even this abomination I must not secrete, I dare not except.—*Envy* is a devilish disposition. It subsists no where, but in damned spirits, and fallen souls. Yet, infernal as it is, it has been found in persons of the most exalted character. The magnanimous *Joshua* felt its cancrous tooth *. The disciples of the blessed *JESUS* were soured with its malignant leaven †. An apostle declares, that *the spirit which dwelleth in us lusteth to envy* ‡; is impetuously prone to that detestable temper.

Lying is confessedly a diabolical practice; yet how unaccountably forward are our children to utter falsehood? As soon as they are born, they go astray; and as soon as they speak, they speak lies.——I said *unaccountably*. But I recall the expression. The cause is evident. They have lost the image of the GOD of truth; and are become like that apostate spirit, who *is a liar, and the father of it* ‖.

What think you of *malice*, of *hate*, and *revenge*? Are they not each a species of murder, and the seed of the old serpent? Unless, therefore, we are entirely free from all these hellish emotions, we must, *we must* acknowledge, that the prince of this world § has his party within us. May the almighty hand of our GOD extirpate and subdue it, day by day!

You tell me, I am *no flatterer*.—Should a person who professes himself the friend of his fellow-creatures, sooth them into a *false* peace? should he bolster them up in a *groundless* conceit of their excellency, when they really are no better than "an unclean thing?"—Shall the surgeon assure his patient, "All is well;" even when the mortification has taken place, and the gangrene is spreading? This were to refine the first out of all benevolence, and to flatter the last into his grave.

A disputant of less complaisance than my *Theron*, would probably ask, with a contemptuous sneer, "Have you then been drawing your own picture?"—To whom I would reply, with confusion and sorrow, "I have:" alledging this only, to moderate *my confusion*, that I am daily seeking, by prayer and watchfulness, more and more *to put off this old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts* ¶. And, to alleviate *my sorrow*, I am endeavouring continually to remember, that, however unworthy I am, however vile I may have been, my adored REDEEMER's righteousness is perfect; and in *this* righteousness every believer is to make his boast.

Ther. So then man is blind in his understanding; perverse in his will; disorderly in his affections; influenced by dispositions, which are partly brutal, and partly diabolical.——I have often heard you extol, in terms of high admiration, the virtue of *humility*. You have lavished all the riches of eloquence, when haranguing on poverty of spirit. If *such* be the condition of mankind, they have infinite cause to be poor in spirit. They must, therefore, have *one* excellency left; and, according to your own account, a very distinguishing one.

Asp. Scarce any thing displays, in a more glaring light, the extreme depravity of man, than his strong propensity to *pride*, notwithstanding so much vileness, and so many deformities.——Should the noisome leper admire the *beauty* of his complexion, or the impotent paralytic glory in the *strength* of his sinews; would they not be mistaken, even to a degree of sottishness and frenzy? Yet for man, fallen man, who has lost his original righteousness, which was the true ornament of his nature; who is become subject to base and sordid lusts, or, as the apostle speaks, *is earthly and sensual*,—for *him* to be proud, is still more absurdly wicked. And since this is the case, I cannot acquit him from the last and heaviest article of the sacred writer's charge; I have a fresh and more convincing proof, that we do him no wrong, when we call his nature, his disposition, his *wisdom—devilish* *.

Ther. Why do you reckon pride an universally-prevailing corruption? I see no ground for such a dishonourable suspicion. I hope, I *myself* am an instance to the contrary. To unguarded sallies of passion, to several other faults, I confess myself subject; but cannot think, that I am proud.

Asp. Ah! *Theron*, if you was not proud, you would not be passionate. Unreasonable anger always proceeds from an overweening opinion of our own worth.——One who, besides his acquired knowledge of human nature, had the supernatural gift of discerning spirits, is observed to join *humility* and *meekness* †: intimating, that they are amiable twins; and where one exists, the other cannot be absent.——Always consistent with himself, he links together the opposite vices, *heady and high-minded* ‡: not obscurely hinting, that those who are easily provoked, are certainly proud.——Shall I add, without offence? If we fancy our minds to be clear from the weeds of vanity, and our thoughts free from the workings of self-admiration; it is a most pregnant symptom, that we are *over-run* with the former, *abandoned* to the latter, and *blinded* by both.

Pride was the first sin, that found entrance into our nature; and it is, perhaps, the last that will be expelled.—What are all our afflictions, but a remedy provided for this inveterate disease? intended to *hide pride* ‖ *from man*. What is the institution of the gospel, but a battery erected against this strong-hold of Satan? ordained to *cast down every high imagination* §.—Though that remedy is often applied, though this battery is continually playing; yet the peccant humour is not entirely purged off, nor the elatement of spirit totally subdued, till *mortality is swallowed up of life*.

Pride is the sin which most easily besets us. *Who can say, I have made my heart clean* ¶ from this iniquity? It defiles our duties, and intermingles itself with our very virtues. It starts up, I know not how, in our most solemn hours, and our most sacred employs.—The good *Hezekiah*, whose prayers were more powerful than all the forces of *Sennacherib*, was not proof against the wiles of this subtil sorceress +. Even the great apostle, who had been caught up into the third heavens, was in danger of being *puffed up* with pride: in such great danger, that it was necessary to put a lancet into the gathering tumour; or, as he himself expresses it, to fix a *thorn in his flesh* ++ and permit the *messenger of Satan to buffet him*.

How pathetically is this corruption lamented, and how truly described by "a sweet singer of our *Israel*!"

But pride, that busy sin,
Spoils all that I perform.
Curs'd pride! that creeps securely in,
And swells a haughty worm.

Thy glories I abate,
Or praise thee with design;
Part of thy favours I forget,
Or think the merit mine.

The very songs I frame,
Are faithless to thy cause;
And steal the honours of thy name,
To build their own applause ==.

Ther. Now, I presume, you have given the last touches to your distorted portrait.

* Numb. xi. 29. † Matth. xx. 24.
‡ Jam. iv. 5. ‖ John viii. 44.
§ John viii. 44. ¶ Eph. iv. 22.

* Jam. iii. 15. † Eph. iv. 2. ‡ 2 Tim. iii. 4.
‖ Job xxxiii. 17. § 2 Cor. x. 4. 5. ¶ Prov. xx. 9.
+ 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. ++ 2 Cor. xii. 7.

Asp. There are other disagreeable and shocking features. But those I shall cast into shades, or hide under a veil. One particular you must allow me to add, which, like a sullen air in the countenance, throws aggravated horror over the whole. I mean, an inclination to be *fond of* our *slavery*.

In other instances, *the captive exile hasteth to be loosed* *. But here we prefer bondage to freedom, and are loath to leave our prison. Of this, our backwardness to *self-examination*, is both a consequence and a proof. Self-examination, under the agency of the SPIRIT, would open a window in our dungeon; would shew us our wretched condition, and teach us to sigh for deliverance. ——Why have we such a dislike of *reproof*? Because we hug our chains, and chuse darkness rather than light. Reproof is more grating than the harshest discord, tho' it tends to dissolve the inchantment, and rescue us from the tyranny of sin. While *flattery*, which abets the delusion, and strengthens the spell, is music to our ears.—Is not our *reason*, which should arraign and condemn every irregularity, forward to invent excuses, and to spare the favourite folly? Reason, which should unsheath the *dagger*, superinduces the *mask*; and, instead of striking at the heart of our vices, screens them under the cover of some plausible names. A wicked habit is called a human infirmity; insnaring diversions pass for innocent amusements; a revengeful disposition is termed spirit, gallantry, and honour. Thus our reason (if, when so egregiously perverted, it deserves the name) is ingenious to obstruct our recovery; and *rivets* on the shackles which our passions have formed †.

This the eternal WISDOM foresaw, and therefore uttered that tender expostulation; *How long ye simple ones will ye* love *simplicity*, *and scorners* delight *in their scorning*, *and fools* hate *knowledge?* Even the inestimably-precious knowledge of an all-atoning and completely-justifying SAVIOUR; who preaches, who has purchased, and who works deliverance,—preaches in his word, has purchased by his blood, and works by his SPIRIT, deliverance for the captives,—the wretched captives of ignorance, sin, and death.

This I take to be the most *flagrant* and *deplorable* effect of human depravity,—our aversion to the doctrine, the privileges, the grace of the gospel. Beware, dear *Theron*, lest you prove my point by—shall I speak it? would you suspect it?—your own practice. Zealous as I am for my tenets, I should be sorry, extremely sorry, to have *such* a demonstration of their truth.

Ther. You are highly obliging, *Aspasio*, to single *me* out for your evidence. Yet why should the honour be appropriated to myself? It belongs, upon the foot of the preceding calculation, not to your friend only, but to the whole species.——If you was aiming at none but the licentious and abandoned, you would have none to oppose you, but persons of that character. Your arrows of satire would then be rightly levelled, and might be serviceable to mankind. Whereas to put *all* in the black list, to mark *all* with the villain's brand; this can never be *Christian* charity, this is unsufferable censoriousness.

Asp. Let me beseech you, *Theron*, not to misapprehend my design. I speak not as a malevolent satirist, but would imitate the faithful physician. I am opening the sore, that it may admit the healing balm: and should I perform the operation with an *invenomed* instrument? My soul abhors the thought.—I must entreat you likewise to remember the distinction between a state of nature and a state of grace. We are all naturally evil. Such we should for ever continue, did not a *supernatural* power intervene; making some to differ, both from their original selves, and from the generality of their neighbours.——Are they refined in their temper, and reformed in their life? I grant it. But then it is the influence of the sanctifying SPIRIT, which purges away their dross, yet not without leaving *some alloy*.

Ther. Here, *Aspasio*, you certainly strain the bow, till it breaks. Since scripture itself celebrates some persons as absolutely perfect.——What says *Moses*, the inspired historian? *Noah was perfect in his generation* *.——What says the GOD of *Moses*, who can neither deceive nor be deceived? *Job was a perfect man and an upright* †. Consequently, *their* nature must be entirely cleansed from this hereditary defilement; and *their* character confutes your derogatory representations of mankind.

Asp. Those eminent saints were perfect; that is, they were *sanctified throughout;* sanctified in all their faculties; no one grace of religion was lacking. As in the new-born infant, there is a human creature complete; no constituent part of the vital frame is wanting; though each is tender, all are very feeble, and none arrived at the full size.

They were *upright*. This word seems to be explanatory of the preceding; and signifies an unfeigned desire, joined with a hearty endeavour, to obey the whole will of GOD; excluding, not all defect, but all *reigning* hypocrisy, and *wilful* remissness.——The interpretation, thus limited, is of a piece with their conduct. If stretched to a higher pitch, it is evidently inconsistent with the narrative of their lives.

Pray, what was your motive for decorating the silvan retirement (which sheltered us yesterday) with the statue of *Elijah?*

Ther. Because I thought, his solitary life, and gloomy temper, suited that sequestered bower: because the memorable adventure, there represented, is, with me, a favourite portion of sacred history.

Are we pleased with spirited and delicate *raillery?* Nothing exceeds his pungent sarcasm on the stupid and despicable dupes of idolatry. Every sentence is keen as a razor, and pointed as a dagger, yet wears the appearance of the most courtly complaisance. We may truly say, in the beautiful language of the psalmist, *His words are smoother than oil, and yet be they very swords* ‡.

Are we delighted with instances of *magnanimity?* A single prophet, unsupported by any human aid, maintains the cause of truth, against the king, his grandees, and hundreds of the apostate priests. He ventures to stake all his credit, to risk his very life, and (what was dearer to him than personal credit, or bodily life) the honour of the true GOD, and interests of his holy religion,—to risk all on the *immediate* interposition of a most surprising miracle.

Do we admire the triumphs of *faith?* His faith was, in a manner, omnipotent. He prays, and *torrents of fire* descend from the sky, to devour his adversaries ||.—He prays again, and the sluices of heaven are *shut*: there is neither dew nor rain for several years §.——A third time he prays, and the windows from on high

* If. li. 14.

† Perhaps, this is what our LORD means, when, developing the human heart, and discovering its latent enormities, he closes the dark account with ἀφροσυνη, *foolishness*: implying that *stupidity*, which has no sense of its misery; that *perverseness*, which has no inclination for a recovery: both which render all the other evils far more inveterate, *Mark* vii. 22.

* Gen. vi. 9. † Job i. 1.

‡ 1 *Kings* xviii. 27. And it came to pass at noon, that *Elijah* mocked them, and said, *Cry aloud; for he is a God. Either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.*

|| 2 Kings i. 10. § 1 Kings xvii. 1.

are

are *opened*; abundance of ſhowers water the earth *.—On another occaſion he preſents his ſupplications, and GOD makes his feet like harts feet, inſomuch that an aged prophet *outruns* the royal chariot †.

Aſp. I commend your taſte, *Theron*; and am particularly pleaſed with the reaſons of your choice.—But do not you remember, that even the wonder-working *Tiſhbite* failed in his reſignation, and failed in his faith? Eminent as he was for mortification, he gave way to *unreaſonable* diſcontent; and, though a champion for the living GOD, he yielded to *unbelieving* fear ‡.—*The man Moſes was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth* ‖: yet he, even he was provoked in his ſpirit, and ſpake unadvitedly with his lips §.—Was not *Peter* the hero among our LORD's followers? Yet he trembles, more than trembles, at the ſhaking of a leaf; he denies his divine MASTER, ſcared by the voice of a woman.

Look where-ever we will, we find proofs of human depravity; reigning *uncontrolled* in ſome, making frequent *inſurrection* in all. It is written in our own hearts, by the pen of experience; the finger of obſervation points it out, in the practice of others;—even in the practice of *thoſe* who have ſeen ſaints of the firſt rank, and of the higheſt endowments. Yet they were defective;—defective too, in *that very* quality, which was their diſtinguiſhing gift, in which they particularly excelled.

Ther. While we are talking, the day has inſenſibly ſtole itſelf away, and left us ſurrounded with *twilight*: which is a ſort of luſtre intermingled with darkneſs; no part wholly lucid; no part wholly obſcure.——An emblem, according to your repreſentation, of the renewed ſoul, and its imperfect holineſs.

Aſp. A very juſt one.—Even where the goſpel ſhines, ſtill there is an *incurrent* gloom of corruption. Ignorance mixes itſelf with our knowledge. Unbelief cleaves to our faith. Nor is our purity free from all contamination.——The prophet *Zechariah*, fortelling the eſtabliſhment of the goſpel-kingdom, and deſcribing the ſtate of its ſpiritual ſubjects, ſays, *It ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the light ſhall not be clear nor dark* ¶. This, as to its *literal* ſenſe, we now ſee exemplified in the circumambient atmoſphere. With regard to its *ſpiritual* meaning, every true believer feels it accompliſhed in his own breaſt.

Ther. While you are ſo vehement in decrying all human attainments, conſider, *Aſpaſio*, whether you do not *check* and *diſpirit* us in the purſuit of exalted virtue.

Aſp. I ſuppoſe, you never expected to be ſuch an adept in geometry as *Archimedes*, nor ſo profound an aſtronomer as *Newton*; yet this did not check your application to the ſtudy of mathematics, or the contemplation of the heavens.——Your brother the merchant, I preſume, has no proſpect of amaſſing the wealth of a *Craſus*, or the immenſe treaſures of a *Kouli-Kan*; yet this does not diſpirit him in proſecuting the buſineſs, which brings him both opulence and honour.

However, *Theron*, ſo long as you deny the imputation of CHRIST's righteouſneſs, I muſt acknowledge, you act a conſiſtent part, in being zealous for the perfection of perſonal obedience. You ought either to *acquire* the one, or to *accept* the other. Therefore I ſhall produce no more arguments for your diſcouragement; but ſhall compriſe the whole of my anſwer, in the motto to an *Iriſh* nobleman's arms, TRY. Or, if this be too conciſe, I will ſubjoin, with a very little alteration, the words of a king; "When you have attained what you purſue, "*bring me word again, that I may go and poſſeſs it alſo* *."

Ther. According to your account, the moſt advanced and eſtabliſhed Chriſtians are but like a company of *invalids*. Does not this extremely derogate from the honour of our LORD, conſidered as the *Phyſician* of ſouls? It ſeems to make a mere nothing of ſanctification, and would ſwallow up CHRIST the King in CHRIST the Prieſt.

Aſp. Invalids they are †; and ſuch will continue, till they are diſmiſſed from this great infirmary, and admitted into that only, happy, bleſſed world; where *the inhabitant ſhall no more ſay, I am* either in ſoul or in body *ſick* ‡.

If the cure was *never* to be completed, this doubtleſs would be diſhonourable to our almighty PHYSICIAN. But the ſpiritual recovery, begun on earth, and advancing through time, will be perfected in heaven, and prolonged to eternity.——Does this make a mere nothing of ſanctification? No, but it makes room for a continual *progreſs*, and affords cauſe for continual *humiliation*. It reſerves a moſt exalted prerogative for the heavenly ſtate and beatific viſion; and perpetually reminds us of a moſt important truth, That our preſent bleſſedneſs conſiſts, not in being *free* from *all* ſin, but in having, *no* ſin *imputed* to us ‖.

This imperfection of our obedience, inſtead of confounding, maintains a proper *diſtinction* between *CHRIST* the King, and *CHRIST* the Prieſt. Whereas, if we were perfect in piety, the prieſtly office, with regard to us, would be ſuperſeded. What need of an interceſſor to recommend our prayers? what occaſion for an high prieſt to *bear the iniquity of our holy things* §? if ſome taint of the original leaven did not pollute our beſt ſervices?

Neither does this detract from the wiſdom, from the goodneſs, or from the power of CHRIST. It rather adminiſters to the advantageous diſplay of all theſe divine attributes.——Of his *wiſdom*, in conducting the affairs of his church with ſuch exact propriety, that the righteouſneſs of faith may have its due honour,

* Jam. v. 17. 18. † 1 Kings xvii. 46.

‡ *Elias*, or rather *Elijah*, *was a man ſubject to like paſſions as we are*, Jam. v. 17. Upon which paſſage, an eminent commentator makes the following remark: "This probably is ſaid, with re- "ſpect to his *fear* and *diſcontent*, manifeſted 1 *Kings* xix. 3. 4."—Ὁμοιοπαθὴς muſt, I think, imply a ſtate liable to the *irregular* workings of paſſion; not free from the *ſinful* infirmities of nature. Otherwiſe, it is an inſtance foreign to the purpoſe; does by no means anſwer the end deſigned; which is to encourage the heart, and ſtrengthen the faith, even of *frail, corrupt offending* creatures. See *ver.* 16.

‖ Numb. xii. 3. § Pſal. cvi. 33.

¶ *Zech.* xiv. 6. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9. *For we know in part.* Perhaps this declaration of the apoſtle may be a key to the prophet's meaning. However, it is a ſufficient confirmation of *Aſpaſio*'s ſentiment.

* Matth. ii. 8.

† Do not the *beſt* of men lament their ignorance of the divine perfections, their ſlowneſs of heart to believe the divine promiſes, and the languor of their gratitude for ineſtimable, for innumerable gifts of the divine goodneſs?—Do they not frequently feel deadneſs in their devotions, diſorder in their affections, and various, others relics of the original leaven!—Do they not often complain, in the language of the apoſtle, *When I would do good, evil is preſent with me?* and ſay, with the earlieſt *Chriſtians*, *We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened*: burdened, not ſo much with affliction; thoſe heroes in *Chriſtianity* had learned, to *rejoice in tribulation*: but burdened with a ſenſe of their ſpiritual infirmities, and with the workings of their inbred corruption; which, to a tender and lively believer, are the *heavieſt* of croſſes and the *moſt galling* of loads.——Nay, do not the heirs of glory *waſh their very robes*, even their faireſt deeds, and their brighteſt graces, *in the blood of the LAMB?* which, if they were free from ſpot, and void of impurity, need not be *made white* in this ſacred fountain. See 2 *Cor.* v. 4. *Rev.* vii. 14.

‡ Pſal. xxxii. 2. ‖ Iſ. xxxiii. 24.

§ *Exod.* xxviii. 38. *Id eſt, expiare peccata, quibus ſanctiſſimæ cæteroquin actiones noſtræ inquinatæ ſunt.* WATS. de Oecon.

nour,

hour, and the ſanctification of the SPIRIT its proper eſteem.——Of his *goodneſs*, in carrying on the work of grace, amidſt ſo much infirmity, and ſo many corruptions; and in crowning, which conſummate happineſs, ſuch frail undeſerving creatures.——Of his *power*, in extracting a variety of benefits even from——

Ther. Benefits, Aſpaſio!—Can any thing beneficial proceed from an evil, which, according to your own repreſentation, is ſo incorrigibly malignant?

Aſp. It will tend to make us *lowly in our own eyes.* When we remember, that by nature we are altogether become abominable; that the remains of natural depravity ſtill adhere to our minds; how muſt ſuch a view of ourſelves cover us with ſhame, and lay us low in abaſement! *Leſs than the leaſt of all thy mercies* *, will be the language of ſuch a one's very ſoul.

It will diſpoſe us to *compaſſionate others.* How can we take a brother by the throat, and require faultleſs perfection in his behaviour, when we ourſelves in many things offend, in all things fall ſhort? Every ſuch conſideration rebukes, what I may call ſpiritual unmercifulneſs; it pleads for tenderneſs and forbearance to our fellow-creatures; is a monitor within, and whiſpers that affecting remonſtrance, *Oughteſt not thou to have compaſſion upon thy fellow ſervant, ſince thy almighty* LORD *hath* ſuch renewed, ſuch unwearied *pity on thee* †?

It will teach us to admire the *riches* of *grace.* Shall fallen creatures, that are taken from the very dunghills of ſin, and reſcued from a hell of inward iniquity,—ſhall *they*, notwithſtanding their deplorable depravity, and innumerable deficiencies,—ſhall *they* be admitted into the boſom of eternal love? *they* be exalted to the thrones of glory, and numbered with the princes of heaven? This is grace, tranſcendently rich, and divinely free indeed!

Will it not *reconcile* us to the approach of *death?* This, methinks, like wormwood on the nipple, or gall in the cup, muſt tend to wean us from the world. How can we be enamoured with ſuch a land of darkneſs, and ſuch a vale of tears? Or why ſhould we covet, when Providence gives us the ſignal for our departure, to prolong our abode in theſe territories of *diſorder?*—Surely this muſt incline us to leave them, every day, more and more in our affections; and at laſt, to leave them, without any reluctance, by final diſſolution; leave them, for that better country, where our perſonal righteouſneſs will no longer be defective, like the *waning* moon; but ſhine forth with conſummate luſtre, like the *meridian* ſun, in the kingdom of our FATHER.

It will *endear* the bleſſed JESUS in *every* capacity; as the ſtings of the fiery flying ſerpents, and the dearth of the waſte howling wilderneſs, endeared to the *Iſraelites* both their miraculous antidote, and their bread from heaven.——They who believe this truth, muſt ſee their inexpreſſible and inceſſant need of CHRIST's Spirit. The proteſtation of *Moſes*, on a particular occaſion, will be the daily, the hourly breathing of their ſouls; *Carry us not up hence, unleſs thy preſence*, thy SPIRIT *go with us* ‡. For without this aid, we can diſcharge no duty aright, nor ſucceſsfully reſiſt any temptation.——They will be exceedingly cautious, not to *grieve* ‖ that ſacred gueſt, leſt he depart from them, and abandon them to the power of their lurking corruptions: knowing, that if *he* abandon them, when ſuch foes are within, and ſo many ſnares without, their caſe will be worſe than *Samſon's*, when his locks were ſhaven, and the *Philiſtines* all around him.

How highly will ſuch perſons value the *blood* of the covenant, and the *interceſſion* of their great HIGH PRIEST!—They will no more preſume to enter into the preſence of the moſt high GOD, without a fiducial reliance upon the atoning and interceding SAVIOUR; than the ſons of *Jacob* would have ventured to appear before the viceroy of *Egypt*, without the company of their younger brother *. In all, in all their intercourſe with heaven, the great PROPITIATION will be their plea, and the great ADVOCATE their confidence.——The impotent man waited at the pool of *Bethesda*, and the *Syrian* general dipped ſeven times in *Jordan.* Theſe perſons will not only *wait*, but *live* by the fountain opened for ſin and uncleanneſs †. They will waſh in the ſacred ſanctifying ſtream, not *ſeven* times only, but *ſeventy times* ſeven.

And when ſuch ſentiments poſſeſs the mind, how dear! O how *dear* and *deſirable* will our LORD's obedience be!—I called ſometime ago, our own works *worm-eaten things;* and muſt not theſe corruptions, if they remain ever ſo little in the heart, tarniſh our graces, and debaſe our duties? Muſt they not be depretiatory to all our accompliſhments; and too much like *corroding vermin*, in the ſubſtance of our timber, or at the core of our fruits?—Should we not then renounce, utterly renounce theſe tarniſhed, worm-eaten things? and rely, wholly rely, for everlaſting acceptance, on our divine HIGH PRIEST? who, in his mediatorial works, as well as in his wonderful perſon, is altogether *light* and *perfection* ‡; and neither in him, nor in them, is there any deficiency or any darkneſs at all.

Excuſe me, *Theron*; I fear, I have been preaching. The importance of the text muſt form my apology. It is an *introduction*, not to the records of hiſtory, or the tranſactions of philoſophy, but to the riches of *CHRIST.*

Ther. If my *Aſpaſio* has been preaching, I can aſſure him for his comfort, that his audience has been very attentive; and though the ſermon was ſomewhat copious, the hero neither ſlept not gaped.——However, I ſhould be glad to have the whole reviewed, and ſummed up; that, if it has been large as the pyramid, it may, like the pyramid, terminate in a *point.*

Aſp. This then is the ſtate of our nature.——The image of the CREATOR is loſt; blindneſs is in the underſtanding; diſorder in all the affections.——In the will, enmity againſt GOD, the ſovereign good; inability to all that is ſpiritual and heavenly; with a propenſity to whatever is ſordid and earthly.——The whole ſoul is deformed, diſtempered, rebellious.——And ſhall ſuch a creature lay claim to thoſe amiable and ſacred endowments, which may be a *proper recommendation* to infinite holineſs?——Is ſuch a creature qualified to perform thoſe righteous acts, which may approve themſelves to the *demand* of GOD's law, and to the *inflexibility* of his juſtice?

Should he conceive the vain hope, or make the vainer attempt, I would now addreſs him, as *Jehoaſh* formerly anſwered *Amaziah.*——*Amaziah* king of *Judah*, elated with the little victories he had obtained over the *Edomites*, began to fancy himſelf invincible. Prompted by this fooliſh imagination, he challenges *Jehoaſh* king of *Iſrael*, to meet him in a pitched battle; and

* Gen. xxxii. 10. † Matth. xviii. 33.

‡ Exod. xxxiii. 15. ‖ Eph. iv. 30.

* Gen. xliii. 5. † Zech. xiii. 1.

‡ *Light and perfection*—This is the meaning of that myſterious ornament, which in the grand officiating robes of the *Jewiſh* high prieſt, was annexed to the breaſt-plate, and ſtyled *Urim* and *Thummim.* Only the *Hebrew* words are in the plural number, and denote *every degree* of illumination, and *all kinds* of perfection.—Does not this very ſignificantly teach ſinners, whence to ſeek their wiſdom, and where to look for their perfection? There never was, in all ages, more than one *Urim* and *Thummim*; and only one perſon, in each generation, was appointed to wear it. And who is there, in all worlds, that can give us heavenly knowledge, but the *SPIRIT* of *CHRIST?* What is there, in ourſelves or all creatures, that can preſent us unblameable before GOD, but the obedience of *CHRIST?*

receives

receives this ironical apologue, by way of reply; —which for gallantry of ſpirit and delicacy of wit, for poignancy of ſatire and propriety of application, has ſeldom been equalled, perhaps never exceeded:— *The thiſtle that was in Lebanon, ſent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, ſaying, Give thy daughter to my ſon to wife: and there paſſed by a wild beaſt that was in Lebanon, and trod down the thiſtle.* What are we,—when we offer to eſtabliſh our own righteouſneſs, or preſume to juſtify ourſelves before the moſt high GOD,—but *deſpicable thiſtles*, that fancy themſelves *ſtately cedars*? And is not every temptation, is not each corruption, a wild beaſt of the deſert, which will trample on the impotent boaſter, and tread his haughty pretenſions in the duſt?

2 Kings xiv. 9.

DIALOGUE XIV.

ASPASIO was employed in preparing for his journey. *Theron*, free from buſineſs, and diſengaged from company, had the greateſt part of the day to himſelf. Which he ſpent, in *reviewing* the ſubſtance of their late conferences; not without intermingled aſpirations to GOD, for the guidance of his divine SPIRIT.

At evening, he *went*, like the patriarch of old, *into the field to meditate* *; amidſt the calm of nature, to meditate on the grace of the goſpel.——The ſky was peculiarly beautiful, and perfectly clear; only where the fine *indigo* received an agreeable heightening, by a few thin and ſcattered clouds; which imbibed the ſolar rays, and looked like penſile fleeces of pureſt *wool*.—All things appeared with ſo mild, ſo majeſtic, ſo charming an aſpect, that, intent as he was upon a different ſubject, he could not but indulge the following ſoliloquy.

"How delightful are the ſcenes of rural nature! eſpecially, to the *philoſophic* eye, and *contemplative* mind. —I cannot wonder that perſons in high life are ſo fond of retiring from a conſpicuous and exalted ſtation, to the covert of a ſhady grove, or the margin of a cooling ſtream; are ſo deſirous of quitting the ſmoky town, and noiſy ſtreet, in order to breathe purer air, and ſurvey the wonders of creation, in the ſilent, the ſerene, the peaceful *villa*.

"'Tis true, in the country, there are none of the modiſh, I had almoſt ſaid, meretricious ornaments of that *falſe* politeneſs, which refines people out of their veracity: but an eaſy ſimplicity of manners, with an unaffected ſincerity of mind.——Here the ſolemn farce of ceremony is ſeldom brought into play, and the pleaſing deluſions of compliment have no place. But the brow is the *real* index of the temper, and ſpeech the *genuine* interpreter of the heart.

"In the country, I acknowledge, we are ſeldom invited to ſee the *mimic* attempts of human art. But we, every where, behold the grand and maſterly exertions of divine power.—No *theatre* erects its narrow ſtage, ſurrounds it with puny rows of aſcending ſeats, or adorns it with a ſhifting ſeries of gorgeous ſcenery. But *fields* extend their ample area; at firſt, lightly clad with a ſcarf of ſpringing green; then, deeply planted with an arrangement of ſpindling ſtalks; as a few more weeks advance, covered with a profuſion of bearded or huſky grain; at laſt, richly laden with a harveſt of yellow plenty.

"*Meadows* diſcloſe their beautiful boſom; yield a ſoft and fertile lap for the luxuriant herbage; and ſuckle myriads of the faireſt, gayeſt flowers: which, without any vain oſtentation, or expenſive finery, outvie each other in all the elegance of dreſs.—— *Groves* of various leaf; arrayed in freſheſt verdure, and liberal of their reviving ſhade; riſe, in amiable, in noble proſpect, all around.——*Droves* of ſturdy oxen, ſtrong for labour, or fat for the ſhambles; "*herds* of ſleeky kine, with milk in their udders, and "violets in their noſtrils; *flocks* of well-fleeced ſheep, "with their ſnowy lambkins, friſking at their ſide; "theſe compoſe the living machinery.——Boundleſs "tracts of bending *azure*, varniſhed with inimitable de"licacy, and hung with ſtarry lamps, or irradiated with "ſolar luſtre, from the ſtately ceiling.——While the "early breezes, and the evening gales; charged with "no unwholeſome vapours, breeding no peſtilential "taint; but fanning the humid buds, and waving their "odoriferous wings; diſpenſe a thouſand *ſweets*, min"gled with the moſt ſovereign ſupports of health.—— "And is not this ſchool of induſtry, this magazine of "plenty, incomparably *more delightful*, as well as infinite"ly *leſs dangerous*, than thoſe gaudy temples of profuſe"neſs and debauchery, where ſin and ruin wear the "maſk of pleaſure? where *Belial* is daily or nightly "worſhipped with, what his votaries call, modiſh re"creation, and genteel amuſement?

"Here indeed is no tuneful *voice*, to melt in ſtrains "of amorous anguiſh, and tranſfuſe the ſickening fond"neſs to the hearer's breaſt. No ſkilful artiſt, to inform "the *lute* with muſical inchantment; to ſtrike infectious "melody from the viol; and ſooth away the reſolution "and activity of virtue, in wanton deſires, or voluptuous "indolence.——But the *plains* bleat; the *mountains* low; "and the hollow circling *rocks* echo with the univerſal "ſong. Every valley re-murmurs to the fall of ſilver "fountains, or the liquid lapſe of gurgling rills.—*Birds*, "muſicians ever beauteous, every gay, perched on a "thouſand boughs, play a thouſand ſprightly and harmonious airs.

"Charmed therefore with the fineſt views, lulled with "the ſofteſt ſounds, and treated with the richeſt odours, "what can be wanting to complete the delight? Here "is *every* entertainment for the eye; the moſt *refined* "gratifications for the ear; and a *perpetual* banquet for the "ſmell; without any inſidious decoy, for the integrity "of our conduct, or even for the purity of our fancy.

"O ye blooming walks, and flowery lawns, ſurrounded with dewy lanſcapes! how often have *patriots* and *heroes* laid aſide the burden of power, and ſtole away from the glare of grandeur, to enjoy themſelves * in your compoſed retreats!—Ye moſſy couches, and fragrant bowers, ſkirted with cooling caſcades! how many *illuſtrious* perſonages, after all their glorious toil for the public good, have ſought an honourable and welcome repoſe in your downy lap †!—Ye venerable oaks, and ſolemn groves;

* Gen. xxiv. 63.

* ——*Mihi me reddentis agelli*,

ſays *Horace* of his little country-ſeat.

† *Virgil* was ſo ſmitten with the amiableneſs of theſe ſcenes, that he aſſigns them as an habitation for happy ſpirits, in the regions of *Elyſium*.

——*Lucis habitamus opacis,*
Riparumque toros, et prata recentia rivis
Incolimus.

"woods, that whiſper to the quivering gale; clifts that "overhang the darkened flood; who can number the "*ſages* and *ſaints*, that have devoted the day to ſtudy, or "reſigned a vacant hour to healthy exerciſe, beneath "your ſilvan porticoes, and waving arches? that, far "from the dull impertinence of man, have liſtened to "the inſtructive voice of GOD; and contemplated the "works of his adorable hand, amidſt your moſs-grown "cells, and rocky ſhades.—How *inelegant*, or how *in-* "*ſenſible* is the mind, which has no awakened lively re-"liſh for theſe ſweet receſſes, and their exquiſite beau-"ties!"

But whither am I carried? Is not this *rural enthuſiaſm?* I find myſelf talking to trees; and forget the momentous queſtion, which waits for our deciſion. Here then let my rhapſody ceaſe, and my inquiry proceed.—Does it betray a want of true delicacy, to be inſenſible of nature's charms? My *Aſpaſio* thinks, it argues as wrong a taſte in practical divinity, not to acquieſce in the imputed righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*. To this doctrine I have been always extremely averſe. I ſet myſelf to oppoſe it with objections, drawn from the *reaſon* of things, and from various paſſages of *ſcripture*. To all which my friend replied. And though I was ſcarcely convinced, yet I was ſilenced by his anſwers.

I pleaded for the ſufficiency of our *ſincere* obedience; eſpecially, when accompanied with *repentance*, and recommended by the *merits* of *CHRIST*.——Neither was this attempt ſucceſsful. His arguments, ſomewhat like the flaming ſword, planted at the entrance of paradiſe, *turned every way* *, and precluded all acceſs to life on the foot of our own duty.

At length, *Aſpaſio* quitted the defenſive, and attacked me in his turn. He explained the precepts, and enforced the threatenings, of the divine law. So *exact* its tenor! that it demands a perfect and perſevering conformity to every injunction.—So *extenſive* its authority! that it reaches the inmoſt thoughts; and requires obedience, not barely in the actions of the life, but the very intentions of the heart.—So *inexorable* its ſeverity! that it condemns every the ſmalleſt offence, and curſes every the leaſt offender.

This remonſtrance had ſome of the terror, and almoſt all the effect, of a maſked battery. It was quite unexpected, and alarmed me conſiderably.—To puſh his advantage, he enlarged upon the *infinite purity* of GOD: A GOD glorious in holineſs; *who cannot look upon evil*, with any connivance, or without the utmoſt abhorrence; before whom the very heavens are unclean, and who will in no wiſe clear the guilty.

To complete his victory, he played off the doctrine of original *guilt*, and original *depravity*:—That, beſides the imputation of *Adam*'s apoſtaſy, beſides the commiſſion of numberleſs iniquities, we were born in ſin;—are, by nature, enmity againſt GOD;—in all our faculties corrupt;—in every imagination evil;—and, even when renewed † by grace, are ſtill, ſtill tainted with ſome baſe *remains* of the old leproſy.

After all, he bid me conſider,—what fruits muſt ſpring from *ſuch a nature?*—how they muſt appear, when compared with *ſuch a law?*—what they muſt deſerve, when tried before *ſuch a GOD?*—Theſe, I muſt confeſs, are very weighty and ſtartling queries. If theſe repreſentations are true, the face of human affairs carries a moſt gloomy aſpect. Or rather, a moſt dreadful ſtorm is hanging over the children of men.—*Aſpaſio* urges me to fly, without any delay, to the covert of *CHRIST*'s meritorious obedience. This, he ſays, was wrought out in my name, and in my ſtead; this will be admitted, both at the throne of grace, and the bar of judgment, as my juſtifying righteouſneſs.

This, he adds, opens a way, on GOD's part, for the largeſt emanations and moſt honourable exerciſe of mercy. On man's part, it founds a title to pardon, to life, and every ſpiritual bleſſing.——This doctrine, eſpecially in ſuch a connection, begins to put on a *more recommending* appearance. My prejudices are really wearing away. I am almoſt a convert.

Aſpaſio overheard the cloſe of theſe reflections. Unwilling to interrupt his friend in ſo ſerious an inquiry, and deſirous to obſerve the iſſue of ſo intereſting a debate, he had hitherto concealed himſelf. But thinking this a favourable minute, he ſtepped forward, and ſaid,——

Aſp. Almoſt! and why not *altogether* a convert? What ſhould hinder my dear *Theron* from ſubmitting to ſo *rational* a ſcheme, with the moſt entire acquieſcence? What ſhould hinder him from embracing ſo *comfortable* a doctrine with the utmoſt complacency? Why ſhould he not ſubſcribe, both with hand and heart, that divine decree? *Their righteouſneſs is of me, ſaith the LORD* *.

Ther. If, by this doctrine, the claims of the law are anſwered,—if the perfections of GOD are glorified,—if the intereſts of morality are ſecured,—I muſt acknowledge, it will be *more worthy* of acceptance, than I could once have imagined.

Aſp. And if all theſe points are not gained, gained too in the moſt eminent manner, I ſolemnly declare, that I will never plead for imputed righteouſneſs more.

But the *claims* of the law are all anſwered.—For there is nothing in its ſacred injunctions, which *CHRIST* did not perform; and nothing in its awful threatenings, which *CHRIST* did not ſuſtain. He fulfilled all its precepts, by an unſpotted purity of heart, and the moſt perfect integrity of life. He exhauſted its whole curſe, when he hung upon the croſs, abandoned by his FATHER, and a bleeding victim for the ſins of his people.—This obedience brings higher honour to the divine law, than it could have received from the uninterrupted duty of *Adam*, and all his poſterity, in all their generations.

The *perfections* of GOD, which were diſhonoured by our rebellion, are glorified.——He appears, by this method of juſtification, inconceivably rich in ſhewing mercy; yet ſteady, inflexibly ſteady, in executing vengeance. The *ſceptre* of grace, and the *ſword* of juſtice, have each its due exerciſe, each its full ſcope. The holineſs of the divine nature, and the dignity of the divine government, are not only maintained, but moſt magnificently diſplayed. Indeed, it is the peculiar excellence of this wonderful expedient, that it renders *all* the divine attributes ſupremely venerable, and ſupremely amiable.

Ther. But are intereſts of *morality* ſecured? This is what I am ſtrongly inclined to doubt. And, to ſay the truth, this is now my principal objection to your ſcheme.

Aſp. I ſhall never blame my friend, for being vigilant and jealous over the intereſts of morality. If our doctrine had a malignant aſpect on true morality, I would give my voice againſt it, and uſe all my endea-

* Gen. iii. 24.

† *Even when renewed*—For a diſplay of this important truth, and a remedy againſt this ſtubborn evil, let me refer the reader to a little treatiſe publiſhed by Dr *Owen*, and entitled, *The nature, power, deceit, and prevalency of the remainders of indwelling ſin in believers*.——The author's pen is indeed a diſſecting knife, goes deep into his ſubject, and lays open this plague of the heart. Like a workman that need not be aſhamed, he demonſtrates his point from the unerring word of GOD, and the acknowledged experience of Chriſtians. Like a compaſſionate as well as able phyſician, he all along preſcribes the proper antidote; nay, he ſhews how the poiſon may be ſo over-ruled by divine grace, and ſo managed by the watchful patient, as to become medicinal, ſalutary, and conducive to the moſt beneficial purpoſes.

* Iſ. liv. 17.

vours to suppress it.——But it is formed with every tendency to awaken the *utmost dread* of sin, and affect us with the *warmest sense* of our CREATOR's love. And is not *that* the strongest barrier against the incroachments of vice? Is not *this* the sweetest inducement to the practice of virtue?

I am glad to find, that a jealousy for the interests of morality, is the chief obstacle in the way of your assent; because, I am perswaded, it is much of the same nature with those forbidding and mistaken apprehensions, which our ancestors entertained, concerning the *ocean*. They looked upon it as an unsurmountable obstruction to universal society. Whereas it is, in fact, the very *cement* of society; the only means of accomplishing a general intercourse; and the great highway to all the nations of the earth. What is here affirmed, may, on some future occasion, be proved.——At present, let me desire you to imagine, rather, may the blessed SPIRIT enable you to believe, that your sins *are expiated*, through the death of JESUS CHRIST: That a righteousness *is given* you, by virtue of which, you may have free and welcome access to GOD; the merit of which you may plead, for obtaining all the blessings of time and eternity.—Then let me ask, Will this *alienate* your affections from your Almighty BENEFACTOR? Will this *irritate* evil concupiscence, or send you to carnal gratifications in quest of happiness? Quite the reverse. When this faith is wrought in your heart, nothing will be so powerful to produce holy love, and willing obedience; to exalt your desires, and enable you to overcome the world.

What says the apostle? *I through the law am dead to the law* *. Being made to understand its spirituality and perfection, I have no longer any hope of justification from my own conformity to its precepts.——Did this prompt him, did this embolden him, to neglect or violate his duty? Hear the sacred writer's own declaration. I am released from the rigour and bondage of the law; I am directed to *CHRIST* for righteousness and salvation; *that I may live unto GOD*: that my whole life may be devoted to HIS honour, who has brought me into a state so delightful, into a liberty so glorious.

Ther. This liberty, I am afraid, will be of very little service to the licentious and gay world.

Asp. I shall be in no pain even for the *gay world*, if once they cordially receive this grace, and are vitally influenced by this doctrine: which, far from dissolving the least obligation to obedience, or weakening any one principle of piety, adds to every other motive, the endearing engagements of gratitude, and the winning perswasives of love.

Nay, I verily believe, that multitudes in the gay and licentious world, are held fast in the *fatal* snare, by their ignorance of this sweet, alluring, consolatory truth. They find themselves deeply obnoxious to divine justice, and feel themselves strongly bound with the chains of sensuality. They think, it is impossible to clear the enormous score of their guilt; impossible to deliver themselves from the confirmed dominion of sin. Therefore, like *desperate* debtors, they stifle every serious thought; lest a consciousness of their long arrears, and a prospect of the dreadful reckoning, should *torment them before the time* †.

But if they were informed, that the infinitely-merciful SON of GOD has undertaken to redeem such undone and helpless sinners;—that he has thoroughly expiated the most horrid transgressions, and procured even for ungodly wretches, all the needful supplies of strengthening grace;—that, instead of being prohibited, they are *invited* to partake, *freely* to partake, of these unspeakable blessings;—were they acquainted with these glad tidings of the gospel, surely they would burst their chains, and spring to liberty. These *truths*, if once revealed in their hearts, would, of all considerations, be most effectual to *make them free* *.

What shall I say more, to obtain my *Theron*'s approbation? Shall I point out and plead the most illustrious precedents?—GOD the FATHER is well pleased with this righteousness of our REDEEMER. He expresses his complacency by the most emphatical words: *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth* †. In CHRIST and his righteousness, GOD is not only pleased but *delighted*: his *very soul*, every perfection of the GODHEAD, with ineffable satisfaction, rests and acquiesces in them.——I said *ineffable*; for he has declared this, in a manner superior to all the energy of language, by raising our crucified SURETY from the dead, by exalting him to the heaven of heavens, and placing him at his own right hand in glory.

Our LORD JESUS CHRIST is well pleased. He esteems it his honour to shine forth as the everlasting righteousness of his people. It is the brightest jewel of his mediatorial crown. In this he *sees of the travail of his soul and his satisfied*: accounting himself fully recompensed, for all the labours of his life, and all the sorrows of his death, when sinners are washed from their guilt in his blood, and presented faultless by his obedience.

The HOLY SPIRIT is equally pleased with this great transaction, and its noble effects. It is his peculiar office, and favourite employ, to *convince* the world of their SAVIOUR's righteousness: not only that his nature was spotlessly pure, and his conversation perfectly holy; but that from both results a righteousness, of infinite dignity, and everlasting efficacy; sufficient, throughout all ages sufficient, for the acceptance and salvation of the most unworthy creatures.

Since then this method of acceptance and salvation is excellent and glorious, in the eyes of the adorable *TRINITY*; since it magnifies the law, and yields the most exalted honour to its divine *AUTHOR*:—since it makes ample provision for the holiness of a *corrupt*, and the happiness of a *ruined* world;—why should my friend any longer dislike it, oppose it, or treat it with a cold indifference? Surely, all these grand recommendations, are enough to over rule any little objections, which may arise from the suspicions of timidity, or may be started by the artifices of sophistry.

Ther. I know not how it is, *Aspasio*; but I cannot reconcile myself to this doctrine of imputed righteousness, notwithstanding all the pains you have taken to make me a convert.

Asp. The disappointment is mine, but the loss is yours, *Theron*.——However, let me entreat you, not to reject my sentiments absolutely, nor to condemn them prematurely. Suppose it possible at least, that they *may* be true; and weigh them in an even balance.——Learn wisdom from your *Aspasio*'s folly. I was once exactly in your situation; saw things in your light, and through your medium.

Conversing, I well remember, with a devout but plain person, our discourse happened to turn upon that solemn admonition; *If any man will come after ME, let him deny himself* ‡. I was haranguing upon the import and extent of the duty; shewing, that merely to forbear the infamous action, is little. We must deny admittance, deny entertainment at least, to the evil *imagination*; and quench even the enkindling spark of irregular desire.——When I had shot a random bolt, my honest friend replied, "There is another in-"stance of self-denial, to which this injunction ex-

* Gal. ii. 29. † Matth. viii. 29.

† Is. xlii. 1. ‡ Matth. xvi. 24.

"tends,

"tends, and which is of very great moment in the "Chriſtian religion. I mean, the inſtance of renouncing our own ſtrength, and our own righteouſneſs; not "leaning on *that* for holineſs; nor relying on *this* for "juſtification."——I thought the old man, I muſt confeſs, little better than a ſuperſtitious dotard; and wondered at (what I then fancied) the motley mixture of piety and oddity in his notions. But now I diſcern ſenſe, ſolidity, and truth in his obſervation *. Now I perceive, that we ourſelves are often the dreamers, when we imagine others to be faſt aſleep.

Ther. I ſhall not forget your caution, and will endeavour to avoid the rock, on which my *Aſpaſio* ſtruck; but happily, it ſeems, eſcaped ſhipwreck.——You may likewiſe aſſure yourſelf, that, upon a ſubject of exceeding great and eternal conſequence, I ſhall not fail to uſe the moſt attentive and impartial conſideration. An *indolent* ſupineneſs, or a *bigotted* obſtinacy, in this great criſis of affairs, would be of all errors the moſt inexcuſable, and muſt prove of all miſcarriages the moſt fatal.

Aſp. But ſtill *you cannot reconcile yourſelf.*——And no wonder. For this way of ſalvation runs directly counter to the ſtream of corrupt nature. It puzzles our reaſon, and offends our pride. What? ſhall we, not work, but *believe unto righteouſneſs* †? Shall we receive all *freely*, and reckon ourſelves no better than *unprofitable* ſervants? This is a method, to which we ſhould never ſubmit; this is a propoſal, which we ſhould always ſpurn; were not our ſentiments rectified, and our hearts new moulded, by ſovereign grace.

Let me remind you of a little incident, which you muſt have read in the *Grecian* hiſtory. A certain ſtranger came, one day, to dine with ſome *Lacedæmonians*. They, you know, always ſat down at a public table, and were content with the plaineſt food. The gentleman, accuſtomed to higher eating, could not forbear expreſſing his diſguſt at the *homely* proviſion.——Sir, ſaid the cook, you don't make uſe of the *ſauce*.—What do you mean? replied the gueſt.—You don't uſe hard exerciſe; nor habituate yourſelf to long abſtinence; nor bring a ſharpened appetite to the meal.——And you, my dear friend, I am apprehenſive, have not the ſauce; have not the proper preparative for this ſalutary doctrine; which is indeed the bread of life, and the very marrow of the goſpel.

Ther. What preparative?

Aſp. A ſenſe of your great depravity, your extreme guilt, and your utterly-undone condition.——While *deſtitute* of theſe convictions, our ſouls will be like *the full ſtomach*, that *loaths* even *the honeycomb*.——So long as theſe convictions are *ſlight*, and *hover* only in the imagination; we ſhall be like *Gallio* ‡ liſtleſs, indifferent, and *caring for none of theſe things*.—But when they are *deep* and *penetrate* the heart, then the righteouſneſs of a REDEEMER will be ſweet, taſteful, and inviting; as myrrh and frankincenſe to the ſmell, as milk and honey to the palate, as gold and treaſures to the ruined bankrupt.

Ther. What method would you adviſe me to uſe, in order to get theſe convictions impreſſed on my heart?

Aſp. Endeavour to underſtand GOD's holy law. Conſider, how pure, how extenſive, how ſublimely perfect it is.—Then judge of your ſpiritual ſtate, not from the *flattering* ſuggeſtions of ſelf-love, nor from the *defective* examples of your fellow-creatures, but by this *unerring* ſtandard of the ſanctuary.—Above all, beſeech the GOD and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, to ſend his enlightening SPIRIT into your ſoul. For indeed, without the enlightening influences of the SPIRIT, we may have the divine law in our hand; we may comprehend its grammatical meaning; yet be like blind *Bartimeus* under the meridian ſun. It is the bleſſed SPIRIT alone, who can rend the veil of ignorance from our minds; and ſhew us either "the wonderful things of GOD's law," or the glorious myſteries of his goſpel. In this ſenſe, our polite poet * ſpeaks a truth, as ſingularly important, as it is elegantly expreſſed:

He from thick films ſhall purge the viſual ray,
And on the ſightleſs eye-ball pour the day.

Will you give me leave to propoſe another expedient? which, I believe, may be conſiderably ſerviceable in this particular caſe; which, I am aſſured, will be greatly advantageous in many other reſpects.

Ther. Backward as I am to adopt your doctrine, I am no enemy to my own intereſt; therefore ſhall not only give you leave to propoſe, but give you thanks for communicating, ſo valuable an advice.

Aſp. It is, in reality, none of mine. It was long ago recommended by your old acquaintance *Horace* †. It conſiſts in *keeping a diary*.

Compile a ſecret hiſtory of your heart and conduct.—Take notice of the manner in which your *time* is ſpent, and of the ſtrain which runs through your *diſcourſe*; how often the former is loſt in trifles, how often the latter evaporates in vanity.——Attend to the *principle* from which your actions flow; whether from the ſteady habitual love of GOD, or from ſome rambling impulſe, and a cuſtomary propenſity to please yourſelf:—Minute down your ſins of *omiſſion*; how frequent you neglect to glorify your CREATOR, to edify your fellow-creatures, and to improve yourſelf in knowledge and holineſs.——Obſerve the frame of your ſpirit in *religious* duties. With what reluctance they are undertaken, and with what indevotion performed; with how many wanderings of thought, and

* *Milton* thought the ſame, otherwiſe he would never have put theſe words into the mouth of a *divine* ſpeaker.

——*Thy merit*
Imputed ſhall abſolve them, who renounce
Their own, both righteous and unrighteous, deeds;
And live in thee tranſplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. Book III. 290.

† Rom. x. 10.

‡ *Acts* xviii. 17. A late commentator, of diſtinguiſhed eminence, has attempted to vindicate *Gallio*'s conduct; and would repreſent it as an amiable inſtance of *prudence* and *moderation*.

According to my apprehenſion, this *Roman* governor acted a part both irreligious and unjuſt.—*Irreligious*, becauſe he refuſed to hear the apoſtle's defence; which was the moſt likely means of his converſion and ſalvation. As one great end, why providence permitted the preachers of the goſpel to be *brought before rulers and kings*, was, that ſuch an incident might ſerve εις μαρτυριον αυτοις, Matth. x. 18. *for a teſtimony* (not *againſt*, but) *to them*: that even the potentates of the earth, prejudiced and ſupercilious as they were, might hereby have an opportunity of hearing the *Chriſtian* doctrine, and ſeeing its efficacy on the ſpirits of men.—*Unjuſt*, becauſe he permitted *Soſthenes*, then an innocent perſon, afterwards a diſciple of *CHRIST*, (1 Cor. i. 1.) to be ſo illegally treated, and outrageouſly abuſed, without interpoſing for his reſcue. Here was evidently a breach of the peace; a violation of the laws. Of *this* therefore the civil magiſtrate ought to have taken cogniſance; however he might fancy himſelf diſcharged from the obligation of attending to the goſpel, or protecting its preachers: however he might imagine himſelf authoriſed, to treat divine truths with contempt; and call *the ſtriving for the faith*, a wrangling about *words and names*.

Beſides, if the HOLY SPIRIT intended to fix a mark of *oppro-bution*, rather than a brand of *infamy* upon the *proconſul*'s behaviour, I cannot but think, it would have been expreſſed in a manner different from—χ ουδεν τουτων τω Γαλλιωνι εμελεν. Which, if it be the language of applauſe, requires ſome more than ordinary ſkill in criticiſm, to underſtand it aright. But, if it be the voice of cenſure, it is obvious and intelligible to every reader.

* Mr *Pope*, in his charming poem ſtyled *the Meſſiah*.

† *Ille velut fidis arcana ſodalibus olim*
Credebat libris: neque ſi male ceſſerat uſquam
Decurrens alio, neque ſi bene: quo fit, ut omnis
Votiva pateat veluti deſcripta tabella
Vita ſenis. HORAT. Sat.

how

how much unlineſs of deſire.—How often, in the common affairs of life, you feel the inordinate ſallies of paſſion, the workings of evil concupiſcence, or the intruſion of fooliſh imaginations.

Regiſter thoſe *ſecret* faults, to which none but your own conſcience is privy, and which none but the all-ſeeing eye diſcerns. Often review theſe intereſting memoirs. Frequently contemplate yourſelf in this faithful mirror. An artiſt, ſometime ago, took a *ſurvey* of your eſtate; drew the form, and meaſured the dimenſions, of each incloſure; pictured out every hedge, and ſcarce omitted a ſingle tree, which grew upon the premiſes.—Act thus with your will, your underſtanding, your affections. Theſe are your noble *internal demeſne*; of which none but yourſelf can be a competent ſurveyor.

Ther. It is unreaſonable and prepoſterous, I muſt acknowledge, to be minutely exact in meaner matters, and uſe no accuracy of inſpection in the moſt momentous affairs; to have a correct draught of our lands, which are a *tranſient* inheritance; and no map of that *everlaſting* poſſeſſion, the ſoul.

Aſp. Gratify me then, my dear *Theron*, in this particular. As I purpoſe to ſet out, very early in the morning, I ſhall inſiſt upon it, that you do not riſe before your uſual time, in order to compliment my departure. But I now make it my *laſt* wiſh, and my *parting* requeſt, that you will, for ſome months at laſt, keep a diary.

You have wondered at my opinion, concerning the corruption of our nature, and the inſufficiency of our righteouſneſs. This may ſeem ſtrange, this may appear ſhocking, to a mind *unacquainted* with itſelf. But, when you have ſearched your heart, by this probe; when you have felt the pulſe of your ſoul, by ſelf-examination; then you will be better able to judge of my ſentiments, and enter into the reaſons of my faith.

By this means, we ſhall alſo diſcover the ſins that moſt eaſily beſet us; which moſt frequently elude our vigilance, and baffle our reſolution. We ſhall learn, *how* to poſt our guard; *when* to exerciſe the ſtricteſt watch; and *where* to direct the artillery of prayer.—In a word, we ſhall learn, better than from ten thouſand volumes, to KNOW OURSELVES: A knowledge, which was ſuppoſed, by the ancient philoſophers, to deſcend from heaven *; and which, I believe, our *Chriſtian* divines will allow, has a happy tendency to lead people thither: becauſe, of all other preparatives, it beſt diſpoſes them for that bleſſed REDEEMER, who is the way, the only way to thoſe bliſsful manſions.

Now I have mentioned a *way*, let me ſuppoſe you travelling through an unknown country. You come to a place, where the road divides itſelf into two equally-inviting parts. You are at a loſs, which track to purſue. Whoſe direction will you chuſe to follow? that man's, who has paſſed through *neither* of them? that man's, who has paſſed through *one* of them only; or that man's, who has paſſed and repaſſed them *both*?—To wait for an anſwer, would be an affront to your judgment. Only let me obſerve, that the laſt is your *Aſpaſio*'s caſe. He has travelled long, and proceeded far, even in *your* path. All that circumſpection and aſſiduity, all that prayer and ſelf-denial, all that faſting and alms, and every other means of grace could do, in order to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of his own, has been done. But to no purpoſe.——He has alſo trod every ſtep in the way, which he recommends to his beloved friend. He has made the trial; can ſet his *Probatum eſt*, to whatever he adviſes; and may very truly ſay, with his divine MASTER, *We ſpeak that we do know* *, and teſtify that we have experienced.

Ther. I am ſorry to obſerve, that the night is coming on, and our converſation almoſt at an end. My regret is increaſed, by the conſideration of your intended journey.——Though buſineſs obliges you to *depart*; it will, I hope, afford you leiſure to *write*. This will be ſome compenſation for the want of your company.

Yonder ſun is ſinking below the horizon, and juſt taking his leave of our earth. To retard the departing radiance, at leaſt to alleviate the approaching loſs, thoſe weſtern clouds catch the rays; and reflect them to our view, in a moſt amuſing diverſity of colours. By this means, we enjoy the great luminary in *his beams*, even when *his orb* is withdrawn from our ſight.——An epiſtolary correſpondence has ſomething of the ſame nature. Letters may be called the talk of abſent friends. By this expedient, they communicate their thoughts, even tho' countries, kingdoms, or ſeas intercept their ſpeech. You muſt, therefore, promiſe me this ſatisfaction; and let me converſe with my *Aſpaſio* by the *pen*, when I can no longer have an intercourſe with him in *perſon*.

Aſp. You have anticipated me, *Theron*. Otherwiſe, what is now my promiſe, would have been my requeſt.

I cannot but take notice of another particularity in that magnificent aſſemblage of clouds. How they varied their appearance, as the lamp of day changed its ſituation.—A little while ago, thoſe curtains of the ſky were ſtreaked with orange, or tinged with amber. Preſently, they borrowed the bluſh of the roſe, or the ſoftened red of the pink. Ere long, they glow with vermilion, or deepen into crimſon. Soon ſucceeds the purple-tinctured robe of majeſty; and as ſoon (thus tranſient is all ſublunary grandeur!) gives place to the *ſable veil* of evening, or the *gloomy pall* of night.——Such, I truſt, will be the iſſue of my *Theron*'s preſent apprehenſions. All his ſplendid ideas of human excellency and ſelf-righteouſneſs will become faint; will loſe their imaginary luſtre; till, at length, they fade away, and darken into abſolute *ſelf-abaſement*.——Then the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS will be amiable, will be deſirable, as the beauties of the dawn, breaking upon the ſhades of night.

* ——*E cœlo deſcendit*, γνῶθι σεαυτὸν. JUVEN.

* John iii. 11.

THERON AND ASPASIO:

OR, A

SERIES

OF

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

I AM now at the ſeat of my worthy friend *Camillus*; where buſineſs and inclination will fix me for ſome weeks.——This evening we had a moſt pleaſing ramble. I have met with nothing ſo agreeable, ſince I left your houſe, and loſt your company.

The time was juſt arrived, and the ſcene was fully opened, which furniſhed our great poet with his fine deſcription;

Now was the ſun in weſtern cadence low,
From noon; and gentle airs, due at their hour,
To fan the earth now walk'd, and uſher in
The evening cool.

At this juncture, *Camillus* invited me to take the air. ——We walked, ſeveral times, along a cloſe ſhady alley, arched with the foliage of *filberts*. Here, hid from every eye, and the whole world withdrawn from our view, we ſeemed like *monks* ſtrolling in their cloyſters.—Turning ſhort at the end, we enter a parallel range of majeſtic and uniformly-ſpreading *walnut-trees*. This tranſition was ſomewhat like advancing, through a low porch, into the iſles of a magnificent *cathedral*. The broad leaf, and large trunk of thoſe lordly trees,—their very diffuſive ſpread, added to their prodigious height, —give them an air of uncommon dignity. It ſwells the imagination with vaſt ideas, and entertains us with a romantic kind of delight, to expatiate amidſt ſuch huge columns, and under ſuch ſuperb elevations, of living architecture.

Quitting our cathedral, we turn once again, and paſs into a grand colonnade of *oaks*: ſo regular in their ſituation, ſo ſimilar in their ſize, and ſo remarkably correſpondent in every circumſtance, that they looked like the *twins* of nature; not only belonging to the ſame family, but produced at the ſame birth. Through theſe lay a walk, ſtrait, ſpacious, and gracefully long; far exceeding the laſt in the extent of its area, though much inferior in the ſtatelineſs of its ceiling. It puts me in mind of that divine benignity, which has allowed us *ſix* days, for the proſecution of our own comparatively-low affairs; and ſet apart but *one*, for the more immediate attendance on the ſublime exerciſes of devotion.

This walk was covered with the neateſt *gravel*; and not a weed to be ſeen, nor one ſpire of graſs, through the whole extended ſurface. It ſtole into a continual aſcent; yet ſo very gradually, that the riſe was ſcarce diſcernable, either by the ſearching eye, the toiling feet, or the panting breath.—At the extremity, a handſome *ſummer-houſe* ſhewed a flight of ſteps, and half a *Venetian* door. The reſt of the building was hid by the cluſtering branches.

As ſoon as we enter the apartment, *Camillus* throws open the left-hand ſaſh; and, with it, a moſt enlarged and amuſive *proſpect*.——The ſtructure appeared ſituate on the brow of a conſiderable eminence: whoſe ſides were partly confuſed and wild with broken rocks, partly ſhagged and perplexed with thorny ſhrubs. The ſpectator is agreeably ſurpriſed, to find himſelf accommodated with ſo *elegant* a manſion, on the ſummit of ſo *rude* and *ruinous* a ſpot.——But how greatly is his ſurprize and his ſatisfaction augmented, when he caſts his eye forward; and beholds the beautiful *meads*, which, from the foot of this ragged hill, ſtretch themſelves into a ſpace almoſt unmeaſureable!

Through the midſt of this extenſive vale, which was decked with the fineſt verdure, and repleniſhed with the richeſt herbage, a *river* rolled its copious flood; rolled in a thouſand ſerpentine *meanders*, as though it had loſt its way in the flowery labyrinth, or made repeated efforts of flowing back to its ſource. Till, at laſt, having wandered more than twice the length of the meadows; having held a mirror to the aſpiring poplars, and bending willows; having paid a welcome ſalute to ſeveral ornamented *villas*, and paſſed through the arches of two or three curiouſly pendent bridges; it ſeemed to meet the ſky, and mingle with the horizon.

Oppoſite to the front-window, a *caſcade* fell from the adjacent ſtream. It flaſhed and foamed along the broad ſlope, indented with ſmall pits, and jagged with protuberant ſtones. The current, vexed and embarraſſed, ſeemed to *rave* at the intervening obſtacles; and forcing its rapid, indignant, ſonorous way, ſtruck the ear with a peal of liquid thunder. Theſe fretful waters,—let our *angry* paſſions obſerve the admonition, and follow the example,—ſoon were pacified; ſoon forgot to chide. Collected into a little rivulet, they ran off in calm and ſilent lapſe, till they loſt themſelves amongſt beds of oſier, and plantations of alder.

The river, widening as it flowed, was parted here and there by ſeveral little iſlands. Some tufted with *reeds*, and the reſort of ſwans. Some adorned with ſtately *porticoes*, and ſplendid *alcoves*, the graceful re-

treats

treats of rural pleasure. Some furnished with green embowering walks, fitted for studious retirement and sedate contemplation.——On either side of the charming valley, towns and villages lay thick and looked gay; adding ornament and variety to the scene, and receiving innumerable advantages from the passing wave.

The whole recalled to an attentive observer's mind, that amiable and august spectacle, which the *Syrian* * soothsayer could not behold, without a rapture of delight:—*From the top of the rocks I see* the tribes of JEHOVAH, *and from the hills I behold* the habitations of his chosen people. *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth; as gardens, by the river's side; as trees of exquisite fragrance* †, *which the LORD hath planted; as cedars* of stateliest growth, *flourishing beside the waters.*

We had but just looked about us, when a messenger came for *Camillus*. As he was called to settle some private affairs, I chose to stay in this inviting retreat; and determined to make myself amends for the loss of *Camillus*'s company, by beginning a correspondence with my *Theron*.——We have pen, ink, and paper, in all our rural retirements; that, if any thing is started in discourse, or occurs in meditation, worthy to be remembered, it may immediately be committed to writing.

I could not but observe to my friend, that, fine as the prospect appeared, there was one decoration wanting; if some *grand deformity* may be called a decoration. The ridges of a bleak and barren mountain, or the skirts of a sun-burnt tawny heath, would give *additional liveliness* to the ornamented parts of the landscape, and make their beauties strike with double vigour.——This also, by shewing us, what wretched abodes and inhospitable quarters might have fallen to our share, would awaken in our hearts a more fervent gratitude to the supreme DISPOSER of things; who has cast *our* "lot in a fairer "ground, and given *us* a more goodly heritage."

So, a proper knowledge of the divine *law*,—of its sublime perfections, and rigorous sanction,—joined with a conviction of our own extreme deficiency, and manifold transgressions;—all this would endear the blessed JESUS to our affections, and powerfully recommend his righteousness to our desires.——The remainder of this epistle, therefore, shall turn upon some instances of duty, injoined in that sacred system. *By which* it may be highly useful to examine our conduct, and sift our hearts; *in which*, I believe, we have all fallen short, and are all become guilty; *from which*, we may learn the imperfection of our best services, and see the inexpressible need of a better righteousness than our own.

The knowledge of GOD is the foundation of all vital religion, and indeed is the consummation of human happiness. It is not only matter of present duty, but the very essence of our future bliss: *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom thou hast sent* ‡.——Yet, important and obligatory as it is, are we not very defective in this divine science? Have we duly acquainted ourselves with the marvellous excellencies of the LORD JEHOVAH? his uncontrollable power, and all-comprehending wisdom; his unbounded goodness, and unwearied patience; his immaculate holiness, and inflexible justice; his never-failing faithfulness, and inviolable veracity?—Have we, according to the direction of our *inspired* tutor, pursued this sacred study on our knees *; and sought this most noble of all intellectual endowments, not merely from books, but principally at the throne of grace? Have we sought it, like that ancient *Jewish* student, with an early application, and with incessant assiduity; even "from the flower, till the grape "was ripe †?"

Is that scanty ray of knowledge, which perhaps has forced itself through our original darkness, *operative* on our affections? Have we loved the LORD our GOD with all our heart? This is the first and great commandment ‡.——Have we constantly entertained the most magnificent and honourable thoughts of his sublime perfections? Is our esteem for this immensely great and most blessed BEING, high, superlative, matchless? somewhat like *that* expressed by the psalmist; *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee* ‖.——Have we been affectionately concerned for his *glory*, and zealous to advance his holy religion? troubled, very sensibly troubled, when our MAKER's honour has been trampled in the dust, by licentious tongues, or flagitious deeds?

Have we made it our ruling care, to approve the whole of our life, and the most secret transactions of our breast, to his all-seeing eye? resolved, deliberately resolved to sacrifice, not only our darling lusts, but even our most valuable interests, whenever they stand in competition with the good pleasure of his will?—In a word, as the hart, panteth after the water-brooks, with such *vehement* and *inextinguishable* ardour, have we thirsted after—a brighter manifestation of his divine attributes,—some sweeter assurances of his special love,—and an ever-increasing conformity to his holy image?

Such was the temper of those excellent men, who are characterized in the scriptures of truth, as children of the HIGHEST, and patterns for our imitation. This is their language; *The desire of our soul is unto thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early* §.——Neither is such warmth of love, and fervour of desire, any needless or extravagant pitch of devotion; but a *reasonable* service, indispensably due, from all intelligent creatures, to the great AUTHOR of their being;—in whom all possible perfections, with the utmost exaltation and dignity, reside;—from whom all manner of blessings, in the most copious and never-failing communications, flow.

When we receive, from an absent *friend*, rich and repeated presents; casks of generous wine, or jars of delicious fruit; we feel ourselves enkindled into a grateful affection. We honour, we love the person, who allows us such a distinguished place in his heart; and expresses his cordial regard, by such a series of

* Numb. xxiii. 7.

† *Numb.* xxiv. 5. 6. It is well known, that the word אהלים is used in the sacred writings, to denote either a *delightful perfume*, Prov. vii. 17. or that *aromatic plant*, which produces it, *Cant.* iv. 14.—For which reason, I think it very justifiable, to render the expression, *trees of exquisite fragrance*; and am persuaded, it will be far more intelligible to the generality of readers, than *trees of lignaloes*.

‡ John xvii. 3

* Jam. i. 5.

† Ecclus li. 15.

‡ Matth. xxii. 38.

‖ Psal. lxxiii. 25.

§ *Is.* xxvi. 8, 9. We can hardly tell, which to admire most, the *beauty* of the description, or the *piety* of the person. *I have desired*; and not with inactive wishes, but such as prompt to vigorous endeavours. *I will seek thee*; and *early*, with the most vigilant application and unwearied assiduity.—The emphasis is very much increased, by the addition of those lively words, *with my soul, yea with my spirit*; with the whole bend and sway of my affections, and with the steady invariable determination of my judgment.—Thus *have I* desired thee, even *in the night*; when both the pursuits and the thoughts of other people are sunk and lost in profound repose. Thus *will I* seek thee, with a zeal—*early* as the rising,—*constant* as the returning sun.

active

active and tender benevolence.——The bleſſed GOD is a friend to us all, infinitely powerful, and equally munificent. We are the conſtant objects of his *more than* friendly, of his parental cares. Every paſſing moment is a meſſenger of his patience, and charged with ſome token of his bounty. For *our* ſake, he has diffuſed bleſſings over all the face of the earth; and commanded every element to concur, in miniſtering to our accommodation. He has not only adapted his benefits to our ſeveral wants; but has given them a *diverſification*, large as the ſcope of our wiſhes; and an *enrichment*, far beyond all that our fancy could conceive.——Profuſe liberality! yet ſmall and ſcanty, compared with his moſt adorable benignity in CHRIST JESUS.

What, if GOD, willing to manifeſt the ſuperabundant riches of his kindneſs, had made bare the arm of his omnipotence; and ſtruck a moſt miraculous road through the ſurges of the ocean, to afford us a ſafe paſſage!—if, to accommodate us in our travels, he had brought waters out of the flinty rock; and bid the ravens bring meat to our hands, bid the winds convey manna to our doors?—if, to furniſh us with a commodious ſettlement, he had dethroned mighty kings, diſpoſſeſſed populous nations, and made the walls of impregnable cities fall to the ground?—if, to further the diſpatch of our buſineſs, or facilitate the conqueſt of our enemies, he had arreſted the ſun in his meridian career, and laid an embargo upon the moon, ſetting out on her nightly tour?—in ſhort, if, to promote our welfare, he had ſuſpended the powers, and controlled the laws of univerſal nature; had wrought *all* the miracles, exhibited in the land of *Egypt*, or recorded in the volumes of inſpiration:—ſhould we not think ourſelves under the moſt inviolable engagements, to love the LORD our GOD, *who had done ſo great things for us*; to love him unfeignedly and ardently; to love him with a ſupreme affection, far above every other amiable object?—Yet we have greater, incomparably-greater obligations to our almighty BENEFACTOR. For (hear O heavens! wonder O earth! and let eternity dwell upon the ſtupendous truth!) GOD *ſpared not his* SON,—*his own* SON,—his tranſcendently-glorious and divinely-excellent SON,—*but delivered him up* to the deepeſt humiliation, and to the moſt accurſed death, *for us* men and our ſalvation.

O, *Theron!* have we been impreſſed with *wonder*, at the contemplation of this goodneſs? Have our hearts glowed with *gratitude*, under a ſenſe of theſe mercies? Surely, no man need be convicted of any other crime, at the great tribunal, than inſenſibility of ſuch love, and ingratitude for ſuch favours. This, without the acceſſion of horrid impieties, is enough to leave him abſolutely inexcuſable. This is enough to prove him one of the moſt *diſingenuous* and *deteſtable* of creatures.

Have we exerciſed ourſelves in frequent *thankſgiving?* Many are the exhortations to this honourable duty. *Praiſe thy GOD, O Zion* *: *praiſe him for his mighty acts* †:—*praiſe him according to his excellent greatneſs* ‡.——Innumerable are the incitements to abound in this pleaſant ſervice. Every comfort has a voice, and cries in the ear of reaſon, *O! that men would therefore praiſe the LORD for his goodneſs.* Every deliverance enforces the addreſs, and furniſhes freſh materials for the heavenly employ.——The man after GOD's own heart declares, as an inviting example for our practice, *I will bleſs the LORD at all times: his praiſe ſhall continually be in my mouth* *: *yea, as long as I have any being, I will ſing praiſes unto my GOD* †.——Indeed, when we conſider the inexhauſtibly-rich bounty of GOD our CREATOR, and the inconceivably-tender mercy of GOD our REDEEMER, it is both ſtrange and deplorable, that the love of GOD is not always prevailing in our hearts, and the language of praiſe ever flowing from our lips.

I will not ſuppoſe our character ſo irreligious, that we have neglected the daily worſhip of GOD, either in our cloſet, or in our family.——But have we prayed with that profound *reverential awe*, which is due to the HIGH and LOFTY ONE, *who inhabiteth eternity?*—Have we made our ſupplications with that *fervent importunity*, which may in ſome meaſure correſpond with the extreme indigence of our ſtate, and the invaluable worth of the bleſſings we crave?—Have our petitions been attended with that *ſteady affiance*, which may glorify the goodneſs, the power, the veracity of the LORD? may evidently declare, that he *is rich in mercy, to all that call upon him* ‡; that he *is the LORD JEHOVAH, in whom is everlaſting ſtrength* ‖; that he *is the GOD of truth, and faithful for ever* §. We call him FATHER: but have we truſted in him, with that unſuſpecting, cheerful, filial confidence, which a child repoſes on the fidelity and indulgence of ſuch an earthly relative? Have we not entertained, too often entertained, narrow, diſhonourable, beggarly apprehenſions, concerning the treaſures of his liberality, and the bowels of his pity? rating them even lower than our parents, our friends, or our own.

Have we been careful to carry the ſpirit of our prayers into our *ordinary* converſation; and waited at the door, as well as approached to the throne of grace?—Amidſt the intervals of our ſolemn devotions, have we cultivated an *ejaculatory* intercourſe with heaven? How highly would the ambitious courtier *prize*, and how frequently would he *uſe* a privy key, which ſhould give him, at all hours, free admittance to his ſovereign. This key of admittance, only to an infinitely more exalted POTENTATE, we all poſſeſs in the practice of mental aſpirations to GOD.——It is certainly the nobleſt employ, and will be the richeſt improvement of our thoughts, to ſend them in ſuch ſhort embaſſies to the KING of kings; and to derive, by ſuch occaſional ſallies ¶ of faith, a renewed ſupply from the

* Pſal. cxlvii. 12. † Pſal. cl. 2.

‡ Among theſe exhortations, we may rank that beautiful and devout addreſs to GOD, ישב תהלות ישראל Pſal. xxii. 3. *Thou that inhabiteſt*—light inacceſſible, ſhall I ſay? the regions of immenſity, or the ages of eternity? No; but what is a more exalted character, *—the praiſes of Iſrael:* finely ſignifying, that praiſe is a moſt acceptable ſacrifice, to which the divine MAJESTY attends with the greateſt delight:—intimating alſo, that the exerciſe of praiſe ſhould not be an occaſional thing, like a *tranſient viſit* to a ſtranger's houſe; but a daily and almoſt unintermitted ſervice, like the *ſtated reſidence* of a perſon in his own habitation.

* Pſal. xxxiv. 1. † Pſal. cxlvi. 2.

‡ Rom. x. 12. ‖ Iſ. xxvi. 4. § Deut. xxxii. 4.

¶ We have, in ſcripture, very remarkable inſtances of the ſucceſs which has attended *ejaculatory prayer*.—Obſerve *Nehemiah*: He ſtands before *Ahaſuerus*, apprehenſive of the monarch's diſpleaſure, yet deſirous to ſolicit him in behalf of *Jeruſalem*. To be delivered from his fears, and to obtain his deſires, what method does he uſe? the mean and ſervile arts of flattery? No; but the manly and devout expedient of prayer. *I prayed*, ſays the patriot, *to the GOD of heaven*.—We cannot ſuppoſe, that he fell on his knees, or ſpoke with his lips, while he continued in the royal preſence. But he darted up his ſoul in *ſilent* ſupplication. Which ſupplication "pierced the clouds;" reached the eternal throne; and returned not again till a bleſſing was ſent: ſuch as totally averted the wrath he dreaded; and procured favour and aſſiſtance, much larger than he expected, *Neh.* ii. 4.

When *David* heard, that *Ahithophel*, the ableſt politician in his kingdom, was revolted to *Abſalom*: ſenſible what a loſs his affairs had ſuſtained, and what an advantage the rebellious party had acquired, he betook himſelf to his GOD. He ſtaid not for an opportunity of retirement, but inſtantly and upon the ſpot cried, *O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counſel of Ahithophel into fooliſhneſs!*—A *ſhort* addreſs, but very *efficacious*. HE, who diſap-

fountain of all good. How great a *loss* then muſt it be to our ſpiritual intereſts, and how contemptuous a *diſregard* of the ever-preſent JEHOVAH, to omit entirely, or long to diſcontinue, this moſt beneficial practice of habitual adoration?—Can you, my dear *Theron*, acquit yourſelf on this article of inquiry? Has not every day of your life been a day of negligence in this reſpect? been a perpetual diſobedience to our SAVIOUR's injunction, *Men ought, in this manner, always to pray, and not to faint* *?

Have we ſanctified the *Sabbath?* Has the LORD's day, with all its ſolemn and ſacred offices, been our delight?—Have we remembered that diſtinguiſhed portion of our time, as *Jacob* remembered the delightful interview at *Peniel?* Have we expected it, as merchants expect the arrival of a richly-laden veſſel? Have we improved it, as huſbandmen improve the ſhining hours of the harveſt?—Have we wholly laid aſide every earthly engagement; *not ſpeaking our own words* †, nor allowing ourſelves in any gratifications, that may interrupt our communion with the FATHER of ſpirits?—Has *one day in his courts been preferable to a thouſand* ‡, ſpent either in the works of our calling, or in the ſcenes of recreation?—Have the memorials of our REDEEMER's dying merits, and the ſeals of his unchangeable loving-kindneſs, been reliſhed as a feaſt, and prized as a portion?

Have we honoured GOD's holy *word?*—What greater mark of diſeſteem, than to deſpiſe a perſon's diſcourſe, and not to think his ſpeech worthy of our notice? eſpecially, when he addreſſes us with very great ſeriouſneſs, and with the utmoſt affection. In our Bible, the GOD of glory ſpeaks to his creatures; ſpeaks with the moſt perſuaſive energy, and with all the yearnings of parental tenderneſs. Have we liſtened to our CREATOR, with reverence and delight; and rejoiced with trembling at——*Thus ſaith the Lord?*

Have we ſearched the oracles of truth, not merely as *ſcholars*, but as *ſinners;* not from a ſpirit of curioſity, or with an air of formality, but with a ſolicitude and ardour, becoming perſons who inquire after the SAVIOUR of their loſt ſouls? Have we ſubmitted our inmoſt thoughts to their impartial ſcrutiny; to receive conviction of ſin from their awful remonſtrances, and to hear the ſentence of condemnation at their righteous bar?—Have we been willing to ſuffer the reproach of *conſcious baſeneſs*, while they have ripped up the diſguiſes of falſehood; laid open our ſecret iniquities; and brought all our evil ways to remembrance? Thus *Joſiah* acted. *His heart was tender, and he humbled himſelf before the LORD; he rent his cloaths, and wept before the LORD, when he heard the words of the book of the law* *,

Have we laid the glad tidings of the goſpel within our memories, within our hearts? Have we been diligent to ſuck this *honeycomb* † of grace by concomitant meditation, and ſubſequent prayer?—Have we valued the precious promiſes, as gentlemen of wealth value the writings of their private eſtates; or as infranchiſed bodies eſteem the charter of their public privileges?—Have we, like the princely patriarch, longed for thoſe words of *edification, exhortation, and comfort*, more than for our neceſſary food ‡; and, like the royal prophet, prevented the night-watches, that we may be occupied in thoſe ſtatutes ‖ and ordinances of heaven?

We have hitherto confined the examination to a few inſtances of the affirmative kind; how dreadfully will the dark account be ſwelled, if inſtead of love and obedience, there be hatred and oppoſition;—*hatred* of the name, glory, and worſhip of GOD;—*oppoſition* to his intereſt, kingdom, and ſervice!

GOD is *infinite perfection;* worthy of all admiration; exalted above all praiſe. Yet do not our thoughts more frequently, or more naturally turn upon our own accompliſhments, than upon the adorable and ſhining attributes of the ALMIGHTY? This is, in itſelf, the moſt ſhameful *dotage;* and, in GOD's ſight, the moſt abominable *idolatry.* Yet let us obſerve what paſſes within, and we ſhall probably find, that as damps ariſe in the mines, or fogs in the fenny grounds, ſo naturally, and ſo copiouſly do theſe overweening reflections ariſe in our depraved minds.

GOD is an *everlaſting King.* Have we not too often reſiſted his authority? Have we not, as far as in us lay, depoſed the omnipotent SOVEREIGN, and exalted *ſelf* into the throne? made ſelf-will our law, and ſelf-pleaſing our end? thus adding ſacrilege to rebellion?

GOD is tranſcendently *gracious* and *amiable.* Have we not turned our backs upon him, by forgetting his mercies? Nay, have we not ſpurned him from our affections, by being *lovers of pleaſure, more than lovers of GOD* §?——Awake, conſcience bear thy impartial teſtimony; and I am perſuaded, the *Phariſee* in our breaſts, like the man unfurniſhed with the wedding-garment, muſt be ſtruck dumb; muſt be covered with confuſion.

Is our heart warm with *brotherly love?*—Good manners will put expreſſions of civility into our mouths; but has a power from on high implanted the royal law of charity in our breaſts? The character of a gentleman requires a deportment acceſſible, obliging, and courteous: has the ſpirit of *Chriſtianity* taught us to love, *not in word* or plauſible appearance only, *but in deed and in truth* ¶?—Do we love our neighbours, not merely on account of ſome relation they bear us, or ſome ſervices they have done us? but becauſe they are creatures of the bleſſed GOD; are the objects of his providential care; and capable at leaſt of being conformed to his image? Do we love them, becauſe we hope, that the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* has bought them with his blood; is willing to make them partakers of his *SPIRIT*, and members of his myſtical body?

Are we ſincerely concerned for their preſent welfare, and their eternal happineſs? Do we embrace all opportunities of promoting both the one and the other? embrace them with the *ſame* alacrity, and improve them with the ſame zeal, which actuate us in ſeeking *our own* felicity?—If they exceed us in all that is amiable, and all that is proſperous, do we contemplate their ſuperior excellence with a real complacency, and their more abundant ſucceſs with a real ſatisfaction?

Do we diſlike to hear, and abhor to ſpread, defama-

diſappointeth the devices of the crafty, ſent a ſpirit of infatuation among the rebels; and inclined them to reject the advice of that judicious ſtateſman. Which falſe ſtep brought upon their horrid enterpriſe, the ruin it deſerved; and chagrined the wretched traitor, even to rage, frenzy, and ſuicide, 2 *Sam.* xv. 31. xvii. 23.

Amyntor, at a memorable period of his life, was under great diſtreſs of conſcience, and haraſſed by violent temptations. He made his caſe known to an experienced friend; who ſaid, *Amyntor, you do not pray.*—Surpriſed at this, he replied; "I pray, if "ſuch a thing be poſſible, too much. I can hardly tell, how "many times in the day I bow my knee before GOD; almoſt to "the omiſſion of my other duties, and the neglect of my neceſ"ſary ſtudies."——"You miſtake my meaning, dear *Amyntor*. "I do not refer you to the ceremony of the *knee*, but to the devo"tion of the *heart*: which neglects not *any* buſineſs, but inter"mingles prayer with *all*; which, in every place, looks unto the "LORD; and, on every occaſion, lifts up an indigent longing "ſoul for the ſupply of his grace. This," (added he, and ſpoke with a peculiar vehemence), "*this* is the prayer which all the "devils in *hell* cannot withſtand."——This, I would farther obſerve, is the prayer, which brings down ſomewhat of *heaven* into the heart; in which I would myſelf deſire to abound; and would earneſtly recommend to all my acquaintance, and all my readers.

* Luke xviii. 1.

† If. lviii. 13. ‡ Pſal. lxxxiv. 10.

* 2 Chron. xxxiv. 27. † Cant. v. 1.
‡ Job xxiii. 12. ‖ Pſal. cxix. 148.
§ 2 Tim. iii. 4. ¶ 1 John iii. 18.

tory tales; even when our adverſaries are the men whom they tend to blacken?—When rudely affronted, or cauſeleſsly abuſed, do we pity the offenders, for the *wrong* down to their own ſouls; rather than kindle into reſentment, at the *indignity* offered to ourſelves?—When greatly injured, are we ſlow to anger, and not eaſily provoked? Are we much more willing to be reconciled, than to foment diſpleaſure, and proſecute revenge? In a word, do we *love our enemies; bleſs them that curſe us; do good to them that hate us; and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe us, and perſecute us* *?—Without this loving and lovely diſpoſition, *we abide*, ſays the apoſtle, *in death* †; are deſtitute of ſpiritual, and have no title to eternal life.

Let me add,—Are all our graces, and all our works, *clothed with humility?* This ſhould be the dreſs, in which they ſeverally appear; as well as the bond of connection, which unites them all ‡.—Do we maintain a very low opinion of our own accompliſhments, and *in honour prefer others to ourſelves* ‖? habitually ſenſible, that we are leſs than the leaſt of the divine mercies, and the very chiefeſt of ſinners?

I might eaſily have branched out the preceding ſubjects, into a much greater variety of interrogatory articles. But I intend only to preſent you with a ſpecimen. Your own meditations will enlarge the ſketch, and ſupply what is defective. Only let me beg of you, my dear friend, to try your ſtate by this touchſtone; to prove your conduct by this ſtandard. And may the FATHER of lights give you an underſtanding, to diſcern the exact purity and ſublime perfection of his holy law!

Have you lived in the *uninterrupted* obſervance of all theſe duties; avoiding whatever is forbidden, and obeying whatever is commanded? Your outward behaviour, I know, has been free from notorious violations; but has your inward temper been preſerved from all ungodly motions, and from every irregular deſire? Is there no enmity in your heart to any of the precepts; nor any backwardneſs, nor any failure in performing each and every injunction?

When you put theſe queſtions to yourſelf, remember, that if you fail in *one* point, or in *any* degree, you are guilty of all §. If your conformity be not *perſevering* as well as *perfect*, you incur the penalty, and are abandoned to the curſe. You ſtand charged, before the JUDGE of the world, with all the guilt of all your ſins, both original and actual: and there is not one circumſtance, nor one aggravation, of any of your iniquities, overlooked or forgotten,——UNLESS, renouncing all your *perſonal* performances, you place your whole affiance on a SAVIOUR's atonement, and a SAVIOUR's righteouſneſs.——I think, you will not dare to put the iſſue of your everlaſting ſtate upon the former footing; which is not only hazardous, but muſt be inevitably ruinous. You will infinitely rather chuſe to acknowledge yourſelf a poor inſolvent; and plead the unſearchable riches of your REDEEMER's obedience.

To thoſe who believe, the law, though *ſtrict*, is not *terrible*. Becauſe, be its precepts of holineſs ever ſo extenſive, they have been moſt completely fulfilled by their glorious SURETY. Be its penal ſanctions ever ſo rigorous, they have been ſatisfied to the utmoſt, by their great MEDIATOR.—Believers, therefore, may make their boaſt of their adorable SPONSOR. They may *ſit under his ſhadow with great delight* *. While the thunderings of mount *Sinai*, and all the terrors of the legal diſpenſation, tend only to increaſe and quicken the refreſhing ſenſe of their ſafety. Juſt as the poſſeſſor of a plentiful eſtate, in ſome peaceful and proſperous country, repoſes himſelf under the ſhade of his vine, or the ſhelter of his fig-tree; and, hearing of the *wars* which embroil, or the *plagues* which depopulate other nations, taſtes, with augmented reliſh, his own felicity.

Let me cloſe with the affectionate and emphatical wiſh of an inſpired epiſtolary writer: That *the LORD of peace may give* my dear Theron *peace—always, by all means* †! *Then* I ſhall think my wiſhes are accompliſhing, and this bleſſing is at the door, when he ſees the *purity* of the divine law,—ſees the *depravity* of his own nature,—and the *impoſſibility* of being juſtified, without an intereſt in the great MEDIATOR's righteouſneſs: That righteouſneſs, which, as it is the only hope, and the conſtant joy, is therefore the darling theme, of

Your ever faithful

ASPASIO.

P. S. Shall I *abridge* the preceding letter, and contract the whole into thoſe two great commandments, which made the firſt awakening impreſſions on my own mind? *Thou ſhalt love the LORD thy GOD with* ALL *thy heart: Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as* THYSELF.——Amazing! ſaid your *Aſpaſio*. Are *theſe* the commands of GOD? as obligatory, as the prohibition of adultery, or the obſervation of the Sabbath? Then has my whole life been a *continual act* of diſobedience. Not a day, no, nor an hour, in which I have performed my duty.—This conviction ſtruck me, as the hand-writing upon the wall ſtruck the preſumptuous monarch.——It purſued me, as *Saul* purſued the *Chriſtians*, not only to my own houſe, but even to diſtant cities;—nor ever gave up the great controverſy, till, under the influences of the SPIRIT, it brought me *weary* and *heavy laden to JESUS CHRIST*.

* *Matth.* v. 44. *What manner of love is this?* How diſintereſted! how extenſive! how triumphant! Muſt not all the boaſted *benevolence* of the philoſopher and moraliſt, ſtrike ſail to this evangelical charity? Muſt not both moraliſt and philoſopher acknowledge the neceſſity of a *divine* operation, thus to enlarge, exalt, and refine their ſocial affections?

† 1 John iii. 14.

‡ 1 *Pet.* v. 5. The unuſual word ἐγκομβώσασθε is ſuppoſed to have *both* theſe ſignifications.

‖ Rom. xii. 10. § Jam. ii. 10. Gal. iii. 10.

* Cant. ii. 3. † 2 Theſſ. iii. 16.

LETTER II.

THERON *to* ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

MORE than three weeks are elapſed, ſince you favoured me with your improving company. During which interval, I have frequently recollected the moſt material parts of our late diſcourſes. I have carefully conſidered, both the doctrines you advanced, and the anſwers you returned to my ſeveral objections. ——I have often reviewed your valuable letter; have uſed it as a *touch-ſtone*, to examine my ſtate; and have, with great punctuality, obſerved your parting advice. ——I have ſat, every evening, for a *picture* of my *mind*; and have endeavoured to take a true unflattering draught of all its diſtinguiſhing qualities. And, if the diary is a faithful mirror, if it does not aggravate the deformity of my features, I ſhall be abſolutely out of

conceit

conceit with myſelf: I ſhall ever entertain the *meaneſt* opinion of my own, either moral or religious, qualifications.

Where is that intenſe and ſupreme *love* of GOD, which his tranſcendent perfections challenge, and his ineffable goodneſs claims?—Where that firm and joyful *reliance* on CHRIST JESUS, in any degree proportioned to his infinite merits and inviolable promiſes?—Where that cordial and tender affection for my *fellow-chriſtians*, which is due to the ſervants of a divine REDEEMER; the people, whom he ranſomed by his agonies, and purchaſed with his very blood?—Where is the incenſe of holy contemplation and refined deſire? where the flame of fervent devotion and ever-active zeal? ſuch as become the *living temple* of GOD, in which his moſt immaculate and glorious SPIRIT vouchſafes to reſide?——Theſe fundamental graces, like the grand organs in the animal ſyſtem, ſhould impart health to the ſoul, and ſpread the beauty of holineſs through all the converſation. But theſe, alas! far from beating with a *vigorous* and *uniform* pulſe, hardly heave with life; only juſt ſtruggle, now and then, with ſome faint, intermitted, uneven throes.

How ſeldom do my actions ſpring from gratitude to the everlaſting BENEFACTOR, or aim at the glory of his ſuper-excellent MAJESTY?—In addreſſing the KING immortal, inviſible, how languid are my affections, and how wandering is my attention? how great my unbelief, and how little my reverential awe?—I receive innumerable mercies; but where are my returns of correſpondent thankfulneſs? I am viſited with many gracious chaſtiſements; but without proper reſignation, or due improvement.——Alas for my heartleſs devotions, my lifeleſs virtues, and the multitude of my *refined iniquities!*——Hid behind the maſk of outward decency, and ſome cuſtomary forms of religion, I was altogether unacquainted with my ſpiritual ſtate. I fancied myſelf *rich, and increaſed with goods, and to have need of nothing*: even while I was *wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked* *.

If I look back, and review the years of youth and manhood, what has been the tenor, what is the aſpect of my life? More like a deſolate and horrid wilderneſs, than a cultivated garden, or a fruitful vineyard.——In *youth*, what ſordid gratifications of appetite! In *manhood*, what baſe compliances with a wicked world! In *both*, what ſholes of evil inclinations have polluted my heart! what ſwarms of vain imaginations have debaſed my thoughts! what frothy and unprofitable words have dropt from my lips!—By all which, how have I diſobeyed, and how diſhonoured GOD! how have I denied, and how crucified the LORD JESUS CHRIST!——and yet ſuppoſed myſelf, all the while, to be *good enough!*

It is ſomething unaccountable, that a perſon of my inquiſitive diſpoſition ſhould, through the courſe of ſo many years, be ſuch an utter *ſtranger* to himſelf. I wonder at my own *prepoſterous* folly!—To travel into foreign countries, and viſit the moſt renowned cities of *Europe*; yet never ſtep over the threſhold, nor look within the apartments of my own breaſt!——To carry on a correſpondence with my friends, even in the remoteſt nations; and never enter upon a conference, nor hold any intelligence with my own heart!——To inquire after news from the fleet, news from the army, news from the court; yet exerciſe neither curioſity nor care, with regard to the hope of heaven, and the concerns of eternity!——What egregious miſconduct is this! A moſt pernicious error, in the œconomy of religious life.

Sometimes I have caſt a tranſient glance on my *outward* behaviour; but never extended my ſearch to the delinquent, the traitor, the rebel *within*.——And even my outward behaviour has been ſurveyed, with as much erroneous partiality, as ſuperficial levity. It has been compared, not with that *exact* and *ſublime* ſtandard, the ſcriptures of truth; but, as in the caſe of the ſelf-deceiving *Phariſee*, with the unjuſt, extortionate, adulterous practices of ſome other people. From whence I moſt unwarrantably concluded, that, being not quite ſo abandoned as the moſt profligate creatures, my character muſt be good, and my condition ſafe.——But, thanks to your laſt friendly letter, and the ſearching expedient it recommended, I am now in a different way of thinking.

It is ſtrange to recollect, and indeed it is ſhameful to confeſs, the many *artifices* which I have uſed, to put a *cheat* upon myſelf.——Sometimes I have fancied, that the divine law could never be ſo ſtrict, as to condemn us inexorably, if we continue not in all its precepts.—Sometimes I have pleaded the infirmity of our nature, and endeavoured to make the works of darkneſs appear only as pitiable failings.—Sometimes I have taken refuge in the excellency of our church, and plumed myſelf with the borrowed feathers of a religious profeſſion.——At other times, I have ſoothed my conſcience to reſt, by a punctuality of attendance on places, or a zealous attachment to forms. And all this, to ſeduce, cajole, and betray myſelf,—betray myſelf, firſt into a vain *conceit* of my own endowments; then into a contemptuous *diſregard* of CHRIST; and at laſt into eternal *deſtruction*.—But now I ſee my guilt; I apprehend my danger; and feel my helpleſs condition.

Indeed, my *Aſpaſio*, I am now convinced, that the darkeſt colours cannot be too dark for the portrait of my ſpiritual ſtate. I ſee myſelf overſpread with an habitual depravity, and cannot forbear crying out, with the abaſhed leper; *Unclean! unclean* *!——The ſacred oracles in no wiſe miſrepreſent fallen man, when they deſcribe him as *altogether become abominable* †. They are far from under-rating human works, when they denominate them *filthy rags* ‡. *Rags* they are, if

* Rev. iii. 17.

* Lev. xiii. 45. † Job xv. 16.

‡ *Iſ.* lxiv. 6. Does not *Theron* miſapply this text? Can it be intended to diſcredit the qualifications of the *upright?* Is it not rather a brand ſet upon the works of the *wicked*: whoſe very "ſacrifices are an abomination to the LORD?" Or, a rebuke given to the ſpecious performances of the *hypocrite*; who is preciſe in the form, but deſtitute of the power of godlineſs? Or, may it not refer to *ritual* obſervances; in contradiſtinction to moral duties, and ſpiritual accompliſhments?

The diſparaging character muſt not, I think, be confined to ritual obſervances: becauſe it is expreſsly ſaid, ALL *our righteouſneſſes*, including every kind of religious duty.—Neither can it be appropriated to the *formal* hypocrite, much leſs to the *notoriouſly-wicked*; becauſe, thoſe very perſons, who are the ſubject of this aſſertion, declare in the context, *LORD, we are thy people; thou art our FATHER; we ſhall be ſaved.*—So that it ſeems intended to *ſtain the pride of all* human *glory*.

Beſides, the prophet ſpeaks of *himſelf*: WE *all are as an unclean thing*: which, however ſtrange or unreaſonable it may ſeem, is the very ſame charge, to which he pleads guilty in another place; *Wo is me! I am undone! for I am a man of unclean lips!* Not that he was defiled with any groſs pollutions; nay, he was a ſaint of the moſt diſtinguiſhed luſtre; but *his eyes had ſeen the KING, the LORD of hoſts*. He was under the clear manifeſtations of a GOD, glorious in holineſs, inflexible in juſtice, and infinite in all perfections.——Amidſt theſe manifeſtations, the impurity of his heart and nature were not only apparent, but glaring; overwhelmed him with abaſhment, and, till *CHRIST* was applied in a type, (*Iſ.* vi. 7.) filled him with terror.

In *ſuch* circumſtances and under *ſuch* views, all our moral virtues and evangelical graces; all our exerciſes of devotion, and acts of charity, will appear both defective and polluted; by no means proportioned to the demands of the law, nor ſufficient for our recommendation to the Supreme LAWGIVER;—no more than a few *tattered* rags, can claim the character, or perform the ſervices, of a complete ſuit;—no more than a few *filthy* rags are fit to dreſs the bride for her nuptials, or the courtier for a birth-night.

But there *is* a righteouſneſs—bleſſed be divine grace!—ſpotleſsly pure and conſummately excellent; a righteouſneſs, which anſwers all that the CREATOR requires, and ſupplies all that ——the

we conſider their great imperfection; *filthy* rags, if we advert to their manifold defilements.——And ſince the nature of GOD is ſo irreconcilably averſe to all contamination; ſince the law of GOD requires ſuch unſpotted perfection; O! *who can ſtand before this holy LORD GOD* *, in any accompliſhments of their own?

When I farther reflect, that I have only a very obſcure glimpſe of the divine purity, and am a mere novice in the knowledge of my own heart; how am I amazed at the lofty apprehenſions which I once formed, concerning the *dignity* of my nature, and the *integrity* of my conduct! All owing to ignorance, the groſſeſt ignorance of myſelf and the ſcriptures.——How do I ſhudder to think, that, in expecting juſtification from the law, I was reſting the welfare of my immortal ſoul, not on the foundation of a rock, but on the point of a dagger. I was going to the deciſive tribunal, fluſhed with the falſeſt hopes, and charged with a ſet of glittering ſins; going, like poor deluded *Uriah* †, not with any valid credentials, but with *the miniſtration of death* ‡ in my hand.

Though I cannot but acknowledge the arrogance of theſe pretenſions, yet loath, very loath is my pride, to renounce the pleaſing abſurdity. Self-love has ſearched, and ſearched again, for ſomething excellent. It would fain make a better appearance, and can hardly brook the humiliation of imploring all *ſub forma pauperis*. With what reluctance is a ſinner brought to confeſs himſelf ſinful in every duty, ſinful in every capacity! Strange perverſeneſs!——But the charge is undeniable. However unwilling, I muſt plead guilty. THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES, AND FOUND WANTING †, is evidently written on all I *am*, all I *have*, all I *do*.——And if I am thus defective, even in my own eſtimation; if I am utterly condemned, at the bar of my own conſcience; *what then ſhall I do, when GOD riſeth up? and when HE viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer him* ‡?

I now ſee the *neceſſity* of an imputed righteouſneſs. Without ſome ſuch object for my truſt, I am undone. I long therefore to hear your *arguments* in its behalf. And I muſt declare to you, if it can be ſatisfactorily proved from the ſcriptures, it is the moſt comfortable doctrine in the world, and worthy of all acceptation.

A letter upon this ſubject, would be a ſingular favour, and, I hope, an equal bleſſing to

Your obliged, and affectionate,

THERON.

* That is, under the character of *a poor deſtitute*, or as a beggar ſues for his alms.

† Dan. v. 27. ‡ Job xxxi. 14.

* 1 Sam. vi. 20. † 2 Sam. xi. 14. 15. ‡ 2 Cor. iii. 9.

LETTER III.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

THOUGH all your letters give me pleaſure, none was ever ſo highly pleaſing as your laſt. I look upon it with the ſame ſecret joy, as a compaſſionate phyſician obſerves ſome *very favourable* ſymptoms, in the criſis of a beloved patient's diſtemper.

What you aſk, I ſhall, without any farther preface, attempt to execute. If my attempt proves ſatisfactory to your judgment, I am ſure, it will be the moſt likely means of *healing* your conſcience, and *calming* your fears. ——When we perceive the odious depravity of our nature; when we diſcern the horrible iniquity of our lives; and are ſenſible of that tremendous wrath, and everlaſting vengeance, which are due to ſuch guilty creatures; *then* nothing can be found, that will ſpeak effectual peace, nothing that will adminiſter ſolid comfort, but only the vicarious ſufferings and the imputed righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST.

To this purpoſe ſpeaks one of the wiſeſt and beſt of ſpiritual guides; *Has ſin abounded?* as undoubtedly it has, in our heart, and our life; *grace has much more abounded*, in the obedience, and the merits of our REDEEMER.——Nay, *has ſin reigned?* exerted its malignant power, in the moſt extenſive and moſt deſtructive manner; rendering us ſubject *unto death*, both temporal and eternal? *Even ſo has grace reigned;* exerted its benign efficacy, and in a manner yet more triumphant; not only reſcuing us from guilt and ruin, but reſtoring us to *everlaſting life* and glory: and all this *through* the *righteouſneſs*, the complete meritorious righteouſneſs brought in *by* JESUS CHRIST *our* LORD *.

You inquire after the *proofs* of this imputed righteouſneſs. From a multitude I ſhall ſelect a few: ſufficient, I hope, to make it appear,—that this is the declared doctrine of our *church*, and the avowed belief of her *moſt eminent* divines;—that it is copiouſly revealed through the whole SCRIPTURES; revealed in many expreſs paſſages, and deducible from a variety of inſtructive ſimilitudes.

Hear the language of our Common Prayer, in a very affecting and ſolemn addreſs to the ALMIGHTY; "We do not preſume to come to this thy table, O mer-"ciful LORD, truſting in our own righteouſneſs."——If we may not, if we dare not, rely on our own righteouſneſs, when we approach the *euchariſtic table;* much leſs may we depend upon it, when we are ſummoned to the *deciſive tribunal.*——Should you aſk, On what we are to depend? The exhortation to the communion furniſhes an anſwer; "On the meritorious death and "paſſion of CHRIST, whereby *alone* we obtain remiſſion "of ſins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of "heaven."

The collect appointed for the feſtival of *Circumciſion* has this remarkable introduction; "Almighty GOD, "whoſe bleſſed SON was *obedient to the law for man*." In what ſenſe, or with what propriety, can this be affirmed, unleſs CHRIST's perfect obedience be referable to us, and accepted inſtead of ours? On any other interpretation, I ſhould think, he was obedient, not for *man*, but for *himſelf*.

Should the artful critic give ſome other turn to theſe paſſages, it will avail him but little. Becauſe the church, her own *beſt* expoſitor, has explained the meaning of ſuch phraſes, and put the matter beyond all doubt. In her eleventh article ſhe ſays, "We are "accounted righteous before GOD only for the me-"rits of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS "CHRIST."——The doctrine relating to pardon of ſin, had been ſtated in a preceding article. This diſplays the method, whereby ſinners may appear righteous in the eye of GOD, and in the court of heaven; ſo as to recover the divine favour, and obtain a title to eternal bliſs.——This is done, not by any *native* righteouſneſs, not by any *acquired* righteouſneſs, but by an

* Rom. v. 21.

an *imputed* righteousness. Were we justified by either of the former methods, it would not have been said, We are *accounted*, but we *are* righteous. They are so far from constituting our reconciling and justifying righteousness, that they have no share in it; contribute nothing towards it; are totally excluded from it. We are accounted righteous, and accepted as such, ONLY (mark the expression) ONLY through the meritorious obedience, and propitiating blood of our great MEDIATOR.

The Homilies are, if it be possible, still more explicit, and more cogent. In the Homily concerning the salvation of mankind, we read the following words:—"The apostle toucheth three things, which must go together in our justification. On GOD's part, his "great mercy and grace. On CHRIST's part the satisfaction of GOD's justice, or the price of our redemption, by the offering of his body, and shedding of his "blood, with fulfilling of the law perfectly. On our "part, true and lively faith in the merits of *JESUS* "*CHRIST*, which yet is not ours, but by *GOD's* "working in us."——You see, according to the judgment of our venerable reformers, not only the offering of *CHRIST*'s body, and shedding of CHRIST's blood, but also his *perfect fulfilling* of the law, are the adequate price of our redemption. All these act conjointly, they sweetly harmonize, in the great and glorious work. To suppose their disunion, is a *doctrinal* mistake, somewhat like that *practical* error of the Papists, in severing the sacramental wine from the sacramental bread; administering to the laity the symbols of the slaughtered body, but with-holding the symbols of the streaming blood.

There are *other* clauses in the same Homily, which set the seal of the church to our sentiments. I shall content myself with transcribing one from the conclusion.—"CHRIST," says that form of sound words, "is the "righteousness of all them that do truly believe. He "for them paid their ransom by his death. He for "them fulfilled the law in his life. So that now, in "HIM, and by HIM, every true *Christian* man may "be called a fulfiller of the law; forasmuch as that which "their infirmity lacked, CHRIST's righteousness hath "supplied."—This authority is as clear, as the doctrine authorised is comfortable. May the former sway our judgment! may the latter chear our hearts.

The Homily on CHRIST's nativity informs the reader, that the design of our LORD's incarnation was,—"to give light unto the world, and call sinners to repentance; to *fulfill the law for us*, and become the propitiation for our sins; to cast out the prince of this "world, and destroy the works of the devil."—We have all broke the law, we are all unable to keep the law; therefore the blessed *JESUS* fulfilled the law,—fulfilled it, in *each* and *every* of its demands,—fulfilled it, in the *highest* degree of perfection,—and, what is of all considerations most delightful, fulfilled it *for us*. His obedience took the place of what we were obliged to perform, under the covenant of works; and is not only the meritorious, but also the constituent cause of our justification.

So that,—if there be any worthiness in our LORD's most holy nature; any merit in his exercise of the sublimest virtues; completed by his submission to the most ignominious sufferings, and tormenting death;—then, according to this standard system of orthodox divinity, these are the *ground*, these are the *substance* of a sinner's justification.—And, according to the dictates of the most unbiassed reason, they are the *best*, the *surest* ground, that can either be wished or imagined.

Does it not, from the preceding quotations, appear, that the doctrine of justification through the imputed righteousness of our REDEEMER, is far from being disclaimed by the *established church?*—I am sorry, but constrained to own, that we rarely find any considerable strictures of this great evangelical peculiarity, in our *modern* theological discourses. Yet there have been preachers of the highest repute for learning, for judgment, and for piety, who professedly maintained this grand truth of the gospel.

The devout Bishop *Beveridge*, in his *Private Thoughts*, has left upon record the following very remarkable acknowledgment; which, if it suited *his* state of eminent holiness, cannot be too humbling, my dear *Theron*, for your lips and for mine. "I do not remember, neither "do I believe, that I ever prayed, in all my life-time, "with that reverence, or heard with that attention, or "received the sacrament with that faith, or did any "work with that pure heart, and single eye, as I ought "to have done. Insomuch that I look upon all my "righteousness, but as filthy rags; and it is in the robes "only of the righteousness of the SON of GOD, that I "dare appear before the MAJESTY of heaven."

The fervent and affectionate Bishop *Hopkins* * speaks in perfect consonance with his brother of *St Asaph*.—"The law was given us, not that we should seek justifi"cation by the observance of it, but finding it impossible "to be justified by fulfilling it, we should thereby be "driven to CHRIST's righteousness; who hath both "fulfilled it in himself, and satisfied for our transgressing "of it; and therefore saith the apostle, *The law was a "schoolmaster to bring us unto CHRIST; that we might be justified by faith.* To this end it was promulged, that "seeing the strictness of its precepts, the rigour of its "threatenings, and withal being convinced of our im"potence to fulfil its commands, we might be urged by "its terrors to fly to *CHRIST*, and find that righteous"ness in him which may answer all the demands of the "law."

Bishop *Reynolds* †, styled by his contemporaries, and not without reason, *A walking library*, bears his testimony in the following words:—"CHRIST as our "Surety paid our debt, underwent the curse due to our "sins, and bare them all in his own body on the tree; "became subject to the law for us, and representatively "in our stead fulfilled all the righteousness the law re"quired, active and passive. For sin being once com"mitted, there must be a double act to justification; the "suffering of the curse, and the fulfilling of righteous"ness anew. The one, a satisfaction for the injury we "have done to *GOD*, as our JUDGE; the other, the "performance of a service which we owe unto him as "our MAKER."

To this illustrious triumvirate, let me join Bishop *Davenant*; who, for his great abilities, and unquestionable integrity, was appointed one of our religious plenipotentiaries, at the renowned synod of *Dort*. In his very valuable exposition of the epistle to the *Colossians*, he writes to this effect: "*Ye are complete in CHRIST.* Ye "are furnished, in that all-sufficient REDEEMER, with "whatever is requisite to everlasting salvation. With "*wisdom;* since it is the consummation of this noble en"dowment, to know CHRIST and him crucified. "With *righteousness;* because he has perfectly satisfied "the law ‡, and thoroughly expiated our guilt. With "*sanctification;* because his SPIRIT dwelling in our "hearts, mortifies our corrupt affections, and renews "the soul after the image of its CREATOR."

* See his sermon on John vii 19.

† See his treatise, entitled, *The life of CHRIST*.——Which, as well as all his other works, abound with striking sentiments; have much elegance of diction, a copious variety of learning, and a lively animating spirit of evangelical piety.

‡ In this respect principally (says our author, enlarging upon the text) are believers *complete*; because though destitute of any righteousness, that may properly be called *their own*, *CHRIST* has graciously enriched them with *his*. *Vid.* DAVENANT *in epist. ad Coloss. cap.* ii. *com.* 10.

Let me beg leave to intimate, that this exposition of the epistle to the *Colossians*,—for perspicuity of style, and accuracy

Let me bring up the *rear* with a teſtimony, which, for clearneſs, ſolidity, and a full repreſentation of the evangelical doctrine, might very juſtly have claimed a place in the *van*. It is taken from an author, whom the general conſent of our nation has diſtinguiſhed with the title of *Judicious*. The judicious *Hooker*, in a treatiſe on juſtification, ſays,—"It is a childiſh cavil our "adverſaries ſo greatly pleaſe themſelves with, exclaim-"ing, that we tread all *Chriſtian* virtues under our feet; "becauſe we teach, That faith alone juſtifieth. Where-"as, by this ſpeech, we never meant to exclude either "hope or charity from being always joined as inſepar-"able mates with faith, in the man that is juſtified; or "works from being added, as neceſſary duties, required "of every juſtified man: but to ſhew, that faith is the "only hand, which putteth on CHRIST to juſtifica-"tion; and *CHRIST* the only garment, which being ſo "put on, covereth the ſhame of our defiled natures, "hideth the imperfection of our works, and preſerveth "us blameleſs in the ſight of *GOD*: before whom, other-"wiſe, the weakneſs of our faith were cauſe ſufficient "to make us culpable, yea, to ſhut us out of the king-"dom of heaven, where nothing that is not abſolute "can enter."

You will allow the ſagacious Biſhop *Sanderſon* * to ſum up the evidence; or rather to make an important remark on the whole of the controverſy. That great light of the church, both in caſuiſtical and practical divinity, obſerves,—"The tidings of a *REDEEMER* "muſt be bleſſed and welcome news, to thoſe that are "ſenſible of their own poverty, and take it of grace." Our eagle-eyed divine penetrates into the *true* cauſe of the prevailing averſeneſs to this evangelical doctrine. It is founded on the *ſtate* of the *heart*, more than upon any force of argument. People are but little, if at all, ſenſible of their ſpiritual and moral indigence; of the defects which depreciate, and the defilements which ſully, whatever they have, and whatever they do. Nay, ſtrongly tinctured with pride, they would be themſelves the *Alpha*, and ſuffer the bleſſed JESUS to be no more than the *Omega*, in procuring their eternal ſalvation. Therefore they can hardly be reconciled to the humbling character of an *eleemoſynary*; one why lives wholly upon the alms of the goſpel, and is dependent upon grace for his all.

Whereas, was this grand obſtacle once removed; were men *convinced* of *ſin*, of exceeding ſinfulneſs in their worſt eſtate, and of remaining ſinfulneſs in their beſt; they would ſoon be *convinced* of *righteouſneſs* †, of the abſolute neceſſity and ineſtimable worth of a REDEEMER's righteouſneſs. They would no longer diſpute againſt it, but cordially receive it; entirely rely on it; and adore the goodneſs, the tranſcendant and unutterable goodneſs of GOD, in providing it.

I think in one of our conferences, I undertook to produce my vouchers from the ancient *fathers*. Let me now ſubjoin two or three atteſtations of this kind. ——From *one* of which you will perceive, that thoſe early writers had a conſiderable degree of clearneſs upon the point. From the *other* you will ſee, that, far from rejecting the doctrine, they embrace it with delight and rapture. And if you will admit of the *laſt*, you cannot be ſtartled at any thing, which I ſhall advance upon the ſubject.——Let me only premiſe in general, that, if thoſe authors are not ſo copious and explicit, with regard to the imputation of *active* righteouſneſs; they abound in paſſages, which evince the *ſubſtitution* of *CHRIST* in our ſtead: Paſſages, which diſclaim all dependence on any duties of our own, and fix the hopes of a believer entirely upon the merits of his SAVIOUR. When this is the caſe, I am very little ſolicitous about any particular forms of expreſſion; and far from being angry, even though the words, which I think moſt ſignificant, are not retained.

Clemens,—an intimate acquaintance of St *Paul*'s, and whoſe *name was in the book of life* *,—in his truly-excellent epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, aſſures that people †: *We are not*, in any reſpect or in any degree, *juſtified by ourſelves*, but wholly by JESUS CHRIST: *not by our own wiſdom or prudence*, which could never find out the way; *not by the piety of our hearts, or works of righteouſneſs performed in our lives*, which could never be ſufficient for the purpoſe; *but by faith*: the one invariable method, *by which the almighty SOVEREIGN has juſtified all* his people, *ever ſince the world began*.

Juſtin,—who was firſt a *Gentile* philoſopher, then an eminent *Chriſtian*, and at laſt a *martyr* for the truth,—ſpeaks more fully to the point ‡: *What elſe could cover our ſins, but the righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST? By what poſſible means could we, unrighteous and unholy creatures, be juſtified, but only by the* interpoſition of the *SON of* GOD in our behalf?—Having, in this clauſe, made a profeſſion of his faith, the good man, on the contemplation of ſuch a privilege, breaks out into a kind of holy tranſport. O SWEET AND DELIGHTFUL EXCHANGE! *A diſpenſation unſearchably wiſe and gracious! Benefits, quite unexpected, and rich beyond all our hopes! that the ſin of many ſhould be hid by one righteous PERSON; and that the righteouſneſs of ONE ſhould juſtify many tranſgreſſors.*

The following words are remarkably ſtrong, and the ſentiments peculiarly bold. But they come from the pen of the fineſt writer in eccleſiaſtical antiquity. They have the great name, and venerable character of St *Chryſoſtom*, for their recommendatory preface ‖:—*Fear not*, ſays he, *on account of any of thy paſt tranſgreſſions of the law, when once thou haſt fled by faith to* JESUS CHRIST. *The moſt enormous and the moſt deſtructive violation of the law is, to be with-held, by the conſciouſneſs of any guilt whatever, from believing on* CHRIST. *When thou acteſt faith on him, thou haſt fulfilled, I might ſay, more than fulfilled the law. For thou haſt received a better righteouſneſs, than it could ever require: thou art poſſeſſed of a better obedience, than any creature could poſſibly pay.*

Two or three witneſſes of *diſtinguiſhed ability*, and *undoubted veracity*, are a ſufficient confirmation of any cauſe. For this reaſon, and to avoid a tireſome prolixity, I have ſet aſide a multitude of voices; which, from the writings of our own and foreign divines, are ready to pour their united evidence.——And leſt the buſineſs of quotation, though ſparingly managed, ſhould ſeem dry and tedious; I will relieve your wearineſs, and enliven the collection, by an extract from the prince of *Engliſh* poetry.——*Michael*, the prophetic archangel, mentioning the deſtructive conſequences of the fall; and aſſerting the GODHEAD

of method;—for judgment in diſcerning, and fidelity in repreſenting, the apoſtle's meaning, for ſtrength of argument in refuting errors, and felicity of invention in deducing practical doctrines, tending both to the eſtabliſhment of faith, and the cultivation of holineſs,—is, I think, inferior to no writing of the kind; and richly deſerves to be *read*, to be *ſtudied*, to be *imitated*, by our young divines.

* See his ſermon upon *If.* iii. 3. † John xvi. 8.

* Phil. iv. 3.

† Ου δι εαυτων δικαιουμεθα, ουδε δια της ημετερας σοφιας, η συνεσεως, η ευσεβειας, η εργων ων κατειργασαμεθα εν οσιοτητι καρδιας· αλλα δια της πιστεως, δι ης παντας τους απ' αιωνος ο παντοκρατωρ Θεος εδικαιωσεν. 1 Epiſt. ad Corinth. ——This quotation is *explained*, as well as *tranſlated*. But that every reader may diſtinguiſh the text from the paraphraſe, the firſt is printed in *Italic*, the laſt in *Roman* characters.

‡ Τι αλλο των αμαρτιων ημων ηδυνηθη καλυψαι, η τουτου δικαιοσυνη; Εν τινι διαιουθησαν δυναλον τας ανομιας ημων η ασεβειες, η εν τω υιω του Θεου; Ω ΤΗΣ ΓΑΥΚΕΙΑΣ ΚΑΤΑΛΛΑΓΗΣ, ω της ανεξιχνιαστου δημιουργιας, ω των απροσδοκητων δε ενος πολλους ανομους δικαιωσαι. Epiſt. ad Diogn.——Though *Du Pin* queſtions the authority of this epiſtle, he allows it to have been written by an ancient hand. Dr *Cave*, as capable a judge, thinks there is no reaſon to doubt, but it is the genuine work of *Juſtin*.

‖ Μη τοινυν φοβηθης, ως τον νομον παραβαινων, ενειδαν την πιστιν προσλαβη· τοτε γαρ αυτον παραβαινεις, ου δι' αυτα τα Χριστω μη πιστευσας· ως ου πιστευσας αυτω, καινην πληρωσας η πολλω πλειον η εκελευσε· πολλω γαρ μειζονα δικαιοσυνην ελαβες. Homil. XVII. in X. ad Rom.

of that glorious PERSON, who undertook to be the repairer of this deadly breach; adds,

Which HE, who comes thy SAVIOUR, shall secure,
Not by destroying Satan but his works,
In thee and in thy seed. Nor can this be,
But by fulfilling (that which thou didst want)
Obedience to the law of GOD, *impos'd*
On penalty of death; and suffering death,
The penalty to thy transgression due;
And due to theirs, which out of thine will grow,
So ONLY *can high justice rest appaid* *.

Here then is the expreſs determination of our *Homilies*,—ſupported by the authority of our *Articles*,—eſtabliſhed by the concurrence of our *Liturgy*,—ſtill farther ratified by the unanimous atteſtation of ſeveral celebrated *Divines*: whoſe lives were the brighteſt ornament to our church, and whoſe writings are the moſt unexceptionable interpretation of her meaning.——As a capital, to crown and complete this grand column, ſupervenes the declaration of the ancient *Fathers*, thoſe who flouriſhed, and with the higheſt renown, in the firſt and pureſt ages of Chriſtianity.——So that, if great authorities carry any weight; if illuſtrious names challenge any regard; this tenet comes attended and dignified with very conſiderable *credentials*.

Yet I will venture to affirm, that all theſe, conſiderable as they appear, are the *leaſt* of thoſe teſtimonials, which recommend the doctrine to my *Theron*'s acceptance, and which have gained it admittance into the heart of,

His moſt affectionate,
ASPASIO.

* MILTON, book XII. 393.

LETTER IV.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

THE family, in which I have the ſatisfaction to reſide, though remarkable for their genteel figure and ample fortune, are ſtill more amiably diſtinguiſhed by their *benevolence*, *hoſpitality*, and *charity*.——As they live at a diſtance from the market-town, the lady has converted one apartment of her houſe into a little diſpenſatory; and ſtocked it with ſome of the moſt common, the moſt needed, and moſt ſalutary medicines: which, in caſes of *ordinary* indiſpoſition, ſhe diſtributes to her indigent neighbours, with ſingular compaſſion, and with no ſmall ſucceſs.——This fine morning, *Emilia* has ordered ſome ſkilful hands into the fields, to cull their healing ſimples, and lay up a magazine of health for the afflicted poor. *Camillus* is withdrawn to receive his rents, and ſettle accounts with his tenants.

Suppoſe, we act in concert with theſe valuable perſons. Suppoſe, we range the delightful fields of ſcripture, and form a collection, not of ſalutiferous herbs, but of ineſtimable texts; ſuch as may be of ſovereign efficacy, to *aſſuage* the anguiſh of a guilty conſcience, and impart *ſaving health* to the diſtempered ſoul.——Suppoſe, we open the mines of divine inſpiration, and enrich ourſelves, not with the gold of *Ophir*, but with the *unſearchable treaſures* of CHRIST; or with that perfect righteouſneſs of our REDEEMER, which is incomparably more precious, than the revenues of a county, or the produce of *Peru*.

In pleading for imputed righteouſneſs, we have already urged the authority of our eſtabliſhed church, and the ſuffrage of her moſt eminent divines.——The opinion of excellent writers, which has been the reſult of much learning, great attention, and earneſt prayer, is no contemptible evidence. Yet we muſt always reſerve the *caſting*-voice, for thoſe infallible umpires, the prophets and apoſtles. *If we receive*, with a deferential regard, *the witneſs of men; the witneſs of GOD is greater* *, and challenges the moſt implicit ſubmiſſion.——Which remark naturally leads me to the intended ſubject of this epiſtle; or rather calls upon me to fulfil my late engagement, and ſhew,—that the above-mentioned doctrine is copiouſly revealed, through the whole proceſs of the ſcriptures.

Let me detach a very ſignificant portion from the epiſtle to the *Romans*; which, though little inferior to a deciſive proof, is produced only as an introduction to others. *Now the righteouſneſs of GOD without the law is manifeſted, being witneſſed by the law and the prophets; even the righteouſneſs of GOD, which is by faith of JESUS CHRIST unto all, and upon all them that believe* *. *The righteouſneſs of GOD*, ſignifies that righteouſneſs, which the incarnate GOD wrought out in his own all-gracious perſon †. It is ſtyled the righteouſneſs of GOD, by way of ſuperlative pre-eminence; in oppoſition to any righteouſneſs of our own, and in contradiſtinction to the righteouſneſs of all creatures whatever.——This righteouſneſs is *without the law*. Its efficacy has no dependence on, its merit receives no addition from, any conformity of our practice to the divine law; being complete, abſolutely complete in itſelf, and altogether ſufficient to procure the reconciliation and acceptance of ſinners.—This righteouſneſs is *witneſſed by the law and the prophets*; receives an uniform atteſtation from the various writings of the Old Teſtament. To inveſtigate which atteſtation, to examine its pertinency, and weigh its ſufficiency, is our preſent pleaſing buſineſs.

We may begin with that gracious declaration, made to the firſt tranſgreſſors: *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the ſerpent's head* ‡; ſhall deſtroy the works of the devil, and retrieve whatever was loſt by his malicious artifices ‖. How could this be effected, but by reſtoring that righteouſneſs, which, for a while, our firſt parents poſſeſſed; which they ought always to have held faſt; but from which they ſo ſoon and ſo unhappily ſwerved?—Take the poſition in the right ſenſe, and *Chriſtianity* is, if not entirely, yet very nearly *as old as the creation*. It was comprehended in this bleſſed promiſe, as the *ſtamina* of the largeſt plants

* 1 John v. 9.

* Rom. iii. 21. 22.

† This explication, or ſomething to the ſame purpoſe, has occurred already. But it is hoped, the candid reader will not condemn the repetition, as a *diſagreeable* and *jejune* tautology.—Becauſe it is ſo conſonant to the practice of our great apoſtle, who repeats the term, reinculcates the doctrine, and hardly knows how to deſiſt from the favourite topic; like one, who was quite enamoured with the ſubject, who found muſic in the words, and whoſe happineſs was bound up in the bleſſing.——Becauſe it is conformable to another, and a greater example. The LORD JEHOVAH himſelf, within the compaſs of *one* chapter, once and again, yea, a third and a fourth time, ſtyles this wonderful obedience, My RIGHTEOUSNESS. As though the GOD of infinite perfection *gloried* in it; thought himſelf moſt *eminently* magnified by it; and was jealous to have all the honour reſulting from it. See *Iſ.* li.

‡ Gen. iii. 15.

‖ In ſome ſuch ſenſe, I think, our firſt parents muſt underſtand the promiſe. Otherwiſe it could yield them no *effectual* relief, under the diſtreſſing ſenſe of their own miſery, and the diſmal apprehenſion of their poſterity's ruin.

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are contained in the ſubſtance of their reſpective ſeeds: every ſubſequent revelation being no more, than a *gradual evolution* of this grand evangelical principle; acting like the vegetative powers of nature, which, in rearing an oak with all its ſpread of branches, only expand the tunicles, and fill up the veſſels of the acorn.

This doctrine ſeems to have been typically taught, by the remarkable manner of *clothing* our firſt parents.—— All they could do for their own recovery, was like the patched and beggarly mantle of *fig-leaves*. This they relinquiſh, and GOD himſelf furniſhes them with apparel *. Animals are ſlain, not for food, but *ſacrifice*; and the naked criminals are arrayed with the ſkins of thoſe ſlaughtered beaſts. The victims figured the *expiation* of CHRIST's death; the clothing typified the *imputation* of his righteouſneſs.—— In perfect conformity, perhaps with a reference, to the paſſage thus interpreted, the apoſtle juſt now expreſſed himſelf; *even the righteouſneſs of GOD, which is* not only made over † *to all* believers, as a rich portion; but put † *upon all*, as a beautiful garment. Whereby alone their moral deformity can be covered, and their everlaſting confuſion prevented.—— *Milton*, it is certain, ſpeaking of this memorable tranſaction, conſiders it in the ſame ſpiritual ſenſe:

Nor HE their outward only with the ſkins
Of beaſts, but inward nakedneſs (*much more*
Opprobrious!) with his robe of righteouſneſs
Arraying, *cover'd from his FATHER's ſight.*

In thy ſeed, ſays the great JEHOVAH to his ſervant *Abraham, ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed* ‡. That the ſeed here mentioned is CHRIST, the apoſtle ‖ places beyond all doubt. Both ſcripture and reaſon declare, that *true bleſſedneſs* muſt neceſſarily include—the pardon of ſins, and the favour of GOD,—the ſanctification of our ſouls, and the inheritance of life eternal. None of which are to be acquired by any human performances; but all are to be ſought, and all may be found, in the Root and Offſpring of *Abraham*, JESUS CHRIST: who is therefore moſt pertinently ſtyled, THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS §: the *actual* deſire of every enlightened nation; and the *implicit* deſire of all nations whatever: becauſe all, without any exception, covet, what is to be derived only from JESUS CHRIST the Righteous, *real* happineſs.

The patriarchal age, and the legal œconomy, bore their teſtimony to this truth, by typical perſons, emblematical miracles, and figurative uſages. Indeed, the whole ceremonial ſervice was a grand *ſeries* of types, repreſenting CHRIST and his everlaſting righteouſneſs. In all which this was the *unanimous* though ſilent language; *Behold the LAMB of GOD, that taketh away the ſin of the world.*——Theſe I ſhall not ſtay to diſcuſs, becauſe proofs of a more explicit and poſitive nature wait for our conſideration. Only I would juſt make a tranſient obſervation, relating to one very remarkable conſtitution in the *Jewiſh* ritual.

The high prieſt had, on the front of his mitre, a plate of pure gold, engraven with that venerable motto ¶, HOLINESS TO THE LORD; which was always to be on his forehead, when he performed the ſolemn miniſtrations of the ſanctuary; and for this important reaſon, that the people *might be accepted before the LORD* ‡. Did not this moſt clearly forethew the immaculate holineſs of our great HIGH PRIEST? and with equal clearneſs imply, that *his* holineſs ſhould procure acceptance for all his followers?

In the book of *Job*, we have ſeveral hints of this truth: and one paſſage very expreſs to our purpoſe.—— deſcribes an unconverted perſon, under the chaſtiſing hand of Providence. *Whoſe life*, through the extremity of his diſeaſe *drew near to the grave; and his ſoul*, through the multitude of his iniquities, was ready to become a prey *to the deſtroyers*. In this deplorable condition, *if there be* preſent *with him, the MESSENGER* * of the covenant of peace; *that* great *INTERPRETER* * of the divine counſels, who, for his ſuperexcellent wiſdom, is juſtly deemed *one among a thouſand*, or rather the chiefeſt among ten thouſand: if he, by his enlightening SPIRIT, vouchſafe *to ſhew unto* the afflicted *man his* own perfect righteouſneſs; that moſt meritorious *uprightneſs*, on which alone a ſinner may depend, both for temporal and eternal ſalvation: *then* the poor diſtreſſed creature, attentive to this inſtruction, and applying this righteouſneſs, is made partaker of pardon. GOD, the ſovereign LORD of life and death, *is gracious unto him; and ſaith*, in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, as well as in the multitude of his mercies, *Deliver him from going down into the pit* of corruption, as a pledge of his deliverance from the pit of perdition. For *I have found a ranſom*, ſufficient to ſatisfy my juſtice. I have received an atonement, in behalf of this once obnoxious, now reconciled tranſgreſſor.

But why do I ſelect *one* particular paragraph? It ſeems to be the main deſign of the *whole* book, to overthrow all pretenſions of any juſtifying righteouſneſs in man; that the wretched ſinner, nay, that the greateſt ſaint, ſtript of every perſonal plea, may rely, only on the merits of a *REDEEMER*. This is the final iſſue of all thoſe warm debates, which paſs between the afflicted hero and his cenſorious friends. This is the grand reſult of *Elihu*'s calm reaſoning, and of *GOD* almighty's awful interrogatories. The apparent *centre* this †, in which all the lines terminate; juſtly therefore to be conſidered, as the *principal* ſcope of the whole work.

I muſt not omit an excellent obſervation, which I find in ſome *critical and explanatory notes* ‡ on the laſt words of *David*. The judicious author proving, that this ſong relates to *CHRIST*; that it diſplays the dignity of our REDEEMER, under the character of *The KING*, and *The JUST ONE*; adds as an explication of the laſt amiable and glorious title.——"Our LORD "JESUS CHRIST is ſo called, not ſo much for "having fulfilled all righteouſneſs, in his own perſon, "and performed an unſinning obedience to the will of "GOD, as becauſe, by his righteouſneſs imputed to us, "we alſo upon the terms ‖ of the goſpel, are juſtified, "or accounted righteous before GOD."

I think we may evidently diſcern the ſame vein of evangelical doctrine, running through many of the *pſalms*.——*He ſhall convert* § *my ſoul*; turn me, not only

* Gen. iii. 21.

†† *Rom.* iii. 22. ΕΙΣ παντας, ΕΠΙ παντας τους πιστευοντας.

‡ Gen. xxii. 18.

‖ See St *Paul*'s comment upon this invaluable promiſe, *Gal.* iii. 8; &c. *This* commentator, we all allow, was guided by the SPIRIT, and knew the mind of GOD. According to his expoſition of the text, it is pregnant with the doctrine of juſtification by faith, and contains an abridgment of the goſpel.

§ Hag. ii. 7. ¶ Exod. xxviii. 36, 37. ‡ Exod. xxviii. 38.

** See *Job* xxxiii. 22. &c.—CHRIST is called מלאך *The angel of* the divine *preſence*, Iſ. lxiii. 9. *The meſſenger of the covenant*, Mal. iii. 1.—He is alſo, in the moſt unlimited ſenſe of the phraſe, מליץ *The Interpreter* of the divine counſels: he, to whom the FATHER hath given the tongue of the learned, and by whom he makes known the otherwiſe unſearchable myſteries of the goſpel.—Should any doubt remain concerning the propriety of applying this paſſage to our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the reader, I hope, will give himſelf the pleaſure of peruſing the polite *Witſius Oecon.* lib. IV. cap. iii. § xxxi. and Dr *Grey*'s valuable notes upon the place, in his *Liber Jobi*.

† See *Job* xlii. 6. ‡ By Dr *Grey*. See 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1. &c.

‖ That is, *freely*: or as the prophet ſpeaks *without money and without price*. For nothing is requiſite, in order to a participation of CHRIST and his benefits, but a conviction of our extreme need, and an unfeigned deſire to receive them; receive them as gifts of pure grace, vouchſafed to the *moſt undeſerving* creatures.—This point, which is ſo intimately connected with our comfort and hope, the reader may ſee more fully ſtated in *Dialogue* XV.

§ *Pſal.* xxiii. 3. I am ſenſible, the word נפשי may ſignify to *refreſh* or *reſtore*; may anſwer to the *Greek* phraſe and

from sin and ignorance, but from every false confidence, and every deceitful refuge. *He shall bring me forth in paths of righteousness*, in those paths of imputed righteousness, which are always adorned with the trees of holiness; are always watered with the fountains of consolation; and always terminate in everlasting rest.—Some, perhaps, may ask, Why I give this sense to the passage? Why may it not signify the paths of duty, and the way of *our own* obedience?—Because such effects are here mentioned, as never have resulted, and never can result, from any duties of our own. These are not *green pastures*, but a parched and blasted heath. These are not *still waters*, but a troubled and disorderly * stream. Neither can these speak peace, or administer comfort, when we pass through the valley and shadow of death. To yield these blessings, is the exalted office of *CHRIST*, and the sole prerogative of *his* obedience.

Admitting, that this obedience is of sovereign advantage, during the years of life, and in the hour of death; it may still occur to the serious and inquisitive mind, what will be our safeguard, after the great change? When the soul departs, and our place on earth knows us no more; when the body revives, and we shall all stand before the judgment-seat; what will *then* avail us?—The same righteousness of our divine LORD. This, if I mistake not, is displayed in the very next psalm: which begins with a solicitous inquiry; subjoins a satisfactory answer, and closes with a most pertinent but rapturous apostrophe.——This is the inquiry, *Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall rise up in his holy place?*—This is the answer; *Even he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart* †. *He shall receive* ‡ *the blessing* of plenary remission *from the LORD, and righteousness also from the GOD of his salvation*: even that perfect righteousness, which is not acquired by man, but bestowed by JEHOVAH: which is not performed by the saint, but received by the sinner: which is the only solid basis, to support our hopes of happiness; the only valid plea, for an admission into the mansions of joy. Then follows the apostrophe. The prophet foresees the ascension of *CHRIST* and his saints into the kingdom of heaven. He sees his LORD marching at the head of the redeemed world, and conducting them into regions of honour and joy. Suitably to such a view, and in a most beautiful strain of poetry, he addresses himself to the heavenly portals; *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory*, with all the heirs of his grace and righteousness, *shall* make their triumphant entry; *shall enter in*, and go out no more.

Having shewn the powerful and extensive influence of our REDEEMER's righteousness; its efficacy, in this world to justify, in the other world to glory; well may the sweet singer of *Israel* profess his supreme value for it, and entire dependance on it. *I will go forth in the strength of the LORD GOD, and will make mention of thy righteousness only* *. As though he had said, I will have recourse to no other righteousness, for the consolation of my soul. I will plead no other righteousness, for the recommendation of my person. I will fly to no other righteousness, for my final acceptance, and endless felicity.——This is that *raiment of needle-work and clothing of wrought gold* †, in which the King's daughter is introduced to HIM, "who sitteth in the heavens over all." This is that garment *for glory and for beauty* ‡, which clothed our great HIGH PRIEST; and descending to his very feet ‖, clothes and adorns the lowest members of his mystical body.

Recollecting all the foregoing particulars, justly, and on the most rational ground, does our royal author declare, *Blessed are the people, that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted* §.——They are truly blessed, they alone are happy, who *know the joyful sound* of the gospel; not only receive it with their ears, but admit it into their very hearts; so as to partake of the sacred peace, and spiritual liberty, which it proclaims.——*They shall walk in the light of thy countenance*; they shall enjoy such communications of thy grace, and such manifestations of thy love, as will constitute the serenity and sunshine of their souls.—*In thy name, O LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in thy glorious person, and thy infinite merit, *shall they rejoice*: and not occasionally, but habitually; not barely at some distinguished intervals, but *all the day*. Their joy shall be as lasting, as it is substantial.——*And in thy righteousness shall they be exalted*, set above the tantalizing power of temporal things; placed beyond the slavish fear of the last enemy; and raised, when time shall be no more, to a state of celestial glory, and consummate bliss.

How thoroughly *evangelical* is this seraphic writer? He has joy, he has blessedness, and he looks for everlasting exaltation: yet not from his faith, his repentance, and his own sincere obedience. According to this, which is the modern scheme, faith, instead of receiving, would *supplant* the *LORD JESUS*; repentance, instead of being the gift of *CHRIST*, would become his *rival*; and sincere obedience, which is for the praise and glory of GOD, would *eclipse* and *impoverish* his grace.—But *David* adopts no such sentiments. *David* maintains no such doctrine. This is the invariable language of his heart, *All my springs* of hope, of trust, and consolation, O thou adored EMMANUEL, *are in thee* ¶.

This sense is the less precarious, I had almost said the more certain, as it exactly corresponds with the analogy of faith, and coincides with the express declarations of other scriptures.——*Isaiah* is styled the *evangelist* of the *Jewish* church; because more frequently

and denote the comforts of the HOLY GHOST.—This verb may also bear the same signification with the participle ἐπιστρεψας, in our LORD's exhortation to *Peter*, *when thou art converted*. Not describing the first grand revolution in the heart, by which a new determination is given to the judgment, and a new bias to the affections; but expressing those subsequent operations of the Divine SPIRIT, by which we are recovered from our various relapses, and healed of our daily infirmities. And I question, whether there is any instance, in which we more frequently need these restoring aids, than in the case of adhering to our REDEEMER's righteousness. So prone are we to *forget our resting-place!* so liable to fall from our stedfastness in CHRIST!

* *Blasted, disorderly*—Let not these words grate on the ear; or if they grate on the ear, let them humble the heart. What were *Job*'s duties? Zealous and exemplary; practised from his very youth; and neither excelled nor equalled by any person on earth. Yet these, in point of justification, were not a whit better than *Aspasio* represents. Let us hear the last words of this matchless saint, *I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes*. From this confession we learn, that, with all his furniture of *personal* obedience, he had just enough to be ashamed, confounded, undone.

† Psal. xxiv. 4. *Who* hath clean hands and a pure heart; he only, whose *heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience*, by the precious blood of CHRIST; and who *lives by faith on the SON of GOD* Heb. x. 22. Gal. ii. 20.

‡ The words of the apostle, ὁ λαμβανων την δωρεαν της δικαιοσυνης, are almost a literal translation, are the very best explanation, of the psalmist's language, נשא צדקה Rom. v. 17. Psal. xxiv. 5.

* Psal. lxxi. 16. There is, in the *Hebrew* original, and in the new translation, a very emphatical repetition; which adds weight to the sentiment, and demands a peculiar attention from the reader: *Thy righteousness, even thine only.*

† Psal. xlv. 13.

‡ Exod. xxviii. 31. *Notabat*, says WITSIUS upon the place, *illud pallium justitiæ, quo indutus est, et suos induit CHRISTUS.*

‖ Rev. i. 13. § Psal. lxxxix. 15. 16

¶ Psal. lxxxvii. 7.

than any of the prophets he celebrates, and more copiously explains, this and other peculiarities of the gospel.——In the very first chapter, he preaches these glad tidings: *Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.* *Zion*, the gospel-church, composed of fallen creatures, sometime disobedient to their GOD, and inslaved to Satan, shall be *redeemed*: redeemed, not with corruptible things, silver and gold, but by severe *judgments* executed on their glorious HEAD, and gracious REPRESENTATIVE: and not by these only, but by *righteousness* also; by the perfect and most meritorious righteousness of the same divinely-excellent PERSON †.

Our sacred author bears his testimony, with warmer zeal and brighter evidence, as he proceeds in his incomparable discourses. *Surely, shall one say,* (or, as it may be rendered, *only*) *in the LORD have I righteousness and strength* †. Please to observe, *Theron*; it is not said, in my own works, in my own repentance, no, nor in my own faith, but *in the LORD JESUS* have I righteousness:—righteousness for justification, and strength for sanctification: an imputed righteousness, to procure my acceptance; an imparted strength, to produce my holiness: the first constituting my title to the everlasting inheritance; the last forming my personal preparation for its enjoyment.—*Surely*, which expresses a firm persuasion, and an unshaken affiance. *Only*, which denotes an utter renunciation of all other confidence, and excludes every other ground of hope.—*Righteousnesses* ‡, the original is in the plural number: which seems to be used, not without an important design; to enlarge the significancy of the word, and make it correspond with the richness of the blessing: so that it may imply the fulness and super-eminent excellency of this gift of grace; as comprehending whatever ‖, either of suffering or of obedience, is requisite to the justification of sinners.—Insomuch that *in the* LORD JESUS CHRIST, and his all-perfect righteousness, *the seed of Israel shall* not only *be justified*, but rejoice; *and* not only confide, but *glory* §.

What he had just now asserted, he exemplifies in his own, and in the person of every true believer. *I will greatly rejoice in the* LORD, *my soul shall be joyful in my* GOD; *for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness* ¶.—True believers are compared, in one of our sacred eclogues, to *a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariot* †: to *horses*, than which no animal is more stately and graceful; to *Egyptian* horses, which were the best and completest then in the world; to those in *Pharaoh*'s chariot, which, doubtless, were a choice set, selected from thousands, and finest where all were fine. Here, methinks, I see the comparison realized. *Christians*, endued with such a spirit as breathes in this animated text, are like a collection of those gallant and majestic steeds; not destined to low drudgery, but appointed to run in the royal chariot; all life; full of fire; champing the bit, and eager for the chace. Nothing can more beautifully describe a state of exultation and ardour, than the preceding similitude, or the following words—*I will rejoice; I will greatly rejoice; my* very *soul*, and all that is within me, *shall be joyful in my* GOD. Wherefore? Because he *has clothed me*, undone sinner as I am, *with the garments of salvation*: because *he hath covered me*, defective as all my services are, *with the robe of righteousness*: A robe, which hides every sin, that in thought, word, or deed, I have committed: a robe, which screens from the sword of justice, the curse of the law, and all the vengeance my iniquities have deserved: a robe, which adorns and dignifies my soul; renders it fairer than the moon, clear as the sun, and meet for the inheritance of saints in light.

Having represented this righteousness, in a variety of grand and charming views,—the prophet farther characterizes it, as the *unalterable* and *never-failing* origin of our justification and happiness. This he displays by a train of images, bold and sublime to the last degree. *Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished* *.——Observe the vast dimensions, and the firm foundations, both of the upper and the lower world. How strong, how stedfast, they all appear! Yet these, indissoluble as they may seem, shall perish.——This majestic *globe*, on which mountains rise and oceans roll, shall lose its beautiful gloss; and be laid aside, like a decayed useless garment. Even that more majestic *concave*, in which stars are fixed, and planets revolve, shall be deprived of its very superior lustre; and vanish away, like the dissolving smoke.—Whereas *my salvation*, with all the spiritual and heavenly blessings included in it, shall subsist and flourish for ever. *And my righteousness*, which is the meritorious cause of all, shall be an immoveable foundation for repose and happiness.—In short, whether there be moral virtues, they shall be found wanting; whether there be Christian graces, they shall prove ineffectual; but my conformity to the law, and my obedience unto death, neither need addition, nor admit of change; they are *all-sufficient* in their merit, and in their virtue *everlasting*.

When *day* arises on our benighted hemisphere, it breaks and spreads by a gradual increase: forming, first, the grey twilight; next the blushing morn; then the shining light; till all is heightened into the blaze and glow of noon.—When *spring* revisits our wintry clime, she also advances by gentle degrees: first, swells the bud, and protrudes the gem; then, expands the leaf, and unfolds the blossom; the face of things is continually changing for the better; and nature shews herself, almost every hour, in some new and more engaging dress.—This leisurely process renders the *strong* effulgence of the celestial orb more supportable; and the *lovely* expansions of the vegetable creation, more observable.

So progressive and increasing are the displays of JESUS CHRIST, exhibited in the scriptures: whose appearance is unspeakably *more delightful* to the soul, than the emanations of orient light are to the eye, or the entertainments of the vernal season to our other senses.—The gloom of fallen *Adam* was alleviated by a ray from this SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.—*Abraham* and the patriarchs saw afar off the blessed *JESUS*, *as the morning spread upon the mountains* †.—The *psalmist* and the prophets beheld his nearer approaches, like the sun upon the point of rising.—To the apostles and evangelists he arose, in perfect lustre, and complete beauty. The grace and the privileges, which *dawned* under other dispensations of religion, are *brought* even to meridian *light* by the gospel.—This I mention, just to intimate, what you may expect from a following letter.

In the mean time, let us attend to the prophet *Daniel*. He records a message from heaven, which is more clearly descriptive of this great evangelical blessing, than all the foregoing texts.——He had been under much distress, and in great perplexity; afflicted

* *Hanc redemptionem docet* SPIRITUS SANCTUS *habere nos in obedientia et sanguine* JESU CHRISTI. Is. li. 27. VITRING. in loc. † Is. xlv. 24.

‡ The parallel to which, both in construction and signification, is the phrase used by St John, Δικαιωματα, Rev. xix. 8. *The fine linen is the righteousness* (properly the righteousnesses) *of the saints.*

‖ *Vult dicere propheta, in JEHOVAH esse* ID PROPTER QUOD *peccator resipiscens et credens*, a peccatis absolvi, et jure ad benedictionem cœlestem *donari queat ac debeat: esse illud JEHOVÆ proprium; ab ipso quærendum; quod extra ipsum non invenitur.* VITRING.

§ Is. xlv. 25. ¶ Is. lxi. 10. † Cant. i. 9.

* Is. li. 6. † Joel ii. 2.

for

for his own, and his countrymen's ſins; anxious for the welfare of the choſen nation, and the proſperity of true religion. When an angel was diſpatched to the holy mourner, with this moſt chearing news; which, received by faith, is the richeſt balm to a wounded conſcience, and the only remedy for a guilty world: *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city; to finiſh the tranſgreſſion, and make an end of ſin; to make reconciliation for iniquity; and to bring an everlaſting righteouſneſs* *.——This propheey relates to the MESSIAH. It foretels, that, in the fulneſs of time, he ſhould *finiſh the tranſgreſſion* ‡; reſtrain and ſuppreſs the power of corruption, by purifying to himſelf a peculiar people: —ſhould *make an end of ſin* ‡; by ſealing up or ſecreting its guilt, and totally aboliſhing its condemning power: —ſhould *make reconciliation for iniquity*, by ſuſtaining the vengeance due to ſinners, and fully ſatisfying the divine juſtice for all their offences:—ſhould not barely publiſh, but accompliſh and *bring in a righteouſneſs* ‖; that it may be preſented both to GOD and man; to GOD, for the reparation of his violated law; to man, for the juſtification of his obnoxious perſon:—That this righteouſneſs ſhould be *everlaſting*; not ſuch as may be compared to the morning-cloud, which paſſeth away; or to the early dew, which is ſoon dried up; but ſuch as will outlaſt the hills, on which the latter ſhines; and outlaſt the ſkies, through which the former fails: A righteouſneſs, whoſe merits extend to every period and every action of our lives; and when once made ours by imputation, remains and will remain our unalienable property.——To this all the ſaints, who, in ancient generations, pleaſed GOD, owe their acceptance; on this, all the children of men, who, in future ages, hope for his mercy, muſt rely; by this the whole aſſembly of the bleſſed will be invariably and eternally precious in his ſight.——Exalted character! Can it be applicable to any thing leſs, than the righteouſneſs of the incarnate GOD? Surely none can imagine, that *Daniel* would ſpeak in ſuch a *magnificent* ſtrain of any *human* righteouſneſs; ſince, in this very chapter, he profeſſedly depretiates himſelf, his fellow-ſaints, all human performances whatever.

I forgot, in the proper place, to conſult the prophet *Jeremiah*. Let us now refer ourſelves to his determination. Celebrating the SAVIOUR of *Judah* and *Iſrael*, he ſays, *This is his name, whereby he ſhall be called, The* LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS: A determination, ſo clear and ſatisfactory, as not to leave, one would almoſt conclude, any room for appeal.——Should the ſenſe of the paſſage be queſtioned, I think, there cannot be a more authentic explication, than the preceding extracts from *Iſaiah* and *Daniel*. And having the unanimous atteſtation of two inſpired penmen, we may venture to abide by ſuch authority, even in oppoſition to ſome reſpectable names.——In the verſe immediately foregoing, the *eſſential* holineſs of the REDEEMER is diſplayed, under the character of the RIGHTEOUS BRANCH.——The ſanctity, which he will *impart* to his ſubjects, is intimated by his *executing judgment and juſtice in the earth*.——In the clauſe we have quoted, his *imputed* righteouſneſs is foretold and promiſed.——Thus the ſeveral ſentences are diſtinct; the deſcription of the SAVIOUR is complete; and he appears perfectly ſuited to the exigencies of a wretched world; in their worſt eſtate, enſlaved to Satan, and in their beſt, falling ſhort of the glory of GOD.——This therefore I take to be the grand and extenſive meaning of the propliet; not barely, the righteous LORD; not barely, the LORD who infuſes righteouſneſs into ſinful ſouls; but the incarnate JEHOVAH *, whoſe *mediatorial* righteouſneſs is, by an act of gracious imputation, *ours*,—to all the intents of juſtification and ſalvation; ours,—as much ours for theſe bleſſed purpoſes, as if we had wrought it out, each in his own perſon †.

Foreſeeing and contemplating theſe bleſſings, the enraptured *Zechariah* cries out, *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; ſhout, O daughter of Jeruſalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is juſt, and having ſalvation, lowly and riding upon an aſs, and upon a colt the foal of an aſs* ‡.—— He addreſſes himſelf to *Zion* and *Jeruſalem*, to the eccleſiaſtical and civil community. Perſons of all ranks and of every character, are exhorted to *rejoice; greatly*; nay, to expreſs the joy of their heart, by loud *Hallelujahs*, and triumphant *exclamations*.——What is the cauſe of this general delight? what can fill both church and ſtate with ſuch high ſatisfaction? *Thy King cometh unto thee*: even thy glorious KING, who rules in heaven, and rules in the heart; whoſe ſervice is freedom, and whoſe laws are love.——*He is juſt*: divinely righteous in his nature, and he cometh to fulfil all righteouſneſs in thy ſtead. *Having ſalvation*: hereby procuring ſalvation for his people; deliverance from ſin, from death and hell; from every evil thou deſerveſt, and from every miſery thou feareſt.——That none may be diſcouraged, and none deterred, from applying to this PRINCE of peace, he is, amidſt all the honours of his ſovereignty, *lowly*: does not abhor the baſeſt, will not deſpiſe the meaneſt; to the poor his goſpel is preached, and for the guilty his benefits are intended.——As an emblem, as a proof, of this moſt amiable and condeſcending goodneſs, *he will ride*; not like the conquerors of old, in a triumphal chariot, or on a richly-capariſoned ſteed; but upon the moſt mean and deſpicable of all animals, *an aſs*; nay, what is ſtill more deſpicable, on a rude undiſciplined *colt*, *the* wayward *foal of an aſs* ‖.

* Dan. ix. 24. † כלא ‡ תחם

‖ ברך I think, muſt ſignify more than to *publiſh* or *preach*. Had this been all that the angel was commiſſioned to declare, הגד or נגד would probably have been uſed.—The word implies ſuch *a bringing in* (the original is the ſame) as when *Abel* brought his ſacrifice to the altar, for the divine acceptance; and *Eſau* brought his veniſon into the chamber, for his father's uſe, *Gen.* xxvii. 31.

* *Jer.* xxiii. 5. 6. In theſe golden, infinitely-better than golden verſes, are characterized the divine and the human natures of CHRIST, together with his mediatorial office. The *divine* nature; in that he enjoys the honours of the GODHEAD, and poſſeſſes the incommunicable name JEHOVAH.—The *human* nature; in that he was to be *raiſed up unto David*, and ſpring as a branch from his root.—The *mediatorial* office; in that he is the *righteouſneſs* of his people, and the *ſalvation* of ſinners.

† *Witſius*, ſpeaking of the *mediatorial* righteouſneſs, has written in *Latin*, what *Aſpaſio* expreſſes in *Engliſh*; *Per illam obedientiam tota multitudo illorum, qui ad ipſum pertinent*, juſti conſtituuntur; *id eſt, cenſentur jus habere ad æternam vitam, non minus quam ſi quilibet eorum in propria perſona illam obedientiam præſtitiſſet.* Lib. II. cap. v.

‡ Zech. ix. 9.

‖ Becauſe ſome profane ſcoffers have preſumed to ridicule this very remarkable incident of our LORD's life, ſome interpreters of note have endeavoured to reſcue it from their *abuſive* attempts, by obſerving,—"That the *eaſtern* aſſes are much larger and more "graceful than ours; that patriarchs and judges thought it no "diſgrace to ride upon them."

This obſervation has, I fear, more of *falſe delicacy*, than of real truth, or Chriſtian ſimplicity. In the *partriarchal* ages, I acknowledge, perſons of high diſtinction thought it no diſhonour, in their journeys and proceſſions, to appear on this animal. But I very much queſtion, whether the ſame faſhion ſubſiſted, or the ſame way of thinking prevailed, in the reign of *Tiberius Cæſar*. See *Jam.* iii. 3.——Nay, I am ſtrongly inclined to ſuſpect, that this plain primitive cuſtom was ſuperſeded, even in the days of *Zechariah*. For long before this time I find, that *Solomon had four thouſand ſtalls of horſes for his chariots, and twelve thouſand horſemen*: and that *horſes were brought to him out of Egypt, and divers other countries*, 1 Kings iv. 26. x. 28. 29. From this period, it is probable, none but the poor and inferior ſort of people rode upon aſſes.——When *Iſaiah* propheſied, *the land was full of horſes*, Iſ. ii. 7. Under the *Perſian* monarchy, when *Zechariah* flouriſhed, horſes were

in

And now,—since my *Theron* confesses himself to be *miserable, and poor, and naked*; since the eyes of his understanding are enlightened, to see the impurity of his heart; the imperfection of his righteousness; and that he is, in himself, a lost undone sinner,—what advice, chearing and salutary, shall I suggest? O! let him listen to an ADVISER, infinitely more able and compassionate; listen to HIM, who is the ANCIENT OF DAYS, and the WISDOM OF GOD; *I counsel thee*, says the blessed JESUS, *to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayst be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed* *.—*Gold!* what can this denote, but all those spiritual treasures, which are hid in CHRIST? which are, in measure, unsearchable; in value, inestimable; in duration, eternal.——*White raiment!* Surely this must signify the righteousness of our REDEEMER; which is all purity, and all perfection; which clothes the soul, as a most suitable and commodious garment; which covers every deformity and every sin; and presents the believer, free from shame, and free from blemish, before the throne of the MAJESTY in the heavens.

This, to use the delicate language, and amiable images of *Isaiah*,—*this* doctrine, embraced by a realizing faith, *is the* only pillow of *rest, wherewith ye may cause the weary* and heavy-laden soul *to find repose; and this is the* sovereign cordial, prepared by infinite mercy, for the *refreshment* of anxious and desponding transgressors. O! let us not be in the number of those proud *and* refractory creatures, who, though *they* infinitely needed, yet *would not bear* † the gracious news, nor receive the unspeakable benefit.——In this respect, and in this most eminently, is that other saying of the same sublime teacher, true; *The* LORD *of hosts shall be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, to the residue of his people* ‡. Shall we tear from our temples, or reject with disdain this unfading and heavenly ornament, in order to substitute a mean and tawdry chaplet of our own.

Let me add a pertient passage from one of our celebrated dramatic writers; which if proper in *his* sense, will be incomparably more so, according to *our* manner of application.

——It were contemning,
With impious self-sufficient arrogance,
This beauty of our GOD, not to accept,
With every mark of honour, such a gift.

I might proceed to urge this expostulation of the poet, as I might easily have multiplied my quotations from holy writ. But, studious of brevity, I leave both, without farther enlargement, to your own meditation. Yet, more studious of my friend's happiness, I cannot conclude without wishing him an interest, a clear and established interest, in this everlasting righteousness of CHRIST. For so, and so only, can he have *everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.*——I am, my dear *Theron*,

Inviolably yours,

ASPASIO.

P. S. Opposite to the room in which I write, is a most agreeable prospect of the gardens and the fields; *these* covered with herbage, and loaded with corn; *those* adorned with flowers, and abounding with esculents: all appearing with so florid and so beautiful an aspect, that they really seem, in conformity to the *psalmist*'s description, even to *laugh and sing.*——Let me just observe, that all these fine scenes, all these rich productions sprung,—from what? From the *dissolution* of the respective seeds. The seeds planted by the gardener, and the grain sowed by the husbandman, first perished in the ground, and then the copious increase arose.

Much in the same manner, a true faith in CHRIST and his righteousness arises—from what? From the *ruins* of self-sufficiency, and the *death* of personal excellency. Let me therefore entreat my *Theron*, still to take the diary for his counsellor; still to keep an eye on the depravity of his nature, and the miscarriages of his life. The more clearly we see, the more deeply we feel, our guilt and our misery, the more highly shall we value the obedience of our blessed SURETY.——In such a heart faith will flourish as a rose, and lift up its head like a cedar in *Lebanon*. To such a soul, the great REDEEMER's righteousness will be welcome, as waters to the thirsty soil, or as rivers in the sandy desert.

in still greater repute. Well therefore might the prophet say, with wonder and delight,—*lowly and riding upon an ass!*

Was it a *mean* attitude? *exceedingly* mean? mean even to *contempt?* I make no scruple to grant it: nay, I make my boast of it! It is for the honour of my LORD's condescension; it is for utter confusion of all worldly pomp and grandeur; and it is for the unspeakable comfort of my sinful soul.——Most charming humility! most endearing gentleness! HE, *who rideth upon the heavens as it were upon an horse, and maketh the clouds his chariot*, to atone for my pride, and to encourage my hope, disdained not, in the days of his flesh, to ride upon an ass.

They who would *dignify* this action, any otherwise than from its ever-to-be-admired abasement, seem to have forgotten the stable and the manger. They who are *offended* at this circumstance, and ashamed to own their LORD in his deep humiliation, have but very imperfectly learned the apostle's lesson; *GOD forbid, that I should glory, save in the cross of* CHRIST JESUS *my* LORD.

* Rev. iii. 18. † Is. xxviii. 12. ‡ Is. xxviii. 5.

LETTER V.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

GIVE me leave to relate an uncommon accident, which happened a little while ago in this neighbourhood, and of which I myself was a spectator.——The day was the sabbath; the place appropriated to divine worship, was the scene of this *remarkable* affair.

A boy came running into the church, breathless and trembling. He told, but in a low voice, those who stood near, that a press-gang * was advancing to besiege the doors, and arrest the sailors.——*An* alarm was immediately taken. The seamen, with much hurry, and no small anxiety, began to shift for themselves. The rest of the congregation, perceiving an unusual stir, were struck with surprise.——A whisper of inquiry ran from seat to seat; which increased, by degrees, into a confused murmur. No one could inform his neighbour; therefore every one was left

* The reader, it is hoped, will excuse whatever may appear *low*, or favour of the *plebeian*, in any of these circumstances. If *Aspasio* had set himself to *invent* the description of a panic, he would probably have formed it upon some more raised and dignified incident. But as this was a real *matter of fact*, which happened in one of our sea-port towns; truth even in a plain dress may possibly be no less acceptable than fiction tacked up with the most splendid embellishments.

ſolve the appearance, from the ſuggeſtions of a *timorous imagination*. Some ſuſpected the town was on fire. Some were apprehenſive of an invaſion from the *Spaniards*. Others looked up, and looked round, to ſee if the walls were not giving way, and the roof falling upon their heads.—In a few moments, the conſternation became general. The men ſtood like ſtatues, in ſilent amazement, and unavailing perplexity. The women ſhrieked aloud; fell into fits; ſunk to the ground in a ſwoon. Nothing was ſeen, but *wild diſorder*; nothing heard, but *tumultuous clamour*.——Drowned was the preacher's voice. Had he ſpoke in thunder, his meſſage would ſcarce have been regarded. To have gone on with his work, amidſt ſuch a prodigious ferment, had been like arguing with a whirlwind, or talking to a tempeſt.

This brought to my mind that great *tremendous day*, when the heavens will paſs away; when the earth will be diſſolved; and all its inhabitants receive their final doom.—If, at ſuch incidents of very inferior dread, our hearts are ready to fail; what unknown and inconceivable aſtoniſhment muſt ſeize the guilty conſcience, when the hand of the ALMIGHTY ſhall open thoſe unparalleled ſcenes of wonder, deſolation, and horror!—when the trumpet ſhall ſound,—the dead ariſe,—the world be in flames,—the JUDGE on the throne,—and all mankind at the bar!

The trumpet ſhall ſound *, ſays the prophetic teacher. And how ſtartling, how ſtupendous the ſummons! Nothing equal to it, nothing like to it, was ever heard through all the regions of the univerſe, or all the revolutions of time.—When conflicting armies have diſcharged the bellowing artillery of war, or when victorious armies have ſhouted for joy of the conqueſt, the ſeas and ſhores have rung, the mountains and plains have echoed. But the ſhout of the archangel and the trump of GOD, will reſound from pole to pole; will pierce the centre, and ſhake the pillars of heaven. Stranger, ſtranger ſtill! it will penetrate even the deepeſt receſſes of the tomb. It will pour its amazing thunder into all thoſe abodes of ſilence. The dead, the very dead, ſhall hear.

When the trumpet has ſounded, *the dead ſhall ariſe*.—In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the graves open, the monumental piles are cleft aſunder, and the nations under-ground ſtart into day. What an immenſe harveſt of men and women, ſpringing up from the caverns of the earth, and the depths of the ſea! Stand a while, my ſoul, and conſider the wonderful ſpectacle.——*Adam* formed in paradiſe, and the babe born but yeſterday, the earlieſt ages, and lateſt generations, meet upon the ſame level. *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, people of all climes and languages, unite in the promiſcuous throng. Here thoſe vaſt armies, which, like ſwarms of locuſts, covered countries; which, with an irreſiſtible ſweep over-run empires; here they all appear, and here they all are loſt; loſt like the ſmall drop of a bucket, when plunged into the unfathomable and boundleſs ocean.—O! the multitudes! the multitudes! which theſe eyes ſhall ſurvey, when GOD *calleth the heavens from above, and the earth, that he may judge his people*. What ſhame muſt fluſh the guilty cheek! what anguiſh wound the polluted breaſt! to have all their filthy practices, and infamous tempers, expoſed before this innumerable croud of witneſſes! Fly, my *Theron*; and fly, my ſoul; inſtantly let us fly, earneſtly let us fly, to the purifying blood of *JESUS*; that all our ſins may be blotted out; that we may be found *unblameable* and *unreproveable*, in the preſence of the aſſembled world; and, what is infinitely more to be revered, in the ſight of the omnipotent *GOD*.

When the ſwarm iſſues, the hive will *burn*. There is no more need of this habitable globe. The elect have fought the good fight, and finiſhed their courſe. The wicked have been tried, and found incorrigible. The important drama is ended: every actor has performed his part: now therefore the ſcenes are taken down, and the ſtage is demoliſhed.——*Woe be to the earth, and to the works thereof!* Its ſtreams are turned into pitch, its duſt into brimſtone; and the breath of the *ALMIGHTY*, like a torrent of fire, enkindles the whole. See! ſee! how the conflagration rages,—ſpreads,—prevails over all! The foreſts are in a blaze, and the mountains are wrapt in flame. Cities, kingdoms, continents, ſink in the burning deluge. *London*, *Britain*, *Europe* are no more. Through all the receptacles of water, through all the tracts of land, through the whole extent of air, nothing is diſcernable, but one vaſt, prodigious, fiery ruin.——Where now are the *treaſures* of the covetous? where the *poſſeſſions* of the mighty? where the *delights* of the voluptuary?—How wiſe, how happy are they, whoſe portion is lodged in heavenly manſions! Their inheritance is incorruptible and undefiled; ſuch as the laſt fire cannot reach, nor the diſſolution of nature impair.

But ſee! the azure vault cleaves; the expanſe of heaven is rolled back like a ſcroll; and the *JUDGE*, the *JUDGE* appears! *He cometh*, cries a mighty ſeraph, the herald of his approach, *he cometh to judge the world in righteouſneſs, and miniſter true judgment unto the people!*—He cometh, not as formerly, in the habit of a ſervant, but clad with uncreated glory, and magnificently attended with the armies of heaven. Angels and Archangels ſtand before him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand of thoſe celeſtial ſpirits miniſter unto him.——Behold him, ye faithful followers of the *LAMB*; and wonder and love. This is *HE*, who bore all *your* iniquities on the ignominious croſs. This is *HE*, who fulfulled all righteouſneſs for the juſtification of *your* perſons.——Behold him, ye deſpiſers of his grace; and wonder and periſh. This is *HE*, whoſe merciful overtures you have contemned, and on whoſe precious blood you have trampled.

The great *white throne* *, beyond deſcription auguſt and formidable, is erected. The KING of heaven, the LORD of glory, takes his ſeat on the dreadful tribunal. *Mercy*, on his right hand, diſplays the olive-branch of peace, and holds forth the crown of righteouſneſs. *Juſtice*, on his left, poiſes the impartial ſcale, and unſheaths the ſword of vengeance. While *Wiſdom* and *Holineſs*, brighter than ten thouſand ſuns, beam in his divine aſpect.——What are all the preceding events, to this new ſcene of dignity and awe? The peals of thunder, ſounding in the archangels trumpet; the blaze of a burning world, and the ſtrong convulſions of expiring nature; the unnumbered myriads of human creatures, ſtarting into inſtantaneous exiſtence, and thronging the aſtoniſhed ſkies; all theſe ſeem *familiar* incidents, compared with the appearance of the incarnate *JEHOVAH*.——Amazement, more than amazement, is all around. Terror and glory unite in their extremes. From the ſight of his majeſtic eye, from the inſupportable ſplendors of his face, the earth itſelf and the very heavens *flee away* †.——How then? oh! how ſhall the ungodly *ſtand?* ſtand in his angry preſence, and draw near to this conſuming fire?

Yet draw near they muſt, and take their trial,—their deciſive trial at his righteous bar. Every action comes under examination. For each idle word they muſt give an account. Not ſo much as a ſecret thought eſcapes this exact ſcrutiny.—How ſhall the criminals, the impenitent criminals, either conceal their guilt, or elude the ſentence? They have to do with a ſagacity too keen to be deceived, with a power too ſtrong to be reſiſted, and (O! terrible, terrible conſideration!) with a ſeverity of moſt juſt diſpleaſure, that will *never* relent, *never* be entreated more.—What ghaſtly deſpair lours on their pale looks! What racking agonies rend

* 1 Cor. xv. 52.

* Rev. xx. 11.

† Rev. xx. 11.

* their

their distracted hearts! The bloody axe and the torturing wheel, are safe, are down, compared with their prodigious woe. And (O holy GOD! wonderful in thy doings! fearful in thy judgments!) even this prodigious woe is the *gentlest* of visitations, compared with that indignation and wrath, which are hanging over their guilty heads,—which are even now falling on all the sons of rebellion,—which will plunge them deep in aggravated and endless destruction.

And is there a last day? and must there come
A sure, a fix'd, irrevocable doom?

Surely then, to use the words of a pious prelate *, it should be "the main care of our lives and deaths, "what shall give us peace and acceptation before the "dreadful tribunal of GOD. What but righteousness? "What righteousness, or whose? Ours or *CHRIST*'s? "Ours, in the inherent graces wrought in us, in the holy "works wrought by us? or *CHRIST*'s, in his most "perfect obedience and meritorious satisfaction, wrought "for us, and applied to us? The *Popish* faction is for the "former. We Protestants are for the latter. *GOD* is "direct on our side, as his word can make him; every "where blazoning the defects of our own righteousness, "every where extolling the perfect obedience of our "*REDEEMER*'s."

Behold! says the everlasting *KING*, *I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone; a tried stone; a precious corner-stone; a sure foundation*: HE THAT BELIEVETH, SHALL NOT MAKE HASTE †. As this text contains so noble a display of our SAVIOUR's consummate ability for his great work; as it is admirably calculated to preserve the mind from distressing fears, and to settle it in a steady tranquillity; you will give me leave to touch it cursorily with my pen; just as I should descant upon it in conversation, was I now sitting in one of your agreeable arbours, and enjoying your more agreeable company.

How beautiful the gradation! how lively the description! and how very important the practical improvement! or, I might say, the inscription which is engraven on the wonderful stone.——*Behold!* Intended to rouse and fix our most attentive regard. The *GOD* of heaven speaks. He speaks, and every syllable is balm; every sentence is rich with consolation. If ever therefore we have ears to hear, let it be to this *SPEAKER*, and on this occasion.

A stone. Every thing else is sliding sand; is yielding air; is a breaking bubble. Wealth will prove a vain shadow; honour an empty breath; pleasure a delusory dream; our own righteousness a spider's web. If on these we rely, disappointment must ensue, and shame be inevitable. Nothing but CHRIST, nothing but CHRIST, can stably support our spiritual interests, and realize our expectations of true happiness. And, blessed be the divine goodness! he is, for this purpose, not a stone only, but

A tried stone. Tried, in the days of his humanity, by all the vehemence of temptations, and all the weight of afflictions; yet, like gold from the furnace, rendered more shining and illustrious by the fiery scrutiny.—Tried, under the capacity of a SAVIOUR, by millions and millions of depraved, wretched, ruined creatures; who have always found him *perfectly able*, and as *perfectly willing*, to expiate the most enormous guilt,—to deliver from the most inveterate corruptions,—and save, to the very uttermost, all that come unto GOD through him.

A corner stone: which not only sustains, but unites the edifice; incorporating both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, believers of various languages, and manifold denominations,—here in one harmonious bond of brotherly love,—hereafter in one common participation of eternal joy.

* Bishop *Hall*. † Is. xxxviii. 16.

A precious stone. More precious than rubies; the pearl of great price; and the desire of all nations. Precious, with regard to the divine dignity of his person, and the unequalled excellency of his mediatorial offices. In these, and in all respects, greater than *Jonah*,—wiser than *Solomon*,—fairer than the children of men,—chiefest among ten thousand,—and, to the awakened sinner, or enlightened believer, *altogether lovely* *.

A sure foundation †: such as no pressure can shake: equal, more than equal to every weight; even to sin, the heaviest load in the world.—*The Rock of ages*; such as never has failed, never will fail, those humble penitents, who cast their burden upon the LORD REDEEMER; who roll all ‡ their guilt, and fix their whole hopes, on this immoveable basis.——Or, as the words *may* be rendered, *a foundation* ‖! *a foundation!* There is a fine spirit of vehemency in the sentence, thus understood. It speaks the language of exultation, and expresses an important discovery. That which mankind infinitely want; that which multitudes seek, and find not; it is here! it is here! This, this is the foundation for their pardon, their peace, their eternal felicity.

Whosoever believeth, though pressed with adversities, or surrounded by dangers, *shall not make haste* §: but, free from tumultuous and perplexing thoughts, preserved from rash and precipitate steps, he shall possess his soul in patience; knowing the sufficiency of those merits, and the fidelity of that grace, on which he has reposed his confidence, shall quietly and without perturbation wait for an expected end.——And not only amidst the perilous or disastrous changes of life, but even in the day of everlasting judgment, such

* Cant. v. 16. † *Fundamentum fundatissimum.*

‡ *Roll*—This is the exact sense of the sacred phrase, גול על in Psal. xxii. 8. xxxvii. 5. Prov. xvi. 3. I am not ignorant, that some people have presumed to *censure*, and many have been *shy* of using this bold and vigorous metaphor: which nevertheless appears to me, of all others the most just, the most significant, and therefore the most truly beautiful.

A burden, that is manageable and comparatively light, we *carry*, we *throw*. But that which is extremely ponderous and quite unwieldy, we move only by rolling. Accordingly, stones of an enormous size, are called by the oriental writers, *stones of rolling*, Ezra v. 8.—Consider the expression in this view, and nothing can represent, with greater or with equal energy, that prodigious load, which, heavier than the sand of the sea, oppresses the guilty conscience.—By substituting any other word, we enfeeble and dilute the sense; we lose the capital and striking idea.

Vain man would be wise. Let him not then, for the credit of his ingenuity, adventure to correct the language of omniscience. This, if any thing in nature, is

Periculosæ plenum opus aleæ.

This will be sure to discover, not his fine taste, but his *grovelling* apprehension, and his *rampant* pride. To improve, with the painter's brush, the glowing colours of the rainbow; to heighten, by fuller's soap, the lustre of the new-fallen snows; would be a more modest attempt, and a much easier task, than to make an *index expurgatorius*, or a table of *errata*, when the SPIRIT of inspiration dictates.

משכ טיסר ‖

§ *Shall not make haste*, לא יחיש This metaphorical expression, though it might be very intelligible to an *Hebrew*, is, to an *English* reader, like some fine picture placed in a *disadvantageous* light. We may possibly illustrate the prophet's meaning, and exemplify his assertion, if we compare the conduct of *Moses*, with that of the *Israelites*, on viewing the fatal catastrophe of *Dathan* and *Abiram*.—When the earth trembled under their feet; when the ground opened its horrid jaws; when the presumptuous sinners were down alive into the pit; when the tremendous chasm closed upon the screaming wretches; the children of *Israel*, it is written, *fled at the cry of them*; fled in wild and hasty confusion; *for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.*—But *Moses*, who denounced the dreadful doom; *Moses*, who was sure of the divine protection; *Moses* made no such precipitate or disorderly *haste*. He stood calm and composed; saw the whole alarming transaction, without any uneasy emotions of fear, or any unnecessary attempts to escape. So that *his behaviour* seems to be a clear and apposite comment on *Isaiah*'s *phrase*. See *Numb.* xvi.

persons

persons shall *stand with boldness*.——They shall look up to the grand ARBRITATOR,—look round on all the solemnity of his appearance,—look forward to the unalterable sentence,—and neither feel anxiety, nor fear damnation.

Such, in that day of terrors, shall be seen
To face the thunders with a godlike mien.
The planets drop: their thoughts are fix'd above;
The centre shakes; their hearts disdain to move.

This portion of scripture, which, I hope, will both delight and edify my friend, recalls our attention to the subject of my present letter;—to those propitiatory sufferings, and that justifying righteousness, which, imputed to sinners, are the ground of their comfort, and the bulwark of their security.——And what say the writers of the *New Testament* upon this point? they, whose understandings were opened by the "WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR," to discern the meaning of the ancient oracles; who must therefore be the most competent judges of their true import, and our surest guides in settling their sense.——Do *they* patronize our interpretation of the prophets? do *they* set their seal to the authenticity of our doctrine?

St *Luke*, in his ecclesiastical history, has preserved this weighty declaration of the apostles; *We believe, that, through the grace of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST, *we shall be saved even as they* *. Here the thing is implied.——St *Peter*, in the introduction to one of his theological epistles, thus addresses his happy correspondents: *To them that have obtained like precious faith, in the righteousness† of our* GOD *and* SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. Here the point is expressly asserted.——With equal clearness is the doctrine delivered by *Matthew* the evangelist; *Seek ye first the kingdom of* GOD *and his righteousness*‡. What can the *kingdom of* GOD mean? An experience of the power, and an enjoyment of the privileges of the gospel. What are we to understand by *his righteousness?* Surely, the righteousness which is worthy of this grand appellation, and peculiar to that blessed institution.

Would we learn, what is the great and distinguishing peculiarity of the gospel? St *Paul* informs us; *Therein the righteousness of GOD is revealed, from faith to faith.* As this text leads us into the epistle to the *Romans*;—as this epistle is, for the propriety of its method, as well as for the importance of its doctrine, singularly excellent,—it may not be amiss to examine its structure, and inquire into its design.

The apostle writes to a promiscuous people; who had been converted, partly from *Judaism*, partly from *Gentilism*. His aim is, to strike at the very root of their former errors respectively,—to turn them *wholly* to the superabundant grace of GOD, and establish them *solely* on the all-sufficient merits of CHRIST.

The *Gentiles* were, for the most part, grosly ignorant of GOD, and stupidly negligent of invisible interests. If any among them had a sense of religion, their virtues, they imagined, were meritorious of all that the DEITY could bestow. If they fell into sin; sin, they supposed, might easily be obliterated by repentance, or compensated by a train of sacrifices ‖. A few of their judicious sages taught, that the most probable means of securing the divine favour, was a sincere reformation of life.

The *Jews*, it is well known, placed a mighty dependence on their affinity to *Abraham*, and the covenant made with their fathers; on their adherence to the letter of the moral law, and their scrupulous performance of ceremonial institutions:—*Gentiles* and *Jews* agreeing in this mistake, that they looked for the pardon of guilt, and the attainment of happiness from some services done, or some qualities acquired by *themselves*.

Against these errors the zealous apostle draws his pen. He enters the lists like a true champion of CHRIST, in the most spirited and heroic manner imaginable. *I am not ashamed of the gospel of* CHRIST: for, however it may be deemed foolishness by the polite *Greeks*, or prove a stumbling-block to the carnal *Jews*, *it is the power of GOD unto*† *salvation*; it is the grand instrument, which he has ordained for his blessed purpose, and which he will certainly crown with the desired success.——Whence has the gospel this very peculiar power? Because therein a *righteousness is revealed*; a true and perfect righteousness, which obliterates all guilt, and furnishes a solid title to eternal life.——What righteousness is this! The righteousness not of man, but *of* GOD; which was promised by GOD in the scriptures; was introduced by GOD in the person of his SON; and, on account of its consummate excellency, is both acceptable and available in his sight.

This righteousness is *from faith to faith*‡; held forth, as it were, by a promising GOD, and apprehended by a believing soul: who, first, gives a firm *assent* to the Gospel; then, cordially *accepts* its blessings; from a conviction that the doctrine is true, passes to a persuasion that the privileges are his own.——When this is effected, a foundation is laid for all happiness; a principle is wrought, to produce all holiness.

But why was it requisite, that such a righteousness should be provided by *GOD*, and revealed in the gospel?—Because both *Gentile* and *Jew* neither possessed, nor could attain, any righteousness of their own; and this righteousness, though so absolutely necessary for their fallen state, was infinitely remote from all human apprehensions. The latter assertion is self-evident. The former is particularly demonstrated.—First, with regard to the *Gentiles*; the generality of whom were abandoned to the most scandalous excesses; and they who had escaped the grosser pollutions, fell short in the duties of natural religion.—Next, with regard to the *Jews*; many of whom lived in open violation of the external commandment; and not one of them acted up to the internal purity required by the *Mosaic* precepts.——From which premises, this conclusion is deduced; that each of them had transgressed even *their own* rule of action; that all of them were, on this account, utterly inexcusable; therefore *by the works of the law*, whether dictated by reason, or delivered by *Moses*, *no mortal can be justified*‡ in the sight of GOD.

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* Acts xv. 11.

† 2 *Pet.* i. 1. The phrase is *τησιν τ δικαιοσυν*. If we retain the common translation, it proves another very momentous truth: that *the righteousness of our* GOD, *even of our* SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, is the one *meritorious* procuring cause of *all* spiritual blessings; of faith, as well as of fruition; of grace, as well as of glory.

‡ Matth. iv. 33.

‖ See WITSII *Animadversiones Irenicæ*, cap. vii.—A choice little piece of *polemical* divinity, perhaps the very best that is extant. In which the most important controversies are fairly stated, accurately discussed, and judiciously determined; with a perspicuity of sense, and a solidity of reasoning, exceeded by nothing, but the remarkable conciseness, and the still more remarkable candour of the sentiments.

The *Oeconomia Fœderum*, written by the same hand, is a body of divinity; in its method so well digested,—in its doctrines so truly evangelical,—and (what is not very usual with our systematic writers) in its language so refined and elegant,—in its manner so affectionate and animating, that I would venture to recommend it to every young student in divinity: I would not scruple to risk all my reputation upon the merits of this performance; and I cannot but lament it, as one of my greatest losses, that I was *no sooner* acquainted with this most excellent author.—All those works have such a delicacy of composition, and such a sweet savour of holiness, that I know not any comparison more proper to represent their true character, than *the golden pot which had manna*: and was—outwardly, *bright* with burnished gold,—inwardly, *rich* with heavenly food.

* Rom. i. 16. † Rom. i. 17.

‡ *Rom.* iii. 20. There seems to be a kind of *humbling* or *degrading* turn in the apostle's language, *εκ εργ*, which may possibly

Left any ſhould imagine, that righteouſneſs may be obtained, if not by a conformity to the law of nature, or the law of *Moſes*, yet by an obſervation of *evangelical* ordinances; he farther declares, that ſinners are *juſtified freely*, without any regard to their own endowments; *through the redemption*, the complete redemption of *JESUS CHRIST* *: after ſuch a manner, as may lay them low in humiliation, even while it exalts them to the kingdom of heaven: after ſuch a manner, as may bring life and ſalvation to their ſouls, while all the glory reverts to GOD the FATHER, and his SON JESUS CHRIST.

In the proſecution of this very momentous ſubject, our ſacred diſputant removes an objection, which is as common, as it is plauſible. *Do we make void the law through faith?* Do we render it a vain inſtitution; ſuch as never has been, never will be fulfilled?—GOD *forbid!* This were a flagrant diſhonour to the divine LEGISLATOR and his holy commandments; ſuch as we would abhor, rather than countenance.——On the contrary, *we eſtabliſh the law* †; not only as we receive it for a *rule* of life, but as we expect no ſalvation without a proper, without a *perfect* conformity to its injunctions. ——How can this be effected? By qualifying its ſenſe, and ſoftening it into an eaſier ſyſtem? This were to *vacate* the law; to deprive it of its honours; and hinder it from attaining the due end, either of obedience or condemnation.——No; but we eſtabliſh the law, by believing in that great MEDIATOR, who has obeyed its every precept; ſuſtained its whole penalty; and ſatisfied all its requirements, in their utmoſt extent.

Farther to corroborate his ſcheme, he proves it from the renowned examples of *Abraham* and *David*.—The inſtance of *Abraham* is ſo clear, that it wants no comment. Any paraphraſe would rather obſcure, than illuſtrate it.——The other, derived from the teſtimony of the *pſalmiſt*, may admit the commentator's tool: yet not to hammer it into a new form, but only to clear away the rubbiſh; to reſcue it from miſrepreſentation, and place it in a true light. *Even as David deſcribeth the bleſſedneſs of the man, to whom GOD imputeth righteouſneſs without works, ſaying, Bleſſed are they, whoſe unrighteouſneſs is forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered: Bleſſed is the man, to whom the LORD will not impute ſin* ‡.——Here is *imputation* aſſerted;—the imputation of *righteouſneſs*;—of righteouſneſs *without works*; without any reſpect to, or any co-operation from, any kind of human works. It is a bleſſing vouchſafed to the ungodly; not founded on a freedom from ſin, but procuring a remiſſion of its guilt.

Some, I know, have attempted to reſolve all the force of this paſſage, into an argument for the *fameneſs* of pardon and juſtification. Whereas the apoſtle undertakes to prove, not that forgiveneſs and juſtification are identically the ſame, but that both are *abſolutely free*. To maintain which poſition, he argues,—"This doctrine is "as true, as it is comfortable. It agrees with the expe"rience, and has received the atteſtation of *David*. "When he ſpeaks of the bleſſed and happy man, he "deſcribes him, not as an innocent, but guilty perſon; "not as having any claim to the divine favour, on ac"count of deſerving performances, or recommending "properties; but as owing all his acceptance to that ſo"vereign grace which *forgives iniquities, and blots out ſin.* "Such is the caſe with regard to that evangelical juſtifi"cation, which we preach. *Even as*; it is, in the *manner* "of its *vouchſafement*; perfectly ſimilar to the bleſſedneſs "celebrated by the *pſalmiſt*."——This apoſtle's eye is not ſo directly upon the nature of the privilege, as upon the *freeneſs* with which it is granted. Nor can any infer from the tenor of his reaſoning, that to be forgiven, is the ſame as to be juſtified; only that both are acts of infinitely-rich mercy, deſigned for ſinners, promiſed to ſinners, beſtowed on ſinners; who have nothing, nothing of their own, either to boaſt, or to plead.

In the fifth chapter, from verſe the twelfth to the end, the ſacred penman points out the *cauſe*, and explains the *method* of juſtification. Of which this is the ſum;—That CHRIST, in purſuance of the covenant of grace, fulfilled all righteouſneſs in the ſtead of his people;—That this righteouſneſs, being performed for them, is imputed to them:—That, by virtue of this gracious imputation, they are abſolved from guilt, and entitled to bliſs; as thoroughly abſolved, and as fully entitled, as if in their own perſons they had undergone the expiatory ſufferings, and yielded the meritorious obedience.—Leſt it ſhould ſeem ſtrange, in the opinion of a *Jew* or a *Gentile*, to hear of being juſtified by the righteouſneſs of *another*, the wary apoſtle urges a parallel caſe, recorded in the *Jewiſh* revelation, but ratified by *univerſal** experience; namely, our being condemned for the righteouſneſs of another.—In this reſpect, he obſerves, *Adam* was a type of our LORD; or *a figure of him that was to come* †. The relations the ſame, but the effects happily reverſed. *Adam* the head of his poſterity; CHRIST the head of his people. *Adam*'s ſin was unputed to all his natural deſcendents; CHRIST's righteouſneſs is imputed to all his ſpiritual offſpring. *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion brought death into the world, and all our woe; CHRIST's obedience brings life and all our happineſs ‡.——The whole cloſes with the very obvious and no leſs weighty inference; *Therefore, as, by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even ſo, by the righteouſneſs of one, the free gift came upon all men unto juſtification of life* ‖.

I do not recollect any other ſimilitude, which the apoſtle ſo minutely ſifts, and ſo copiouſly unfolds. He explains it; he applies it; he reſumes it; he dwells upon it; and ſcarcely knows how to deſiſt from it. I am ſure, you will not blame me, if I imitate the ſacred author; revert to the ſubject; and quote another paſſage from the ſame paragraph.——*Much more ſhall they who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteouſneſs, reign in life by one, JESUS CHRIST* §.—Here, I am ready to think, the inſpired writer puts a difference between the two grand bleſſings purchaſed by EMMANUEL, remiſſion and righteouſneſs ¶. For who are the perſons which *receive abundance of grace?* They, I apprehend, that, having ſinned much, have much forgiven.——Who are the perſons which *receive abundance of the gift of righteouſneſs?* They that, having in their own conduct wrought out none, which will bear the teſt of GOD's impartial ſcrutiny, have one placed to their account, which the all-ſeeing eye of heaven approves.——However, whether the diſtinction I have ventured to propoſe, be fanciful or ſubſtantial, of this I am perſuaded, that *the gift of*

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poſſibly be preſerved in the tranſlation, *no mortal*.—We may farther obſerve the very nice and exact manner of the ſacred argumentation. Leſt it ſhould be ſaid, and from the authority of *St James, a man is juſtified by works*; our unerring writer tacitly allows, that *before men* this is practicable, *before men* this is proper; but not παρα θεω, not *before* GOD.

* Rom. iii. 24.

† *Rom.* iii. 31. An inconteſtable proof, that the apoſtle treats of the *moral* law.

‡ Rom. iv. 6, 7.

* By the pains and death which *infants*, in every nation, endure; which are unqueſtionably puniſhments, and to which they are doomed by the righteous judgment of GOD.

† Rom. v. 14.

‡ *Quemadmodum peccatum Adami*, ſays *Bengelius*, *ſine peccatis quæ poſtea commiſimus, mortem attulit nobis, ſic juſtitia* CHRISTI, *ſine bonis operibus, quæ deinceps a nobis fiunt, vitam nobis conciliat.* That is, As the ſin of *Adam*, without any concurrence of the ſins which we ourſelves reſpectively commit, occaſioned our ruin; ſo the righteouſneſs of CHRIST, abſtracted from all conſideration of our perſonal obedience, procures our recovery.

‖ Rom. v. 18. § Rom. v. 17.

¶ *Non tantum peccata ſublata, ſed juſtitia præſtita.*

righte-

righteouſneſs * muſt ſignify a righteouſneſs, not originally their own, but another's; not what they themſelves have acquired, but what was fulfilled by their SURETY; and is, by an act of heavenly indulgence, conſigned over to them. Accordingly, it is repreſented not as a *work*, but as a *gift*; and thoſe who are intereſted in it, are ſtyled not *workers*, but *receivers*.

I ſhould but faintly copy the apoſtolic example, if I did not once again avail myſelf of this important topic. Suffer me, therefore, to tranſcribe one more verſe from this admirable chapter. *As by the diſobedience of one man, many were made ſinners; ſo, by the obedience of one, ſhall many be made righteous* †:—The *diſobedience of one*, is the diſobedience of *Adam*; his actual tranſgreſſion of the divine law. Hereby *many were made ſinners*; ſinners, in ſuch a ſenſe, as to become obnoxious unto condemnation and death.——All this, I think, is, from the apoſtle's own words, indiſputable. And if we would preſerve the propriety of his antitheſis, or the force of his reaſoning, we muſt allow, that the *obedience of one* is the obedience of *CHRIST*; his actual and complete performance of the whole law. Hereby *many are made righteous*; righteous in ſuch a ſenſe, as to be releaſed from condemnation, and veſted with a title to life eternal.—How clear and eaſy is this meaning! how juſt and regular this argumentation! What ſubtilty of evaſion muſt be uſed, to give a different turn to the inſtructive text!

This is the moſt conſiſtent ſenſe in which I can underſtand *Rom.* viii. 5. *That the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the SPIRIT*: That the righteouſneſs required by the holy but broken law, might be thoroughly accompliſhed; accompliſhed by our public REPRESENTATIVE, and in our human nature; ſo as to be deemed, in point of legal eſtimation, fulfilled *for* us and *by* us ‡. This, I ſay, is moſt conſiſtent with the tenor of St *Paul*'s arguing, and with the exact import of his language.—*With the tenor of his arguing*: for he undertakes to demonſtrate the *impoſſibility* of our juſtification, by any perſonal conformity to the law. Whereas, if we could ſatisfy its penalty, and obey its precepts; or, in other words, fulfil its righteouſneſs; this impoſſibility would ceaſe.——*With the exact import of his language*: for the original phraſe denotes, not a *ſincere*, but a *complete* obedience; not what we are enabled to perform, but what the law has a right to demand. Which, every one muſt acknowledge, is not fulfilled in any mere man, ſince the fall; but was fulfilled by JESUS CHRIST, for our good, and in our ſtead.——This interpretation preſerves the ſentences diſtinct, and makes a very natural introduction for the following clauſe; where the perſons intereſted in this privilege, are deſcribed by their fruits, *who walk not after the fleſh, but after the SPIRIT*: implying, that juſtification and ſanctification are, like the *ever-correſponding* motion of our eyes, inſeparable concomitants; and we vainly pretend to the former, if we continue deſtitute of the latter.

We have produced poſitive proofs of our doctrine.—We have heard an apoſtle declaring the aſſured happineſs, and complete juſtification of *true believers*.——Let us now obſerve the ſame ſagacious judge of men and things, diſcovering the danger of thoſe *ſelf-juſticiaries*, who reject the REDEEMER's righteouſneſs.

He is filled with the darkeſt apprehenſions, concerning his brethren the *Jews*. He is impreſſed with melancholy preſages, relating to their eternal ſtate †.—What was the cauſe of this tender ſolicitude? Had they caſt off all religion, and given themſelves over to groſs immoralities? On the contrary, they were worſhippers of the true GOD; and had, in their way, not only a *regard*, but a *zeal* for his honour ‡.——Wherefore then does this compaſſionate father in *Iſrael* feel the ſame trembling uneaſineſs, for his kinſmen according to the fleſh, as *Eli* felt for the endangered ark? Himſelf aſſigns the reaſon: Becauſe *they being ignorant of GOD's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of GOD* ‖. Not knowing that immaculate holineſs, which the perfect nature, and equally perfect law of the moſt high GOD, require;—being wilfully ignorant of that conſummate obedience, which an incarnate GOD vouchſafed to perform, for the juſtification of his people;—they ſedulouſly, but fooliſhly endeavoured, to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs; to make it, ſcanty and decrepit as it was, the baſis of their hopes.——Thus were they reſting their everlaſting ALL on a bottom, not precarious only, but irreparably ruinous. A boundleſs *eternity* the fabric! yet they built (wonder, O heavens!) on the *foam* of the waters! and (which added ſtubbornneſs to their folly) in avowed contempt of that ſtrong and ſure foundation, laid by GOD's own hand in *Zion*.——For this the good apoſtle was afflicted, with "great heavineſs and continual ſorrow." For this he made the prophetic complaint his own; *Oh! that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might bewail, day and night* §, the incorrigible perverſeneſs of my people! *For my people have committed two evils*; in not thankfully ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of GOD, *they have forſaken the fountain of living waters*; in attempting to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, *they have hewed themſelves out ciſterns, broken ciſterns that can hold no water* ¶.

Having ſhewed *their* fatal error, he ſtrengthens his repreſentation, by diſplaying the happy ſucceſs of the *Gentiles*. *What ſhall we ſay then?* This, however improbable it may ſeem, we confidently affirm, *That the Gentiles, who followed not after righteouſneſs*, who had

* I cannot but wonder at the aſſertion of a late writer, who roundly declares, "That there is not one word in this whole chapter relating to the antecedent obedience of CHRIST's life, but expreſſing only his paſſive obedience."—Muſt then this group of expreſſions—δικαιοσυνη—δικαιωμα—υπακοη—be confined *barely* to the ſufferings of our LORD? To put ſuch a ſenſe upon the words of the apoſtle, is, according to my apprehenſion, not to *hear* his voice, but to *gag* his mouth; not to acquieſce in the ſacred oracles, but to make them ſpeak our own meaning.—*Beza*, who perhaps is inferior to no critic, with regard to a maſterly ſkill in the *Greek* language, thus explains δικαιωμα; *Juſtificationis eſt materia, nempe CHRISTI obedientia; cujus imputatio nos juſtos facit.*—*Schleuſner*, in his accurate and copious lexicon for the *Greek* Teſtament, gives this interpretation of δικαιοσυνη; *Opera CHRISTO a patre Præſcripta hoc nomine veniunt; nimirum omnia quæ ab ipſo præſtanda erant, tam ad legis divinæ impletionem, quam ad generis humani redemptionem; quæ nobis imputata, et per fidem accepta, faciunt ut coram DEO juſtificemur.*—And as for υπακοη, ſurely that cannot, without the utmoſt violence to its native ſignification, be *ſo* applied to the paſſive, as to *exclude* the active obedience. The *contrary* opinion, if an artful diſputant ſhould eſpouſe it, might appear somewhat plauſible; but *this* has not the leaſt air of probability.

* Rom. v. 19.

‡ It is remarked by a judicious critic, and very valuable expoſitor, that the prepoſition εις ſometimes ſignifies *by* or *for*; and is ſo tranſlated *Matth.* v. 34. *Heb.* i. 1. See Dr *Guyſe*'s expoſition of the New *Teſtament*.

* It may be worth our while to obſerve, that St *Paul*, when treating on this ſubject, uſes three diſtinct words, all derived from the ſame original.—Δικαιωσις, which expreſſes *juſtification*, the accounting or declaring a perſon righteous.—Δικαιοσυνη, which never ſignifies juſtification, but *righteouſneſs*, either performed by us, or imputed to us.—Δικαιωμα, the phraſe which occurs in this place, and denotes the *right* or *demand* of the law; as that which is indiſpenſably neceſſary to the juſtification of man.

† Rom. ix. 2. ‡ Rom. x. 2.

‖ Rom. x. 3. § Jer. ix. 1.

¶ Jer. ii. 13.

no knowledge of it, and no concern about it; even they *have attained to righteouſneſs* *.—Strange aſſertion! How is this poſſible! Doubtleſs, the righteouſneſs which they attained, could not be any perſonal righteouſneſs. Of this they were totally deſtitute. Inſtead of practiſing moral virtues, or religious duties, they were immerſed in ſenſuality, and abandoned to idolatry. It muſt therefore be the evangelical, the imputed righteouſneſs, *even that which* was wrought by *CHRIST*, and *is* received *by faith* †.

Iſrael, in the mean time, the nominal *Iſrael*, *who*, with great pretenſions to ſanctity, and many coſtly oblations, *followed after the law of righteouſneſs, hath not attained to the law of righteouſneſs.* Attained! They have done nothing leſs. They are fallen vaſtly ſhort of it; they are pronounced guilty by it; they ſtand condemned before ‡.——*Wherefore* did they ſo groſsly miſtake, and ſo grievouſly miſcarry? *Becauſe* they forſook the good old way, in which *Abraham*, *David*, and their pious anceſtors walked. They adopted a new ſcheme; and would fain have ſubſtituted their own, inſtead of relying on a *SAVIOUR*'s righteouſneſs. *They ſought* for juſtification, *not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law* ‖. A method which their fathers knew not; which their *GOD* ordained not; and which proved, as it always will prove, not only abortive, but deſtructive.—At this ſtone they ſtumbled; on this rock they ſplit. Let their ruin be a *way mark*, and the apoſtle's obſervation a *light-houſe* to my *Theron*.

Our zealous writer tries every expedient. He mingles hope with terror. Having pointed out the *rock* on which the *Iſraelites* ſuffered ſhipwreck, he directs us to the *haven*, in which ſinners may caſt anchor, and find ſafety. He gives us a fine deſcriptive view of the *Chriſtian*'s complete happineſs. He opens (if I may continue the metaphor) a free and ample port for periſhing ſouls; not formed by a neck of land, or a ridge of mountains, but by a magnificent chain of ſpiritual bleſſings. All proceeding from, and terminating in that precious corner-ſtone *JESUS CHRIST*: *who of GOD is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption* §; *wiſdom*, to enlighten our ignorant minds; *righteouſneſs* ¶, to juſtify our guilty perſons; *ſanctification* ¶, to renew our depraved natures; *redemption*, to reſcue us from all evil; and render us, both in body and ſoul, perfectly and eternally happy.——Let it be remarked, how careſully our inſpired writer lets aſide all *efficiency*, as well as all *merit* in man. He repreſents the whole of our ſalvation, both in its procurement and application, as a work of freeſt grace. *CHRIST* is, and not we ourſelves, the author of this glorious reſtoration, the cauſe of this great felicity. *He is made* all this unto us.—*How?* Not by our own reſolution and ſtrength; but *of GOD*, by the agency of his mighty power, and bleſſed *SPIRIT*. *He* ſhews us the all-ſufficient fulneſs of *CHRIST*. *He* brings us by ardent longings to *CHRIST*. *He* implants us into CHRIST, and makes us partakers of his merits.

In the proceſs of the ſame epiſtle, the ſacred penman enumerates the *conſtituent parts* of that great ſalvation, which the SON of GOD has procured for ruined ſinners. *But ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of the LORD JESUS, and by the SPIRIT of our GOD* *. Ye are *waſhed;* cleanſed from the filth, and diſcharged from the guilt, of all your iniquities. Ye are *ſanctified;* delivered from the death of ſin, and endued with a living principle of holineſs. Ye are *juſtified;* reſtored to a ſtate of acceptance with GOD, and inveſted with a title to eternal glory. All which ineſtimable prerogatives are conferred upon the believer, *in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST*; in conſideration of his atoning blood and meritorious righteouſneſs. *By the SPIRIT of our GOD*; through the efficacy of his operation, revealing CHRIST, and working faith in the heart.

Some gentlemen have talked of a *new remedial* law; whereas the apoſtle declares, that *CHRIST is the end of the* old, the unalterable, the *Moſaic law, for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth* †.—Follow the courſe of a river, it will conſtantly lead you to the ocean. Trace the veins of the body, they invariably unite in the heart. Mark likewiſe the tendency of the law, it no leſs conſtantly and invariably conducts you to CHRIST, as the centre of its views, and the conſummation of its demands. The *moral* law aims at diſcovering our guilt, and demonſtrating our inexpreſſible need of a SAVIOUR. The *ceremonial* points him out, as ſuffering in our ſtead, making reconciliation for iniquity, and purging away every defilement with his blood.—They *both* direct the wretched tranſgreſſor, to renounce himſelf, and fly to the REDEEMER; who alone has paid that perfect obedience, and brought in that everlaſting righteouſneſs, which the ſinner wants, and the law exacts; who is, therefore, the only proper *accompliſhment* of the one, and the only ſuitable *ſupply* for the other.

What is the grand deſign of the whole ſcripture? St *Paul*, diſplaying their ſublime origin, and enumerating the gracious purpoſes they are intended to ſerve, writes thus: *All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of GOD; and is profitable——for doctrine*, to declare and eſtabliſh religious truth;—*for reproof*, to convince of ſin, and to refute error,—*for correction* ‡, or reformation of the heart, and reformation of the life;—*for inſtruction in righteouſneſs*, in that righteouſneſs, which could never have been learned from any other book.

* Surely, this muſt ſignify more, than "attaining to the *profeſſion* of a religion, whereby they may be juſtified and ſaved." To this multitudes attain, who continue, as the prophet ſpeaks, *ſtout-hearted and far from righteouſneſs*: who derive no real benefit from their profeſſion; but are rendered utterly inexcuſable, and liable to more aggravated condemnation.

† Surely, *the righteouſneſs, which is by faith*, cannot conſiſt "in "humbly *committing* the ſoul to CHRIST, in the way that he hath "appointed." According to this notion, the juſtifying righteouſneſs would ſpring from ourſelves; would be conſtituted by an act of our own, and not by the perfect obedience of our LORD.

I am ſorry to ſee this, and the preceding interpretation, in the works of an *expoſitor*, whoſe learning I admire, whoſe piety I reverence, and whoſe memory I honour. Yet I muſt ſay, on this occaſion, with one of the ancient philoſophers, *Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, ſed magis amica Veritas.*

‡ This, I apprehend, is the purport of the apoſtle's ſpeech, when he tells us, that his countrymen *had not attained unto the law of righteouſneſs*. He uſes the figure μειωσις, and means more than he expreſſes. Somewhat like the dramatic poet, who ſays of certain literary pretenders,

Qui ſe primos eſſe rerum omnium exiſtimant,
Nec tamen ſunt,

That is, *they are quite the reverſe.*—Or like the prophet in the cloſe of this chapter, who aſſures the believers in *JESUS*, *They ſhall not be aſhamed*; that is, they ſhall be *encouraged, emboldened, eſtabliſhed.*

‖ Rom. ix. 30. 31. 32.

§ 1 Cor. i. 30.

¶¶ *Righteouſneſs* and *Sanctification*; the former *imputed*, the latter *inherent*. This preſerves a *diſtinction* between the noble articles, and aſſigns to each a grand ſhare in the œconomy of ſalvation.—To ſay, that, if one of the bleſſings is communicated by way of imputation, the other ſhould be communicated in the ſame manner, ſeems to be *cavilling*, rather than *arguing*: becauſe the ſubjects are of a different nature, and therefore muſt be enjoyed in a different way.—The *cocoa* tree is, to the *American*, food and clothing, a habitation and domeſtic utenſils. But muſt we ſuppoſe, in adminiſtering to *all* theſe uſes in *one* and the *ſame* unvaried method? Becauſe in one reſpect it is eaten, in another it is worn, muſt it be thus applied in all? I believe, the illiterate ſavage, who enjoys the ſeveral gifts, need not be taught, the abſurdity of ſuch a ſuppoſition.

* 1 Cor. vi. 11. † Rom. x. 4.

‡ Tim. iii. 16. Προς επανορθωσιν.

in which alone sinful men may appear with comfort before their GOD.

We have seen the principal *scope* of the *law*, and the leading *design* of the *scriptures*: let us add one inquiry more. What is the chief *office* of the SPIRIT?—If all these coincide, and unitedly terminate in the imputed righteousness of CHRIST, we have a confirmation of its *reality* and *excellence*, great as man can desire, I had almost said, great as GOD can impart.——What says our LORD upon this point? *When he, the SPIRIT of truth is come, he shall convince* * *the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me: of righteousness, because I go to my FATHER, and ye see me no more: of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged* †.——Is it possible for words to be more *weighty* and *comprehensive*? Here is a summary of Christian faith, and of Christian holiness. Not that *superficial* holiness, which is patched up of devotional forms, and goes no farther than external performances; but that which is *vital*, and springs from the heart; consists in power, not in mere profession; whose praise, if not of men, who are smitten with pompous outsides, is sure to be of GOD, who distinguishes the things which are excellent.

He shall convince the world of sin; of original and actual sin. The sin of their nature, as well as the sin of their life; the sin of their best deeds, no less than of their criminal commissions, and blameable omissions. Above all, of their sinning against the sovereign, the only remedy, by unbelief; *because they believe not on me.*——He shall convince *of righteousness*; of the divine REDEEMER's righteousness, which the foregoing conviction must render peculiarly welcome: convince them, that it was wrought out in behalf of disobedient and defective mortals; that it is absolutely perfect, and sufficient to justify even the most ungodly. Of all which an incontestable proof is given, by his resurrection from the dead, his triumphant ascension into heaven, and session at the right hand of his FATHER; *because I go to my FATHER, and ye see me no more* ‡.——He shall convince of *judgment.* Those who are humbled under a sense of guilt, and justified through an imputed righteousness, shall be taught by happy experience, that *the prince of this world is condemned* and dethroned in their hearts: that their souls are rescued from the tyranny of Satan; are made victorious over their corruptions; and restored to the liberty,—the glorious liberty of the children of GOD.

You wonder, perhaps, that I have not strengthened my cause, by any quotation from the epistle to the *Galatians.* What I design, my dear *Theron*, is not to accumulate, but to select arguments. However, that I may not disappoint an expectation so reasonable, I proceed to lay before you a very nervous passage, from that masterly piece of sacred controversy.——Only let me just observe, that the epistle was written to persons, who had embraced Christianity, and professed an affiance in CHRIST; but would fain have *joined* circumcision, would fain have *superadded* their own religious duties, to the merits of their SAVIOUR, in order to constitute, at least, *some* part of their justifying righteousness.—— Against which error, the vigilant and indefatigable assertor of *the truth as it is in* JESUS, remonstrates,—*We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of JESUS CHRIST, even we have believed in JESUS CHRIST; that we might be justified by the faith of CHRIST, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified* *.

We, who are Jews by nature, the descendents of *Abraham*, and GOD's peculiar people; have the tables of his law, and the ordinances of his worship; we who, in point of privileges, are greatly superior to the *Gentile* nations, and have all possible advantages for establishing (if such a thing were practicable) a righteousness of our own; what have *we* done?—*We have believed on JESUS CHRIST*: we have renounced ourselves; disclaimed whatever is our own; and depended wholly on the righteousness of CHRIST.——For what end? That by this *faith in CHRIST*, which receives his righteousness; pleads his righteousness; and presents nothing but his righteousness before the throne, *we might be justified.*—— What motive has induced us to this practice? A firm persuasion, that by *the works of the law*, by sincere obedience, or personal holiness, *no man living* has been, and no man living *can be, justified before GOD.*

Are you tired, *Theron?* have I fatigued your attention, instead of convincing your judgment?—I will not harbour such a suspicion. It is pleasing to converse with those, who have travelled into *foreign* countries, and seen the *wonders* of creation. We hearken to their narratives with delight. Every new adventure whets our curiosity, rather than palls our appetite. Must it not then afford a more sublime satisfaction to be entertained with the discourses of a person, who had, not indeed sailed round the world, but made a journey to the *third heavens?* who had been admitted into the *paradise* of *GOD*, and heard things of infinite importance, and unutterable dignity?—This was the privilege of that incomparable man, whose observations and discoveries I have been presenting to my friend. And I promise myself, he will not complain of weariness, if I enrich my epistle with one or two more of those glorious truths.

GOD hath made HIM to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might, not be put into a capacity of acquiring a righteousness of our own, but *be made the righteousness of GOD in him* †. In this text, the *double* imputation of our sin to CHRIST, and of CHRIST's righteousness to us, is most emphatically taught, and most charmingly contrasted.—Most *emphatically taught.* For we are said, not barely to be righteous, but to be made righteousness itself; and not righteousness only, but (which is the utmost that language can reach) the righteousness of *GOD.* ---Most *charmingly contrasted.* For one cannot but ask, In what manner CHRIST was made sin? In the very same manner we are made righteousness. CHRIST knew no *actual* sin; yet, upon his mediatorial interposition on our behalf, he was treated by divine justice, as a sinful person. We likewise are destitute of all *legal* righteousness; yet, upon our receiving CHRIST, and believing in his name, we are regarded by the divine MAJESTY as righteous creatures. This therefore cannot, in either case, be *intrinsically*; but must be, in both instances, *imputatively.*——Gracious, divinely-gracious exchange §!

* *He shall convince*, seems to be the most proper translation of ἐλέγξει, as it implies the *sure success*, which attends the operation of the divine SPIRIT.—Man may *reprove*, and no conviction ensue. Whereas that almighty AGENT not only reproves, but reproves *with power*; so as to determine the judgment, and sway the affections.

† John xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11.

‡ For, if the work had been imperfect in any degree, our REDEEMER, instead of taking up his stated and final residence in the regions of glory, must have descended again into this inferior world, to complete what was deficient.

* *Gal.* ii. 15, 16. Observable, very observable is the zeal of our apostle, in this determined stand against the *most specious*, and therefore the most dangerous, encroachments of error. To express his ardent concern for the truth and purity of the gospel, the *works of the law* are mentioned no less than three times, and as often *excluded* from the affair of justification. *The faith of CHRIST* likewise is thrice inculcated, and as often asserted to be the *only* method of becoming righteous before GOD.

† 2 Cor. v. 21.

‡ *Ita scilicet* mirabili permutatione *mala nostra in se recepit, ut bona sua nobis largiretur: recepit miseriam, ut largiretur* mise-

pregnant with amazing goodneſs, and rich with ineſtimable benefits. The inceſſant triumph of the *ſtrong*, the ſovereign conſolation of the *weak* believer!

Ceaſe your exultation, cries one, and come down from your altitudes. The term uſed in this verſe denotes, not ſo properly *ſin*, as an *offering for* ſin.——This is a mere ſuppoſal, which I may as reaſonably deny, as another affirm. Since the word occurs, much *more frequently* in the former ſignification, than in the latter; and ſince, by giving it the latter ſignification in the paſſage before us, we very much impair, if not totally deſtroy, the apoſtles beautiful *antitheſis*.

However, not to contend, but to allow the remark; I borrow my reply from a brave old *champion* * for the truths of the goſpel: "This text," ſays he, "invincibly "proveth, that we are not juſtified in GOD's ſight by "righteouſneſs inherent in us, but by the righteouſ-"neſs of CHRIST imputed to us through faith." After which he adds, what I make my anſwer to the objection; "That CHRIST was made ſin for us, becauſe "he was a ſacrifice for ſin, we confeſs: but *therefore* was "he a ſacrifice for ſin, becauſe our ſin was imputed to "him, and puniſhed in him."——The poor delinquents under the *Moſaic* diſpenſation, who brought their ſin-offering to the altar of the LORD, were directed to lay their hand on the devoted beaſt; ſignifying, by this uſage, the transferring of guilt from the offerer to the ſacrifice. Conformably to the import of this ceremony, CHRIST aſſumed our demerit; like a true *piacular* victim, ſuffered the puniſhment, which we had deſerved; and which, without ſuch a commutation, we muſt have undergone. So that our LORD's being made a ſin-offering for us, does by no means invalidate, but very much confirm our doctrine. It neceſſarily implies the tranſlation of our iniquity to his perſon; and, on the principles of analogy, muſt infer the imputation of *his righteouſneſs* to our ſouls.

One paſſage more permit me to tranſcribe into my paper; and, at the ſame time, to wiſh, that it may be written on both our hearts; written, not with ink and pen, no, nor with the point of a diamond, but with the finger of the living GOD. *Yea, doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD; for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things; and do count them but dung, that I may win CHRIST, and be found in him; not having mine own righteouſneſs which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of CHRIST, the righteouſneſs which is of GOD through faith* †.

Be pleaſed to obſerve, that in this confeſſion of faith, and with reference to the caſe of juſtification, the apoſtle renounces all thoſe acts of ſuppoſed righteouſneſs, which were *antecedent* to his converſion.——Nor does he repudiate them only, but all thoſe more excellent ſervices, by which he was ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed, even *after* his attachment to CHRIST, and engagement in the *Chriſtian* miniſtry. As though he ſhould ſay,—"The privi-"lege of being a *Hebrew* by birth; the prerogative of "being a *Phariſee* by profeſſion; together with a beha-"viour exemplary, and a reputation unblameable; all "theſe, which were once reckoned my higheſt gain, as "ſoon as I became acquainted with the glorious perfec-"tions of CHRIST, *I counted* * *loſs for him*.—And now, "though I have been a *diſciple* many years; have walked "in all holy converſation and godlineſs; have endured, "for my divine MASTER's name, tribulations above "meaſure; have laboured more abundantly, and more "ſucceſsfully than all the apoſtles; yet even *theſe* and "*all other* attainments, of what kind or of what date ſo-"ever, I *count* † but loſs, for the tranſcendent excellency "of CHRIST JESUS my LORD.——*Yea doubtleſs* ‡ "it is my deliberate and ſtedfaſt reſolution; what I have "moſt ſeriouſly adopted, and do publicly avow, that, "ſpecious as all theſe acquirements may ſeem, and va-"luable as they may be in other reſpects, I reckon them "*but dung*, that I may win CHRIST ‖. They fade into "nothing, they dwindle into *leſs than nothing*, if ſet in "competition with his matchleſs obedience; and were "they to ſuperſede my application to his merits, or "weaken my reliance on his mediation, they would be "not contemptible only, but injurious,—irreparably in-"jurious,—*loſs itſelf*."

You will aſk, If he rejects all his own righteouſneſs, on *what* are his hopes fixed?—On a foundation, *extenſive* as the obedience of the REDEEMER's life and death, *unſhaken* as the dignity of his eternal power and GOD-HEAD. They are fixed on *the righteouſneſs which is of GOD*; the righteouſneſs which GOD the FATHER, in unſearchable wiſdom, provided; and which GOD the SON, in unutterable goodneſs, wrought.—Do you inquire, *How* he came to be inveſted with this righteouſneſs? The anſwer is ready and ſatisfactory. It was by the application of the divine SPIRIT, and the inſtrumentality of *faith*.——Leſt any ſhould imagine, that this faith might be ſubſtituted inſtead of his own obedience to the law, he puts an apparent difference between the righteouſneſs which juſtifies, and the faith by which it is received; not the righteouſneſs which *conſiſts in*, but is THROUGH *the faith of CHRIST*.——To ſhew the great importance of this diſtinction, how earneſtly he inſiſted upon it as a preacher, how much it tended to his conſolation as a *Chriſtian*, he repeats the ſentiment, he reinculcates the doctrine, *the righteouſneſs which is of GOD* BY *faith*.

Will *you* now, *Theron*, or ſhall *I*, poor unprofitable creatures, preſume to rely on any performances or any accompliſhments of our own? When that diſtinguiſhed ſaint,—a perfect prodigy of gifts, of graces, and of zeal,—indefatigable in labours, unconquerable by afflictions, and of whoſe uſefulneſs there is neither meaſure nor end;—when *he* denies himſelf in every view;

in ſericordiam; recepit maledictionem, ut benedictionis ſuæ compotes nos faceret; recepit mortem, ut vitam conferret; recepit peccatum, ut juſtitiam impertiretur. Thus writes the judicious *Turrettine*. To which, in concurrence with the accurate *Witſius*, I ſubſcribe both with hand and heart.

* See Dr *Fulk*'s annotation on the place, in that valuable piece of ancient controverſy and criticiſm, *The examination of the Rhemiſh Teſtament*. Which, though not altogether ſo elegant and refined in the language, nor ſo delicate and genteel in the manner, as might be wiſhed, is nevertheleſs full of *ſound* divinity, *weighty* arguments, and *important* obſervations.—Would the young ſtudent be taught to diſcover the *very ſinews* of Popery, and be enabled to give an effectual blow to that complication of errors, I ſcarce know a treatiſe better calculated for the purpoſe.

† Phil. iii. 8, 9.

* Ηγημαι, *I have counted.*

† Ηγουμαι, relates to the preſent time, and comprehends preſent attainments, *I do count.*—Not ſome, or the greateſt part, but *all things.*—What? Is a courſe of ſobriety, and the exerciſe of morality, to be reckoned as dung? *All things*, ſays the apoſtle.—What? Is our moſt elevated devotion, and enlarged obedience, to be degraded at this monſtrous rate? *All things*, ſays the apoſtle. This is his invariable reply. And we may venture to affirm, that *he had the mind of CHRIST.*

‡ Perhaps αλλα μενουνγε may be tranſlated, *but truly.* As if he had ſaid, "But why ſhould I mention any more particulars? In "*truth*, I count *all* things, *&c.*"

‖ Δια Χριστον—δια το υπερεχον—ινα Χριστον κερδησω—plainly imply this *comparative* or *relative* ſenſe. Virtues, which are the fruits of the SPIRIT, and labours, which are a bleſſing to mankind, muſt not be reckoned *abſolutely* or in *all* reſpects deſpicable; but only in a limited and qualified acceptation: deſpicable, not in themſelves, but as compared with the divinely-perfect righteouſneſs of CHRIST, or as referred to the infinitely-important article of juſtification.

That *Aſpaſio*, in this whole paragraph, ſpeaks the ſenſe of our church, will appear from the following extract:—"The apoſtle "St *Paul* ſaith, He doth glory, in what? In the contempt of his "own righteouſneſs; and that he looketh for the righteouſneſs of "GOD by faith."

Homily of ſalvation, part II.

depre-

depreciates all; disavows all; and makes mention of nothing, but the incomparable righteousness of his *obedient, dying, interceding* SAVIOUR.

What shall I say more? Shall I attempt to play the rhetorician, and borrow the insinuating arts of persuasion? This, after all the *cogent testimonies* produced, and all the *great authorities* urged, would be a needless parade. When our pen is a sun-beam, there is but little occasion to dip it in oil.

Instead of such an attempt, give me leave to make a frank and honest confession. I would conceal nothing from my friend. He should have a sash to my breast; throw it up at his pleasure; and see all that passes within.——Though I never had any temptation to that pernicious set of errors, which passes under the character of *Socinianism*; yet I had many searchings of heart, and much solicitous inquiry, how far we are indebted to CHRIST's *active* righteousness. Thoroughly persuaded, that *other foundation can no man lay, save that which is laid, even* JESUS CHRIST *; and that *there is no other name given under heaven, whereby men can be saved* †; yet, whether we were not to confine our believing regards to a *dying* SAVIOUR, was matter of considerable doubt.—At first, I was inclined to acquiesce in the affirmative. After long consideration and many prayers, my faith fixed upon the *whole* of CHRIST's mediatorial undertaking: which began in his spontaneous submission to the law; was carried on through all his meritorious life; and issued in his atoning death.——This is now the basis of my confidence, and the bulwark of my happiness. Hither I fly; here I rest; as the dove, after her wearisome and fruitless rovings, returned to Noah, and rested in the ark.

This scheme first recommended itself to my *affections;* as making the most ample provision for the security and repose of a guilty conscience; which, when alarmed by the accusations of sin, is very apprehensive of its condition; and will not be comforted, till every scruple is satisfied, and all the obstructions to its peace are removed. Thus I reasoned with myself: "Though there is, undoubtedly, something to be said for the other side of "the question; yet this is evidently the safest method. "And, in an affair of infinite consequence, who would "not prefer the safest expedient?—Should the righteousness of JESUS CHRIST be *indispensably* requisite, "as a wedding-garment; what will *they* do, when the "great immortal KING appears, who have refused to "accept it? Whereas, should it not prove *so absolutely* "necessary, yet such a dependance can never obstruct "our salvation. It can never be charged upon us as an "article of contumacy or perverseness, that we thought "*too meanly* of our own, *too magnificently* of our LORD's "obedience. So that let the die turn either way, we "are exposed to no hazard.—This scheme takes in all "that the other systems comprehend, and abundantly "more. In this I find no defect, no flaw, no shadow "of insufficiency. It is somewhat like the *perfect cube;* "which, where-ever it may be thrown, or however it "may fall, is sure to settle upon its base.—Supposing, "therefore, the important beam should hang in equilibrio, with respect to argument; these circumstances, "cast into the scale, may very justly be allowed to turn "the balance."

Upon a more attentive examination of the subject, I perceived,—that this is the doctrine of our *national* church; is enforced by the attestation of our ablest divines; and has been, in all ages, the consolation of the most eminent saints:—That it is the genuine sense of scripture; and not some inferior or subordinate point, incidentally touched upon by the inspired writers, but the *sum* and *substance* ‡ of their heavenly message; that which constitutes the vitals of their system, and is the very soul of their religion. On which account the whole gospel is denominated from it, and styled *the ministration of righteousness.*——I was farther convinced, that this way of salvation magnifies, beyond compare, the divine law; is no less honourable to all the divine attributes; and exhibits the ever-blessed MEDIATOR in the most illustrious and the most delightful view:—All these considerations, under the influence of the eternal SPIRIT, have determined my *judgment*, and established my *faith*. So that I trust, neither the subtilties of wit, nor the sneers of ridicule, nor any other artifice, shall ever be able to separate me from the grace and righteousness which are in JESUS CHRIST.

Let me now, by way of conclusion, review that awful subject which introduced the letter. Let me suppose the *JUDGE*, who *is at the door*, actually come; the great and terrible day, which is hasting forward ‖, really commenced.——Hark! the trumpet sounds the universal summons. The living are struck with a death-like astonishment; the dead start from their silent abodes.—See! the whole earth takes fire; the sun is turned into darkness; and the stars fall from their spheres.——Behold! the LORD JESUS comes with myriads of his angels. The judgment is set, and the books are opened.

Observe those exemplary *Christians*, whose sentiments I have been collecting. *They* renounce themselves, and rely on their glorious SURETY, Methinks I hear them say, each as they quit their beds of dust; *I will go forth* from the grave *in thy strength*, O blessed *JESUS; and*, at the decisive tribunal, *will make mention of thy righteousness only.*—At the same time, will you, *Theron*, or shall I, stand forth and declare,—before the innumerable multitude of anxious sinners and adoring seraphs,—"Let those pusillanimous creatures fly for re"fuge to their SAVIOUR's righteousness. We will "confide in works, in accomplishments of our own. "We are the men, who have *personally* kept the divine "law, and want no *supposititious* obedience from another. "Let the eye that glances through immensity, and pe"netrates the recesses of the heart; let that holy and "omniscient eye, examine our temper, and sift our "conduct. We are bold to risk our souls, and all their "immortal interests, on the issue of such a scrutiny."

Perhaps, your mind is impressed with this *solemn scene*, and your thoughts recoil at such *daring presumption.* If so, it will be proper for me to withdraw, and leave you to your own meditations. At such moments to obtrude on your company, would render me the troublesome and officious, rather than

The respectful and affectionate,

ASPASIO.

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* 1 Cor. iii. 11. † Acts iv. 12.

‡ This doctrine runs through St *Paul*'s writings, like a golden *warp*. While privileges, blessings, and evangelical duties are like a *woof* (if I may allude to the ornaments of the sanctuary) of blue, of purple, of scarlet, and indeed of every pleasant colour. *The righteousness of GOD*, Rom. i. 17.—*The righteousness from GOD*, Phil. iii. 10.—*Righteousness by faith*, Rom. iii. 22.—*Righteousness of faith*, Rom. iv. 11.—*Righteousness without the law*, Rom. iii. 21.—*Righteousness without works*, Rom. iv. 6.—*Righteousness in the blood of CHRIST*, Rom. v. 9.—*Righteousness by the obedience of CHRIST*, Rom. v. 19.—*Righteousness not our own*, Phil. iii. 9.—*Righteousness imputed by GOD*, Rom. iv. 6. 10. 22.

‖ The sacred writers, I observe, often remind their readers of this grand event; often display this *delightful dreadful* scene.—Their manner of speaking shews, that they themselves lived under the habitual and joyful expectation of it; as persons, who were *looking for, and hasting to, the coming of the day of GOD.*—They represent it, not only as *sure*, but *near*; yea, very near, and upon the point to take place. *The LORD is at hand. The JUDGE is at the door. Yet a little while, and HE that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.*—The last passage is the most spirited and emphatical of them all; but has lost much of its emphasis, by the *English* version. It is in the original μικρον οσον οσον. A beautiful *pleonasm*; by which the *Septuagint*, though too often inaccurate in translating the *prophetic* text, have very happily expressed *Isaiah*'s כמעט רגע which may, I think, be rendered in our language, *yet a very, very little while.* Heb. x. 37. Is. xxvi. 20.

LETTER VI.

THERON *to* ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

THE laſt evening was one of the fineſt I ever ſaw. According to my cuſtom, I made an excurſion into the open fields; and wanted nothing to complete the ſatisfaction, but my friend's company *. I could not but obſerve, how much your improving converſation heightened the charms of nature. When religion applied philoſophy, every thing was *inſtructive*, as well as *pleaſing*.—Not a breeze ſwept over the plains, to clear the ſky, and cool the air, but it tended alſo to diſperſe our doubts, and enliven our faith in the ſupreme all-ſufficient GOOD.—Not a cloud tinged the firmament with radiant colours, or amuſed the ſight with romantic ſhapes, but we beheld a picture of the preſent world, of its *fading* acquiſitions and *fantaſtic* joys, in the mimic forms and the tranſitory ſcene.——Even the weakeſt of the inſect-tribe, that ſkim the air in ſportive ſilence, addreſſed us with the ſtrongeſt incitements, and gave us the loudeſt calls, to be *active* in our day, and *uſeful* in our generation. They cried, at leaſt when you lent them your tongue,

Such is vain life, an idle flight of days,
A ſtill deluſive round of ſickly joys,
A ſcene of little cares, and trifling paſſions,
If not ennobled by the deeds of virtue.

How often at the approach of ſober eve, have we ſtole along the cloyſters of a ſequeſtered bower; attentive to the tale of ſome *querulous* current, that ſeemed to be ſtruck with horror at the awful gloom; and complained with heavier murmurs, as it paſſed under the blackening ſhades, and along the root obſtructed channel!—Or elſe, far from the babbling brook, and ſoftly treading the graſſy path, we liſtened to the *nightingale*'s ſong; while every gale held its breath, and all the leaves forbore their motion, that they might neither drown nor interrupt the melodious woe.——From both which penſive ſtrains, you endeavoured to temper and chaſtiſe the exuberant gaiety of my ſpirits. You convinced me, that *true* joy is a ſerious thing †; is the child of ſedate thought, not the ſpawn of intemperate mirth; nurſed, not by the ſallies of diſſolute merriment, but by the exerciſe of ſerene contemplation.

Sometimes, at the gladſome return of morn, we have aſcended an airy eminence; and hailed the new-born day; and followed, with our delighted eye, the mazes of ſome glittering ſtream.——Here *ruſhing*, with impetuous fury, from the mountain's ſide; foaming over the rifted rocks, and roaring down the craggy ſteep; impatient as it were, to get free from ſuch rugged paths, and mingle with the beauties of the lower vale.—There ſlackening its headlong career, and ſmoothing its eddies into an even flow. While, deep emboſomed in the verdant mead, it *glides* through the cheriſhed and ſmiling herbage. Sometimes loſt amidſt cloſing willows; ſometimes emerging with freſh beauty from the leafy covert; always roving with an air of amorous complacency, as though it would careſs the fringed banks, and flowery glebe.—Reminded, by this watery monitor, of that conſtancy and vigour, with which the affections ſhould move towards the great *centre* of happineſs, *CHRIST JESUS*;—of that determined ardour, with which we ſhould break through the entanglements of temptation, and obſtacles of the world, in order to reach our everlaſting *reſt*;—and of the mighty difference between the turbulent, the frothy, the precipitate gratifications of vice, and the calm, the ſubſtantial, the permanent delights of *religion*.

Or elſe, with eager view, we have ſurveyed the extenſive proſpect, and wandered over all the magnificence of things;—an endleſs variety of graceful objects, and delightful ſcenes! each ſoliciting our chief regard; every one worthy of our whole attention; all conſpiring to touch the heart with a mingled tranſport of wonder, of gratitude, and of joy.—So that we have returned from our rural expedition, not as the *ſpendthrift* from the gaming-table, curſing his ſtars, and raving at his ill luck; gulled of his money, and the derided dupe of ſharpers: not as the *libertine* from the houſe of wantonneſs *, ſurfeited with the rank debauch, dogged by ſhame, goaded by remorſe, with a thouſand recent poiſons tingling in his veins. But we returned, as ſhips of commerce from the *golden* continent, or the *ſpicy* iſlands, with new acceſſions of ſublime improvement, and ſolid pleaſure: with a deeper veneration for the almighty CREATOR; with a warmer ſenſe of his unſpeakable favours; and with a more inflamed deſire, "to know him now by faith, and after this life to have "the fruition of his glorious GODHEAD."

Sometimes, with an agreeable relaxation, we have transferred our cares, from the welfare of the nation, to the flouriſhing of the farm; and, inſtead of enacting regulations for the civil community, we have planned ſchemes for the cultivation of our ground, and the proſperity of our cattle.—Inſtead of attending to the courſe of fleets, and the deſtination of armies, we have directed the plough, where to rend the graſſy turf; or taught the honeyſuckle to wind round the arbour, and the jeſſamine to climb upon the wall.—Inſtead of interpoſing our friendly offices, to reconcile contending kingdoms; we have formed a *treaty* of *coalition*, between the ſtranger cyon, and the adopting tree; and, by the remarkable melioration of the enſuing fruit, demonſtrated (would contending empires regard the precedent) what advantages flow from pacific meaſures, and an amicable union.—Inſtead of unravelling the labyrinths of ſtate, and tracing the fineſſes of foreign courts; we have made ourſelves acquainted with the *politics* of nature, and obſerved, how wonderfully, how myſteriouſly, that great projectreſs acts.—In this place ſhe rears a vaſt trunk, and unfolds a multiplicity of branches, from one ſmall berry. She qualifies, by her amazing operations, a few contemptible acorns, that were formerly carried in a child's lap, to bear the *Britiſh* thunder round the globe, and ſecure to our iſland the ſovereignty of the ocean.——In another

* *Tu quod abes excepto, cætera lætus.*
† *Res ſevera eſt verum gaudium.* SEN.

* *Solomon*, in order to deter unwary youth from thoſe ſinks of uncleanneſs, repreſents the harlot under the character of a peſtilent hag, or baleful ſorcereſs. *Her feet go down to death*, Prov. v. 5. *Her houſe is* the high road *to hell*, Prov. vii. 27. yea, *her gueſts are in the depths of hell*, Prov. ix. 18.—The ſecond clauſe ſeems to be emphatical. The original expreſſion is in the plural number רדמי. I chuſe therefore to render it not ſimply *the road*, but more largely *the high road*: from which many other ways of guilt branch out, in which many other paths of ruin coincide. There Murder is often known to drench her dagger in blood; and Robbery forms the raſh reſolve, which ends in the ignominious halter. There Intemperance daily brews the bowl, which enervates the conſtitution, and transforms the man into a beaſt. While Diſeaſe, pale cadaverous noiſome diſeaſe, anticipates the putrefaction of the grave, and cauſes the wretched *martyrs* of *vice* to rot even above ground.—Well may every one, who loves life, and would fain ſee good days, cry out with a mixture of deteſtation and dread, "O my ſoul, come not thou into their horrid "haunts!"

Dii meliora piis, erroremque hoſtibus illum! VIRG.

place,

place, ſhe produces from a dry grain, *firſt the* green *blade; then the* turgid *ear; afterwards* the full-grown and ripened *corn in the ear* *: repaying, with exact punctuality, and with laviſh uſury, the huſbandman's toil, and the huſbandman's loan; cauſing, by a moſt ſurpriſing reſurrection, the death of one ſeed, to be fruitful in the birth of hundreds.

But I forget your caution, *Aſpaſio;* forget how kindly you have checked me, when I have been haranguing upon, I know not what, powers and works of nature. Whereas it is GOD who *worketh hitherto* †: who to this day exerts, and to the end of time will exert, that ſecret but unremitted energy, which is the life of this majeſtic ſyſtem, and the cauſe of all its ſtupendous operations.——Let this ſhew you, how much I want my guide, my philoſopher, and friend. Without his prompting aid, my genius is dull; my reflections are awkward; and my religious improvements jejune; ſomewhat like the *bungling* imitations of the tool, compared with the *maſterly* effects of vegetation.——However, I will proceed; yet not from any view of informing my *Aſpaſio*, but only to draw a bill upon his pen; and lay him under an obligation to enrich me with another letter, upon the grand and excellent ſubject of his laſt.

Art is dim-ſighted in her plans, and defective even in her moſt elaborate eſſays. But *Nature*, or rather nature's ſublime AUTHOR, is indeed a deſigner, and *a workman that need not be aſhamed* ‡. His eye ſtrikes out ten thouſand elegant models, and his touch executes all with inimitable perfection.——What an admirable ſpecimen is here, of the divine ſkill, and of the divine goodneſs! This terraqueous globe is intended, not only for a place of habitation, but for a ſtorehouſe of conveniencies. If we examine the ſeveral apartments of our great abode; if we take a general *inventory* of our common goods; we ſhall find the utmoſt reaſon to be charmed with the diſplays, both of nice œconomy, and of boundleſs profuſion.

Obſerve the *ſurface* of this univerſal meſſuage. The ground, coarſe as it may ſeem, and trodden by every foot, is nevertheleſs the *laboratory*, where the moſt exquiſite operations are performed; the *ſhop*, if I may ſo ſpeak, where the fineſt manufactures are wrought. Though a multitude of generations have always been accommodated, and though a multitude of nations are daily ſupplied by its liberalities, it ſtill continues inexhauſted; is a reſource that never fails; a magazine never to be drained.

The *unevenneſs* of the ground, far from being a blemiſh or a defect, heightens its beauty, and augments its uſefulneſs.——*Here* it is ſcooped into deep and ſheltered vales, almoſt conſtantly covered with a ſpontaneous growth of verdure: which, all tender and ſucculent, compoſes an eaſy couch, and yields the moſt agreeable fodder for the various tribes of cattle.——*There* it is extended into a wide, open, champaign country; which, annually repleniſhed with the huſbandman's ſeed, ſhoots into a copious harveſt: A harveſt, not only of that *principal wheat*, which is the ſtaff of our life, and ſtrengthens our heart; but of the *appointed barley* ‖, and various other ſorts of grain, which yield an excellent food for our animals; and either enable them to diſpatch our drudgery, or elſe fatten their fleſh for our tables.

The furrows, obedient to the will of man, vary their produce §. They bring forth a crop of tall, flexile, ſlender plants ¶: whoſe thin filmy coat, dried, attenuated, and ſkilfully manufactured, transforms itſelf into ſome of the moſt neceſſary *accommodations* of life, and

* Mark iv. 28. † John v. 17.

‡ 2 Tim. ii. 1. ‖ Iſ. xxviii. 25.

§ One may venture to ſay of the earth, with regard to its vegetable operation,

Omnia transformat ſeſe in miracula rerum.

¶ Flax and hemp.

genteeleſt *embelliſhments* of ſociety.——It is wove into ample volumes of cloth; which, fixed to the maſt, give wings to our ſhips, and waft them to the extremities of the ocean. It is twiſted into vaſt lengths of cordage; which add nerves to the crane, and lend ſinews to the pulley; or elſe, adhering to the anchor, they faſten the veſſel even on the fluctuating element, and ſecure its ſtation even amidſt driving tempeſts. It furniſhes the duchets with her coſtly head-dreſs, and delicately-fine ruffles.—— No leſs ſtrong than neat, it ſupplies the ploughman with his coarſe frock, and the ſailor with his clumſy trowſers. Its fibres, artfully ranged by the operations of the loom, cover our table with a graceful elegance, and ſurround our bodies with a cheriſhing warmth. On this the painter ſpreads the colours, which inchant the eye; in this the merchant packs the wares, which enrich the world.

Yonder, the *hills*, like a grand amphitheatre, ariſe. Amphitheatre! All the pompous works of *Roman* magnificence, are leſs than mole-banks, are mere cockle-ſhells, compared with thoſe majeſtic elevations of the earth. Some clad with mantling vines; ſome crowned with towering cedars; ſome ragged with miſhapen rocks, or yawning with ſubterraneous dens: whoſe rough and inacceſſible crags, whoſe hideous and gloomy cavities, are not only a continual refuge for the wild goats, but have often proved an aſylum to perſecuted merit *, and a ſafeguard to the moſt valuable lives.

At a greater diſtance, the *mountains* lift their frozen brows, or penetrate the clouds with their aſpiring peaks. Their frozen brows *arreſt* the roving, and *condenſe* the rarefied vapours †. Their caverned bowels collect the dripping treaſures, and ſend them abroad, in gradual communications, by trickling ſprings. While their ſteep ſides *precipitate* the watery ſtores; rolling them on with ſuch a forcible impulſe ‡, that they never intermit their unwearied courſe, till they have ſwept through the moſt extenſive climes, and regained their native ſeas.

The *vineyard* ſwells into a profuſion of cluſters: ſome tinged with the deepeſt purple, and delicately clouded with azure: ſome clad with a whitiſh tranſparent ſkin, which ſhews the tempting kernels, lodged in luſcious nectar.——The vine requires a ſtrong reflection of the ſun-beams, and a very large proportion of warmth. How commodiouſly do the hills and mountains, miniſter to this purpoſe! May we not call thoſe vaſt declivities, the *garden-walls* of nature? which, far more effectually than the moſt coſtly glaſſes, or moſt artful green-houſes, concenter the ſolar heat, and complete the maturity of the grape: diſtending it with a liquor of the fineſt ſcent, the moſt agreeable reliſh, and the moſt exalted qualities; ſuch as diſſipate ſadneſs, and inſpire vivacity; ſuch as make glad the heart of man, and moſt ſweetly prompt, both his

* To *David*, from *Saul*'s malice; to *Elijah*, from *Jezebel*'s vengeance; to many of the primitive *Chriſtians*, from the rage of perſecuting emperors: *they wandered in deſerts and in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth*, Heb. xi. 38.

† Therefore ſtyled—*nimboſa cacumina montis.* VIRG.

‡ It is obſerved, that the largeſt rivers in the world, thoſe which roll the heavieſt burden of waters, and perform the moſt extenſive circuit through the nations, generally take their riſe from mountains. The *Rhine*, the *Rhone*, and the *Po*, all deſcend from the *Alps*. The *Tygris* derives its rapid flood from the everlaſting ſnows and ſteep ridges of *Niphates*. And, to mention no more inſtances, the river *Amazones*, which pours itſelf through a multitude of provinces, and waters near eighteen hundred leagues of land, has its urn in the caverns, and its impetus from the precipices, of that immenſe range of hills, the *Andes*.

If the reader is inclined to ſee the origin and formation of rivers deſcribed, in all the ſublimity of diction, and with all the graces of poetry, he may find this entertainment in Mr *Thomſon*'s Autumn, *lin.* 781. laſt edit.

Amazing ſcene! behold, the glooms diſcloſe.
I ſee the rivers in their infant beds!
Deep, deep I hear them, labʼring to get free! &c.

grati-

gratitude, and his duty, to the munificent GIVER.——I grieve, and I bluſh for my fellow-creatures, that any ſhould *abuſe* this indulgence of heaven; that any ſhould turn ſo valuable a gift of GOD into an inſtrument of ſin; turn the moſt exhilarating of cordials into poiſon, madneſs, and death.

The *kitchen-garden* preſents us with a new train of benefits. In its blooming ornaments, what unaffected beauty! in its culinary productions, what diverſified riches! It ripens a multitude of nutrimental eſculents, and almoſt an equal abundance of medicinal herbs; diſtributing refreſhments to the healthy, and adminiſtering remedies to the ſick.——The *orchard*, all fair and ruddy, and bowing down beneath its own delicious burden, gives us a freſh demonſtration of our CREATOR's kindneſs; regales us, firſt, with all the delicacies of ſummer-fruits; next, with the more laſting ſucceſſion of autumnal dainties.

What is nature, but a ſeries of wonders, and a fund of delights! That ſuch a variety of fruits, ſo beautifully coloured, ſo elegantly ſhaped, and ſo charmingly flavoured, ſhould ariſe from the earth! than which nothing is more inſipid, ſordid, and deſpicable.——I am ſtruck with pleaſing aſtoniſhment at the *cauſe* of theſe fine effects, and no leſs ſurpriſed at the *manner* of bringing them into exiſtence. I take a walk in my garden, or a turn through my orchard, in the month of *December*. There ſtand ſeveral logs of wood faſtened to the ground.——They are erect indeed and ſhapely, but without either ſenſe or motion. No human hand will touch them, no human aid will ſuccour them; yet, in a little time, they are beautified with bloſſoms, they are covered with leaves, and at laſt are loaded with mellow treaſures; with the downy peach and the poliſhed plum; with the muſky apricot and the juicy pear; with the cherry, and its coral pendants, glowing through lattices of green,

——*and dark*
Beneath her ample leaf, the luſcious fig.

I have wondered at the ſtructure of my watch; wondered more at the deſcription of the ſilk-mills; moſt of all, at the account of thoſe prodigious engines invented by *Archimedes*. But what are all the inventions of all the geometricians and mechanics in the world, compared with theſe inconceivably-nice *automata* * of nature! Theſe *ſelf-operating machines* diſpatch their buſineſs, with a punctuality that never miſtakes, with a dexterity that cannot be equalled. In ſpring, they clothe themſelves with ſuch unſtudied but exquiſite finery, as far exceeds the embroidery of the needle, or the labours of the loom. In autumn, they preſent us with ſuch a collation of ſweetmeats, and ſuch blandiſhments of taſte, as ſurpaſs all that the moſt critical luxury could prepare, or the moſt laviſh fancy image.——So that thoſe *coarſe* and *ſenſeleſs* logs firſt decorate the divine creation, then perform the honours of the table.

If, amidſt theſe ordinary productions of the earth, GOD appears ſo *great in counſel, and mighty in work* †; what may we expect to ſee in the palaces of heaven; in the hierarchies of angels; and in that wonderful REDEEMER, who is, beyond all other objects, beyond all other manifeſtations, *the wiſdom of GOD, and the power of GOD* *!

The *foreſt* rears myriads of maſſy bodies, which, tho' neither gay with bloſſoms, nor rich with fruit, ſupply us with timber of various kinds, and of every deſirable quality †. But who ſhall cultivate ſuch huge trees, diffuſed over ſo vaſt a ſpace? The toil were endleſs. See therefore the all-wiſe and ever-gracious ordination of Providence! They are ſo conſtituted, that they have no need of the ſpade and the pruning knife. Nay, the little cares of man would diminiſh, rather than augment their dignity and their uſefulneſs. The more they are neglected, the better they thrive; the more wildly grand and magnificent they grow.

When felled by the axe, they are ſawed into beams, and ſuſtain the roofs of our houſes; they are faſhioned into carriages, and ſerve for the conveyance of the heavieſt loads.——Their ſubſtance ſo *pliant*, that they yield to the chizel of the turner, and are ſmoothed by the plane of the joiner; are wrought into the niceſt diminutions of ſhape, and compoſe ſome of the fineſt branches of houſehold furniture.——Their texture ſo *ſolid*, that they form the moſt important parts of thoſe mighty engines; which, adapting themſelves to the play of mechanic powers, diſpatch more work in a ſingle hour, than could otherwiſe be accompliſhed in many days. At the ſame time, their preſſure is ſo *light*, that they float upon the waters; and glide along the ſurface, almoſt with as much agility, as the finny fry glance through the deep.——Thus, while they impart magnificence to architecture, and beſtow numberleſs conveniencies on the family; they conſtitute the very baſis of navigation, and give expedition, give being to commerce.

Amidſt the inacceſſible depths of the foreſt, an habitation is aſſigned for thoſe *ravenous* beaſts, whoſe appearance would be frightful, and their neighbourhood dangerous to mankind. Here the ſternly-majeſtic lion rouſes himſelf from his den; ſtalks through the midnight-ſhades; and awes the ſavage herds with his roar. Here the fiery tyger ſprings upon his prey, and the gloomy bear trains up her whelps. Here the ſwift leopard ranges, and the grim wolf prowls, and both in queſt of murder and blood.——Were theſe horrid animals to dwell in our fields, what *havock* would they make? what *conſternation* would they ſpread? But they voluntarily bury themſelves in the deepeſt receſſes of the deſert; while the ox, the horſe, and the ſerviceable quadrupeds, live under our inſpection, and keep within our call; profiting us as much by their preſence, as the others oblige us by their abſence.

If, at any time, thoſe ſhaggy monſters make an excurſion into the habitable world, it is when man retires to his chamber, and ſleeps in ſecurity. The ſun, which invites other creatures abroad, gives them the ſignal to retreat. *The ſun ariſeth, and they get them away, and lay them down in their dens* ‡. Strange! that the orient light, which is ſo pleaſing to us, ſhould ſtrike ſuch terror on them! ſhould, more effectually than a legion of guards, put them all to flight, and clear the country of thoſe formidable enemies!

If we turn our thought to the *atmoſphere*, we find a moſt curious and exquiſite apparatus of *air*: which, becauſe no object of our ſight, is ſeldom obſerved, and little regarded; yet is a ſource of innumerable advantages. And all theſe advantages (which is al-

* *Automata*, or *ſelf-operating* machines; not meant to ſet aſide the ſuperintendency of Providence, but only to exclude the co-operation of man.

The word αὐτόματα is uſed by our MASTER; is a very fine, and moſt expreſſive word; for which reaſons, I have ventured to give it a kind of *Engliſh* naturalization. It ſignifies, ſays a *Greek* ſcholiaſt, τὰς μηχανὰς, αἱ κατ' αὐτὰς ἐνεργοῦσαι. See *Mark* iv. 28.——It is an explication and an abridgment of that remarkable phraſe, which occurs in the *Moſaic* hiſtory of the creation, לעשות אשר בראו אלהים Gen. ii. 3. *Which GOD created and made*, appears tautological, and is by no means an exact tranſlation. It ſhould rather be interpreted, *which GOD created in order to make*; to make, by theſe prolific inſtruments and reproducing principles, a continual ſucceſſion of animals, vegetables, and creatures.

† Jer. xxxii. 19.

* 1 Cor. i. 24.

† *Tully* has given us an abridgment of all the preceding particulars: which, I think, is one of the fineſt landſcapes in miniature, that the deſcriptive pen ever drew.——*Terra univerſa cernitur, veſtita floribus, herbis, arboribus, frugibus; quorum omnium incredibilis multitudo inſatiabili varietate diſtinguitur. Adde huc fontium gelidas perennitates, liquores perlucidos amnium, riparum veſtitus viridiſſimos, ſpeluncarum concavas altitudines, ſaxorum aſperitates, impendentium montium altitudines, immenſitatesque camporum.* De nat. Deor. lib. II.

‡ Pſal. civ. 22.

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most incredible) are fetched from the very jaws of ruin. My meaning may be obscure, therefore I explain myself.

We live plunged, if I may so speak, in an ocean of air. Whose *pressure*, upon a person of moderate size, is equal to the weight of *twenty thousand* pounds. Tremendous consideration! Should the ceiling of a room, or the roof of a house, fall upon us with half that force, what destructive effects must ensue? such a force would infallibly drive the breath from our lungs, or break every bone in our bodies. Yet so admirably has the divine wisdom contrived this aereal fluid, and so nicely counterpoised its dreadful power, that we receive not the slightest hurt; we suffer no manner of inconvenience; we even *enjoy* the load. Instead of being as a mountain on our loins, it is like wings to our feet, or like sinews to our limbs.——Is not this *common* ordination of Providence, thus considered, somewhat like the miracle of the burning bush; whose tender and combustible substance, though in the midst of flames, was neither consumed nor injured *? Is it not almost as marvellous, as the prodigy of the three *Hebrew* youths, who walked in the fiery furnace, without having a hair of their head singed, or so much as the smell of fire passing on their garments †?—Surely we have reason to say unto GOD, *O! how terrible*, yet how beneficent, *art thou in thy works!*

The air, though too weak to support our flight, is a thoroughfare for innumerable wings. Here the whole commonwealth of *birds* take up their abode. Here they lodge and expatiate, beyond the reach of their adversaries. Were they to run upon the earth, they would be exposed to ten thousand dangers, without proper strength to resist them, or sufficient speed to escape them. Whereas, by mounting the skies, and *lifting themselves up on high*, they are secure from peril, *they scorn the horse and his rider* ‡.—Some of them perching upon the boughs, others soaring amidst the firmament, entertain us with their *notes*; which are musical and agreeable, when heard at this convenient distance; but would be noisy and importunate, if brought nearer to our ears.——Here many of those feathered families reside, which yield us a delicious *treat*; yet give us no trouble, put us to no expence, and, till the moment we want them, are wholly out of our way.

The air, commissioned by its all-bountiful AUTHOR, charges itself with the administration of several offices, which are perfectly obliging, and no less serviceable to mankind.—Co-operating with our lungs, it *ventilates* the blood, and refines our fluids. It qualifies and attempers the vital warmth, promotes and exalts the animal secretions. Many days we might live, or even whole months, without the light of the sun, or the glimmering of a star. Whereas, if we are deprived, only for a few minutes, of this aerial support, we sicken, we faint, we die.——The same *universal nurse* has a considerable share in cherishing the several tribes of plants. It helps to transfuse vegetable vigour into the trunk of the oak, and a blooming gaiety into the spread of the rose.

The air undertakes to convey to our nostrils the extremely-subtile *effluvia*, which transpire from odoriferous bodies. Those detached particles are so imperceptibly small, that they would elude the most careful hand, or escape the nicest eye. But this trusty depositary *receives* and *escorts* the invisible vagrants, without losing so much as a single atom: entertaining us, by this means, with the delightful sensations, which arise from the fragrance of flowers; and admonishing us, by the transmission of offensive smells, to withdraw from an unwholesome situation, or beware of any pernicious food.

The air, by its undulating motion, conducts to our ear all the diversities of *sound*; and thereby discharges the duty of a most seasonable and faithful monitor. As I walk cross the streets of *London*, with my eye engaged on other objects; a dray, perhaps, with all its load, is driving down directly upon me. Or, as I ride along the road, musing and unapprehensive, a chariot and six is whirling on, with a rapid career, at the heels of my horse. The air, like a *vigilant* friend, in pain for my welfare, immediately takes the alarm; and, while the danger is at a considerable distance, dispatches a courier, to advertise me of the approaching mischief. It even thunders in my ear; and, with a *clamorous* but *kind* importunity, urges me to be upon my guard, and provide for my safety.

The air wafts to our sense all the modulations of *music*, and the more agreeable entertainments of refined conversation. When *Myrtilla* strikes the silver strings, and teaches the willing harpsichord to warble with her CREATOR's praise; when her sacred sonata warms the heart with devotion, and wings our desires to heaven.—When *Cleora* tunes her song, or the nightingale imitates her inchanting voice: when she heightens every melodious note, with her adored REDEEMER's name; and so smooths her charming tones, so breathes her rapturous soul, "that GOD's own ear listens delighted."——When Wisdom takes its seat on *Mitio*'s tongue; and flows, in perspicuous periods, and instructive truths, amidst the chosen circle of his acquaintance.—When Benevolence, associated with Persuasion, dwell on *Nicander*'s lips, and plead the cause of injured innocence, or oppressed virtue.—When Goodness, leagued with Happiness, accompany *Eusebius* into the pulpit; and reclaim the libertine from the slavery of his vices; disengage the infidel from the fascination of his prejudices; and so affectionately, so pathetically invite the whole audience, to partake the unequalled joys of pure religion.——In all these cases, the air distributes every musical variation with the utmost *exactness*; and delivers the speaker's message, with the most punctual *fidelity*. Whereas, without this internuncio, all would be sullen and unmeaning silence. We should both lose the pleasure and the profit; neither be charmed with the harmonious, nor improved by the articulate accents.

The breezes of the air, when vague and unconfined, are so very gentle, that they sport with the most inoffensive wantonness amidst *Ophelia*'s locks, and scarce disadjust a single curl. But, when collected and applied by the contrivance of man, they act with such *prodigious force*, as is sufficient to whirl round the hugest wheels, though clogged with the most encumbering loads. They make the ponderous millstones move as swiftly, as the dancer's heel; and the massy beams play as nimbly, as the musician's finger.

If we climb, in speculation, the higher regions, we find an endless succession of *clouds*, fed by evaporations from the ocean. The clouds are themselves a kind of ocean, suspended in the air with amazing skill. They travel, in detached parties, and in the quality of *itinerant cisterns*, round all the terrestrial globe. They fructify, by proper communications of moisture, the spacious pastures of the wealthy; and gladden, with no less liberal showers, the cottager's little spot. Nay, so condescending is the benignity of their great Proprietor, that they *satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and cause*, even in the most uncultivated wilds, *the bud of the tender herb to spring forth* *: that the natives of the lonely desert, those savage herds which know no master's stall, may nevertheless experience the care, and rejoice in the bounty, of an all-supporting PARENT.

How wonderful! that the water, which is much *denser* and far *heavier* than the air, should rise into it; make its way through it; and take a station in the very uppermost regions of it! This, one would imagine,

* Exod. iii. 2. † Dan. iii. 27. ‡ Job xxxix. 18.

* Job xxxviii. 27.

were almoſt as impoſſible, as for the rivers to run back to their ſource. Yet Providence has contrived a way to render it not only practicable, but matter of continual occurrence.

How wonderful! that *pendent lakes* ſhould be diffuſed, or *fluid mountains* heaped over our heads; and both ſuſtained in the thinneſt parts of the atmoſphere! We little think of that ſurpriſing expedient, which, without conduits of ſtone, or veſſels of braſs, keeps ſuch loads of water in a buoyant ſtate. *Job* and *Elihu* conſidered this, and were ſtruck with holy admiration. *Doſt thou know the balancings of the clouds!* how ſuch ponderous bodies are made to hang with an even poiſe, and hover like the lighteſt down? Theſe are *the wondrous works of HIM, who is perfect in knowledge* *. *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud*, though nothing is more looſe and fluid, becomes, by his almighty order, ſtrong and tenacious as caſks of iron; it *is not rent* † under all the weight.

When the ſluices are opened, and the waters deſcend, we might reaſonably ſuſpect, that they ſhould burſt forth in cataracts, or pour out themſelves in torrents. Whereas, inſtead of ſuch a diſorderly and precipitate effuſion, which would be infinitely pernicious, they coaleſce into *globules*, and are diſpenſed in gentle *ſhowers*. They are often attenuated into the ſmallneſs of a hair‡: they ſpread themſelves, as if they were ſtrained through the orifices of the fineſt watering-pot; and form theſe *ſmall drops of rain, which the clouds diſtil upon man abundantly* ‖. Thus, inſtead of drowning the earth, and ſweeping away its fruits, they cheriſh univerſal nature; and, in conformity to the practice of their great MASTER, diſtribute their humid ſtores to men, to animals, and vegetables, *as they are able to bear them* §.

Beſides the reſervoirs of water, here are cantoned various parties of *winds*, mild or fierce, gentle or boiſterous; furniſhed with breezy wings, to fan the glowing firmament, and diffuſe refreſhment on a fainting world; or elſe fitted to act as an univerſal *beſom*; and, by ſweeping the chambers of the atmoſphere, to preſerve the fine aereal fluid free from feculencies. Without this wholeſome agency of the winds, the air would ſtagnate; become putrid; and ſurround us, in the literal ſenſe of the words, with *darkneſs that might be felt* ¶. *London*, *Paris*, and all the great cities in the world, inſtead of being the ſeats of elegance, would degenerate into ſinks of corruption.

At *ſea*, the winds ſwell the mariner's ſails, and ſpeed his courſe along the watery way; ſpeed it far more effectually than a thouſand rowers, bending to their ſtrokes, and tugging at the oar.—By *land*, they perform the office of an immenſe ſeedman, and ſcatter abroad the reproductive principles of a multitude of plants; which, though the ſtaff of life to many animals, are too ſmall for the management, or too mean for the attention of man.—*HE bringeth the winds out of his treaſuries* +, is a very juſt obſervation, whether it relate to GOD's abſolute and uncontrollable dominion over his moſt potent meteor, or to its welcome and ſalutary influence +– on all the face of nature.

Here are *lightnings* ſtationed. Though dormant at preſent, they are in act to ſpring, and launch the livid flame; whenever their piercing flaſh is neceſſary to deſtroy the *ſulphureous* vapours; or diſlodge any other *noxious* matter, which might be prejudicial to the delicate temperature of the æther, and obſcure its more than cryſtalline tranſparency.

Above all is ſituate a *radiant* and *majeſtic* orb, which enlightens the tracts, cheers the inhabitants, and colours all the productions of this habitable globe. While the air, by a ſingular addreſs in managing the rays, amplifies their uſefulneſs; its *reflecting* power * augments that heat, which is the life of nature; its *refracting* power prolongs that ſplendor, which is the beauty of the creation.—Theſe emanations of light, though formed of inacture matter, yet (aſtoniſhing apparatus of almighty wiſdom!) are refined almoſt to the *ſubtilty* of ſpirit, and are ſcarce inferior even to thought in *ſpeed*. By which means, they ſpread themſelves, with a kind of inſtantaneous ſwiftneſs, through the circumference of a whole hemiſphere; and though they fill, where-ever they pervade, yet they ſtraighten no place, embarraſs no one, encumber nothing.

Theſe give the diamond its brilliancy, and the velvet its gloſs: to theſe the chearful eye is obliged for its lively ſparkle, and the modeſt cheek for its roſy bluſh. Theſe, attending the judicious touches of the pencil, bid the drapery flow, and the embodied figure ariſe; bid the countenance wear the calm ſerenity of thought, or be agitated with wild tranſports of paſſion.—Without this circumſtance of *colour*, we ſhould want all the entertainments of viſion, and be at a loſs to diſtinguiſh one thing from another. We ſhould heſitate to pronounce, and muſt take a little journey to determine, whether yonder incloſure contains a piece of paſturage, or a plot of arable land. We ſhould queſtion, and could not very expeditiouſly reſolve, whether the next perſon we meet, be a ſoldier in his regimentals, or a ſwain in his holiday-ſuit? a bride in her ornaments, or a widow in her weeds? But colour, like a particular livery, characterizes the claſs, to which every individual belongs. It is the *label*, which indicates, upon the firſt inſpection, its reſpective quality. It is the *ticket*, which guides our choice, and directs our hand †.

We have curſorily ſurveyed the *upper rooms* of our great habitation, and taken a turn along the *ground-floor*; if we deſcend into the ſubterraneous lodgment, the *cellars* of the ſtately ſtructure, we ſhall there alſo find the moſt exquiſite contrivance acting in concert with the moſt profuſe goodneſs.—Here are various *minerals*,

* Job xxxvii. 16. † Job xxvi. 8.

‡ The *Hebrew* words, which convey the idea of gentle *rain*, ſignify a portion of water, made ſmall as a *hair*, or divided into *millions* of parts, שאירם דקוקים Deut. xxxii. 2.

‖ Job xxxvi. 28. § Mark iv. 33.

¶ Exod. x. 21. + Pſal. cxxxv. 7.

+– *Quam ſalutares autem dedit, quam tempeſtivos non modo hominum, ſed etiam pecudum generi, iis denique omnibus quæ oriuntur a terra, ventos? quorum flatu nimii temperantur calores, ab iiſdem etiam maritimi curſus celeres et certi diriguntur.* De nat. Deor. lib. II.

* The air is a curious *cover*, which, without oppreſſing the inhabitants of the earth with any perceivable weight, confines, reflects, and thereby *increaſes* the vivifying heat of the ſun. The air increaſes this kindly heat, much in the ſame manner as our garments by day, or bed-cloaths by night, give additional warmth to our bodies —Whereas, when the aeriel veſtment grows thin, or, to ſpeak more philoſophically, when the air becomes leſs in quantity, and more *attenuated* in quality, the ſolar warmth is very ſenſibly diminiſhed. Travellers on the lofty mountains of *America* ſometimes experience, to their terrible coſt, the truth of this obſervation. Though the clime, at the foot of thoſe prodigious hills, is even hot and ſultry; yet, on their ſummits, the cold rages with ſuch exceſſive ſeverity, that it is no unuſual calamity, for the horſe and his rider to be frozen to death.—We have therefore great reaſon to bleſs the ſupreme DISPOSER of things, for placing us in the *commodious* concavity, or rather under the *cheriſhing* wings of an atmoſphere.

† This, I believe, ſuggeſts the true ſenſe of thoſe noble metaphors, uſed by the divine ſpeaker. *It is turned as clay to the ſeal, and they ſtand as a garment: it*, the earth, and all its productions, receive, from the riſing ſun, both colour and beauty. Juſt as the ſoft clay, and the melting wax, receive an elegant impreſſion from the ſeal.—*They* (the morning and the day ſpring, mentioned in a preceding verſe) *ſtand as a garment*; they act the part of a magnificent and univerſal clothing; give all viſible objects, their comely aſpect, and graceful diſtinctions. *Job* xxxviii. 14.

What bold and fine images are here!—The *ſea* had been deſcribed as an *infant*, changeable, froward, and impetuous, with thick darkneſs for its ſwadling band. The *light* is repreſented as an *handmaid*, attending to *dreſs* the creation; and executing the CREATOR's orders, with a *punctuality* that never fails, with a *ſpeed* that cannot be equalled.

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of ſovereign efficacy in medicine; which rectify the vitiated blood, and quicken the languid ſpirits; which often rekindle the fading bloom in the virgin's complexion, and reinvigorate the infeebled arm of manhood.—Here are beds fraught with *metals* of the richeſt value. From hence come the golden treaſures, from hence the ſilver ſtores which are the very life of traffic; and circulate through the body politic as the vital fluid through the animal frame: which, in the refining hand of charity, are feet to the lame, and eyes to the blind, and make the widow's heart ſing for joy.—Here are mines, which yield a metal of meaner aſpect, but of a firmer coheſion, and of ſuperior uſefulneſs: A metal, that conſtitutes almoſt all the implements, with which art executes her various deſigns. Without the aſſiſtance of *iron*, trade would be reduced to the loweſt ebb; commerce would feel her wings clipped; and every ſpecies of mechanic ſkill, either utterly fail, or be miſerably baffled. Without the aſſiſtance of iron, it would be almoſt impoſſible to rear the ſteady maſt, to diſplay the daring canvaſs, or drop the faithful anchor. Deſtitute of this ever-needful commodity, we ſhould have no plough to furrow the ſoil, no ſhuttle to traverſe the loom, ſcarce any ornament for polite, or any utenſil for ordinary life.

Here is an inexhauſted fund of *combuſtible* materials *, which ſupply the whole nation with fewel. Theſe preſent their miniſtrations in the kitchen; and yielding themſelves as aliment to the flame, render our food both palatable and healthy.—Theſe offer their ſervice at the forge; and, with their piercing heat, mollify the moſt ſtubborn bars, till they become pliant to the ſtroke of the hammer.—The *coals* pour themſelves likewiſe into the glaſs-houſes. They rage, amidſt thoſe aſtoniſhing furnaces, with irreſiſtible but uſeful fierceneſs. They liquify even the obdurate flint, and make the moſt rigid ſubſtances far more ductile than the ſofteſt clay, or the melting wax; make them obſequious, not only to the lighteſt touch, but to the impreſſions of our very breath.

By this means, we are furniſhed, and from the coarſeſt ingredients, with the moſt curious, beautiful, and ſerviceable manufacture in the world: A manufacture, which tranſmits the light and warmth of the ſun into our houſes; yet excludes the annoyance of the rains, and the violence of the winds. Which gives *new eyes* to decrepit age, and vaſtly *more enlarged* views to philoſophy and ſcience; which leads up the aſtronomer's diſcernment, even to the *ſatellites* of *Saturn*: and carries down the naturaliſt's obſervation, as far as the animalcule race; bringing near what is immenſely remote, and making viſible what, to our unaſſiſted ſight, would be abſolutely imperceptible.

We have alſo, when the ſun withdraws his ſhining, an expedient to ſupply his place. We can create an *artificial* day in our rooms, and prolong our ſtudies, or purſue our buſineſs, under its chearing influence. With beaming tapers and ruddy fires, we *chaſe* the darkneſs, and *mitigate* † the cold; we cheriſh converſation, and cultivate the ſocial ſpirit. We render thoſe very intervals of time, ſome of the moſt delightful portions of our life, which otherwiſe would be a joyleſs and unimproving void.

Theſe obſcure caverns are the birth-place of the moſt ſparkling *gems*: which, when nicely poliſhed, and prodigal of their luſtre, ſtand candidates for a place on the royal crown, or a ſeat on the *virtuous* fair-one's breaſt: and, I will not with our men of gallantry ſay, emulate the living brilliancy of her eyes; but ſerve as a foil, to ſet off the lovelineſs and excellency of her accompliſhed mind, and amiable converſation; *whoſe price*, according to the unerring eſtimate of inſpiration, is ſuperior to ſapphires, *is far above rubies* *.

Here are *quarries*, ſtocked with ſtones, inferior in beauty to the jeweller's ware, but much more eminently beneficial: which, when properly ranged, and cemented with a tenacious mortar, from the convenient abodes of peace, and build the ſtrongeſt fortifications of war; defending us from the inclemencies of the weather, and the moreformidable aſſaults of our enemies. Theſe conſtitute the arches of the bridge, which convey the traveller, with perfect ſecurity, over the deep and rapid ſtream. Theſe ſtrengthen the arms, the ſtupendous arms, of the mole; which ſtretch themſelves far into the ocean, break the impetuoſity of the ſurge, and ſcreen the bark from tempeſtuous ſeas.—Theſe ſtony treaſures are comparatively *ſoft*, while they continue in the bowels of the earth; but acquire an increaſing *hardneſs*, when expoſed to the open air. Was this remarkable peculiarity reverſed, what difficulties would attend the labours of the maſon? His materials could not be extracted from their bed, nor faſhioned for his purpoſe, without infinite toil. Were his work completed, it could not long withſtand the fury of the elements; but inſenſibly mouldering, or inceſſantly decaying, would elude the expectations of the owner; perhaps, might prove an immature grave, inſtead of a durable dwelling.

Here are various aſſortments or vaſt *layers* of *clay*: which, however contemptible in its appearance, is abundantly more advantageous, than the rocks of diamond, or the veins of gold. This is moulded, with great expedition and eaſe, into veſſels of any ſhape, and of almoſt every ſize. Some ſo delicately *fine*, that they compoſe the moſt elegant and ornamental furniture, for the tea-table of a princeſs. Others ſo remarkably *cheap*, that they are ranged on the ſhelves, and miniſter at the meals, of the pooreſt peaſant. All ſo perfectly *neat*, that no liquid takes the leaſt taint, nor the niceſt palate any diſguſt, from their cleanly ſervices.

A multiplicity of other valuable ſtores, are locked up, by Providence, in thoſe ample vaults. The *key* of all is committed to the management of *induſtry*; with free permiſſion to produce each particular ſpecies, as neceſſity ſhall demand, or prudence direct.

Which ſhall we moſt admire, the beautiful heart, the liberal hand, or the all-diſcerning eye, of our great CREATOR? How obſervable and admirable is this *precaution*, in removing theſe uſeful but cumbrous wares from the ſuperficies; and ſtowing them, in proper repoſitories, beneath the ground!—Were they ſcattered over the ſurface of the ſoil, the earth would be *embarraſſed* with the enormous load. Our roads

* *As for the earth*, ſays *Job*, *out of it cometh bread*: corn, vegetables, and whatever is good for food, ſpring from its ſurface. While *under it is turned up as it were fire*: its lower parts תחתיה its deeper ſtrata, yield combuſtible materials; which are eaſily enkindled into fire, and adminiſter the moſt ſubſtantial fewel for the flame, *Job* xxviii. 5.

† I can hardly forbear tranſcribing the grateful and pious remark, which *Socrates* makes on this occaſion. Demonſtrating, from the advantageous and benign conſtitution of things, GOD's indulgent care for mankind, he aſks, Το δε ψυχει το πυρ πομισαι, ημιν, χειμωνι μεν ψυχρας, επιουσιον δε σκολιας, συνεργον δε προς πασαν τεχνην, και παντα οσα ωφελιμα εστιν ανθρωποις κατασκευαζεσθαι; Ως γαρ συνελοντι ειπειν, ουδεν ξυγκλειει ανευ πυρος ανθρωποις των προς βιον χρησιμων κατασκευαζεσθαι. To which his pupil very intelligently replies, Υπερβαλλει και τελος καλλιστα. *Vid* Socrat. *Memor.* lib. IV. A work, which may be ranked among the *fineſt* remains of antiquity. *Equal*, 'tis acknowledged, to any of the ancient compoſitions, in purity of ſtyle, and dignity of ſentiment. *Superior*, I think, to them all, for the artful, delicate, and happy manner of conveying inſtruction.

I wiſh, the author of the preceding dialogues had been better acquainted with the *Socratic* method; and I could wiſh, that young ſtudents for the miniſtry would adopt the ſkill of this *Heathen* philoſopher. Perhaps, no qualification of human growth, would more effectually contribute to render them, what St *Paul* ſtyles διδακτικους.—It ſeems to be the moſt *inſinuating* and *ſucceſsful* way to convince and inſtruct. Nay, it convinces the opponent out of his own mouth, and makes the pupil inſtruct himſelf. It is what the *TEACHER* ſent from *GOD* practiſed, in thoſe incomparable ſketches of obliging and maſterly addreſs, the parables of the *two debtors*, and of the *good Samaritan*. Luke vii. 41. Luke x. 30.

* Prov. xxxi. 16.

would

would be blocked up, and ſcarce any portion left free for the operations of huſbandry.——Were they buried extremely deep, or ſunk to the centre of the globe, it would coſt us immenſe pains to procure them; or rather, they would be quite *inacceſſible*.——Were they uniformly ſpread into a pavement for nature; the trees could not ſtrike their roots, nor the herbs ſhoot their blades, but univerſal *ſterility* muſt enſue.——Whereas, by their preſent diſpoſition, they furniſh us with a magazine of metallic, without cauſing any diminution of our vegetable treaſures. Foſſils of every ſplendid and ſerviceable kind enrich the *bowels*, while bloom and verdure embelliſh the *face* of the earth.

So judicious is the arrangement of this grand edifice! ſo beneficent the deſtination of its whole * furniture! in which, all is regulated with conſummate ſkill, and touched into the higheſt perfection. All moſt exactly adapted to the various intentions of Providence, and the manifold exigencies of mankind; to ſupply *every want* we can feel; and gratify *every wiſh* we can form.

Inſomuch that the whole ſyſtem affords a favourite and exalted topic of praiſe, even to thoſe diſtinguiſhed beings, who *ſtand on the ſea of glaſs, and have the harps of GOD in their hands*. They lift their voice and ſing, *Great and marvellous are thy works, O LORD GOD almighty* †! —And is there not reaſon, my *Aſpaſio* would ſay, infinite reaſon, for *us* to join this triumphant choir; and add gratitude to our wonder, love to our Hallelujahs? Since all theſe things are to us, not merely objects of contemplation, but ſources of accommodation; not only a majeſtic ſpectacle, bright with the diſplay of our CREATOR's wiſdom, but an ineſtimable gift, rich with the emanations of his goodneſs. The earth hath he *ſet before* the inhabitants of glory, but *the earth hath he given to the children of men* *.——Having given us ourſelves; given us a world; has he not a right, a moſt unqueſtionable and unrivalled right, to make that tender demand, *My ſon, give me thy heart* †?

Shall I add another paſſage, which, viewed with any but the laſt paragraph, will be like *the head of gold*, eminent and conſpicuous on *feet of iron and clay*? It is taken from the fineſt philoſophical oration that ever was made. I never read it, but with a glow of delight, and with impreſſions of awe. It is, in ſhort, inimitably ſpirited and ſublime.——You think, perhaps, I act an impolitic part, in being ſo laviſh of my praiſe; and that the quotation muſt ſuffer, by ſuch an *aggrandizing* introduction. But I am under no apprehenſions of this kind. Forbear to be delighted, if you can; ceaſe to admire, if you can, when you hear OMNISCIENCE itſelf declaring, that, on the ſight of this univerſal fabric, emerging out of nothing, THE MORNING-STARS SANG TOGETHER, AND ALL THE SONS OF GOD SHOUTED FOR JOY ‡.——The ſyſtem was ſo graceful, ſo magnificent, and, in all reſpects, ſo exquiſitely finiſhed, that the moſt exalted intelligencies were charmed, were tranſported. They knew not how to expreſs themſelves on the great occaſion, but in ſhouts of exultation, and ſongs of praiſe. Is it poſſible for imagination to conceive an encomium ſo juſt, ſo high, ſo beautifully noble?—I am ſure, after ſo much delicacy, and majeſty of ſentiment, any thing of mine muſt be intolerably flat; unleſs you will except this one profeſſion, that I am, with the moſt cordial ſincerity,

My dear Aſpaſio,

Inviolably yours,

THERON.

* No notice is taken of the *ocean*, in this little *rent-roll* of nature's wealth; becauſe a diſtinct ſketch is given of that grand receptacle and its principal ſervices, in LETTER IX.

† *Rev.* xv. 3. *Great and marvellous are thy works, O LORD GOD almighty! juſt and true are thy ways, thou KING of ſaints!* The firſt part ſeems to mean, what the inſpired writer calls, *the ſong of Moſes*. The ſecond contains, what he ſtyles, *the ſong of the* LAMB. The firſt, I ſhould imagine, relates to the ſtupendous works of creation. The ſecond alludes to the far more wonderful ſcheme of redemption. The former, deſcribing the ſyſtem of nature, is recorded by *Moſes*; the latter, comprehending the ſalvation of the ſaints, is accompliſhed by CHRIST.

* Pſal. cxv. 16. † Prov. xxiii. 26. ‡ Job xxxviii. 7.

LETTER VII.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

My dear THERON,

IF you write with ſuch a view, and from ſuch a motive, as are mentioned in your laſt, expect no more *free-will* offerings from my pen. In this one inſtance, I ſhall think it my duty to be covetous. I ſhall act the miſer out of principle; and hardly perſuade myſelf to part with a ſingle line, till it is become an undeniable *debt*. I muſt turn your own artifice on yourſelf; and lay you under a neceſſity of obliging, entertaining, and edifying me by your correſpondence.

For give me leave to aſſure you, that I am always delighted, and always improved by your epiſtles. They ſhew me a multitude of beauties in the creation, which I ſhould not otherwiſe have diſcerned. They point out the infinite power, the unſearchable wiſdom, and the charmingly-rich goodneſs of the glorious MAKER. Such a philoſophy turns all nature into a *ſchool* of inſtruction, and is an excellent *handmaid* to true religion. It makes every object a ſtep, better than a golden ſtep, to raiſe both our knowledge and our affections to the adorable and immortal CAUSE of all.

While I am roving heedleſsly along, your remarks often interpoſe, like ſome intelligent faithful monitor, who claps his hand upon my breaſt, and ſays, *Stand ſtill, and conſider the wonderous works of GOD* *.—Willingly I obey the admonition: the *Chriſtian* may, with peculiar complacency, conſider this grand magazine of wonders, this copious ſtore-houſe of bleſſings; and, conſcious of an intereſt in JESUS, has a right to call them all *his own* †. He may look round upon preſent things; look forward unto future things; and, truſting in his SAVIOUR's merit, may confidently ſay,—"Not one only, but both "theſe worlds are mine. By virtue of my REDEEM- "ER's righteouſneſs, I poſſeſs the neceſſary accommo- "dations of this life; and, on the ſame unſhaken footing "I ſtand, entitled to the inconceivable felicity of a "better."

Surely then it will be as pleaſing an employ, and as important a ſearch, to examine the *validity* of our title to future things, as to eſtimate the value of our preſent poſſeſſions. *You* have executed the one, let *me* attempt the other.——You have ſurveyed material nature. It appears to be a fair and ſtately manſion; void of all defect; and, for the purpoſes which it is intended to anſwer, completely finiſhed. Is not our SAV-

* Job xxxvii. 14. † 1 Cor. iii. 2.

OUR

OUR's obedience, the provision made for indigent and guilty souls, equally rich and equally perfect?—Since this is everlasting and immutable; since the other is transient and perishable; doubtless we may argue with the judicious apostle; *If that which is to be done away, which will soon be consigned over to dissolution, is glorious; much more that which remaineth*, whose blessed effects continue to eternal ages, *is glorious* *.

We are every one *as an unclean thing* †. Our very nature is contaminated. Even sanctification, though it destroys the reigning, does not wholly supersede the polluting power of iniquity. So that whatever graces we exercise, whatever duties we perform, (like the rays of light transmitted through coloured glass) or like generous wine streaming from a defiled cask) they receive some improper tinge, or contract some debasing taint. But *CHRIST* was entirely free from this *innate* contagion. He hath no erroneous apprehensions in his mind, no corrupt bias upon his will, nor any irregular concupiscence in his affections.

Being thus perfectly undefiled, *he had no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth* ‡. All his thoughts were innocent; all his words were irreproachable, and every action blameless. The most accomplished among the children of men, when surprised in some unguarded moment, or assaulted on some weak side, have been betrayed into error, or hurried into sin. Even *Moses* spake unadvisedly with his lips; and *Aaron*, the saint of the LORD, warped to idolatrous practices. *They* were like some stagnating *lake*; in which, the dregs being subsided, the waters appear clean; but when stirred by temptation, or agitated by affliction, the sediment rises, and the pool is discoloured. Whereas, *CHRIST* may be compared to a *fountain*, that is all transparency, and pure to the very bottom, which, however shaken, however disturbed, is nothing but fluid crystal; permanently and invariably clear.

It was a small thing for the blessed JESUS, to have no depraved propensity; he was born in a state of *consummate rectitude*, and adorned with all the beauties of holiness. *HOLINESS TO THE LORD* was inscribed, not on the *mitre*, but on the *heart* of our great *HIGH PRIEST*. Therefore he is styled, by the angelic harbinger of his birth, *THAT HOLY THING* ‖.—In the prophecy of *Zechariah*, the dignity of our REDEEMER's nature, and the perfection of his obedience, are displayed by the similitude of a *stone* §, adorned with exquisite engraving: wrought, not by *Bezaleel* or *Aholiab*, though divinely-inspired artists, but by the finger of JEHOVAH himself; and more highly finished, than it is possible for human skill to equal, or human thought to conceive.

The whole tenor of our LORD's conduct, was a living exemplification of piety and morality, in their most *extensive* branches, and most *amiable* forms. Saints of the highest attainments, have fallen short of the glory of GOD; have been far from reaching the exalted standard of his precepts. But CHRIST failed in no point, came short in no degree.—We formerly observed the great sublimity, and vast extent of the divine law. From whence appears the extreme difficulty, nay the utter impossibility of our justification, on account of any duties performed by ourselves. How should we rejoice then to contemplate the vicarious righteousness of our condescending and adorable SURETY? As the mercy-seat was exactly commensurate to the dimensions of the ark; so did our LORD's obedience most *fully quadrate* with all and every demand of the divine law. It flowed from those best of principles, supreme love to *GOD*, and unfeigned affection to mankind.

From these two capital sources, let us trace our *LORD*'s obedience, through some little part of its illustrious progress.—His delight in *GOD* was conspicuous, even from his *early* years. The sacred solemnities of the sanctuary, were more engaging to his youthful mind, than all the entertainments of a festival.—When he entered upon his ministry, *whole nights* were not too long for his copious devotions. The lonely retirements of the desert, as affording opportunity for undisturbed communion with *GOD*, were more desirable to *CHRIST*, than the applauses of an admiring world.

So ceaseless and transcendent was his love to *GOD*, that he never sought any separate pleasure of his own; but always did those things which were pleasing in his *FATHER*'s sight. His own will was entirely absorpt in the will of the *MOST HIGH*; and *it was his meat and drink*, refreshing and delightful as the richest food, or as royal dainties, *to finish the work that was given him to do* *.

So entirely devoted to the honour of *GOD*, that a zeal for his house, and for the purity of his ordinances, is represented, by the evangelical historian, as *eating him up* †. Like a heavenly flame glowing in his breast, it sometimes fired him with a graceful indignation; sometimes melted him into godly sorrow; and, by exerting itself in a variety of vigorous efforts, consumed his vital spirits.

So active and unremitted was the obedience of the blessed JESUS, that the sun did not enter upon his race with a more constant assiduity, nor dispatch his business with greater expedition: and sure I am, that radiant luminary never dispensed beams, half so bright, or a thousandth part so beneficial.——Short was his span, but how grand and extensive were his services! So *grand*, that they bring more glory to *GOD*, than all the administrations of Providence, and all the phænomena of nature. So *extensive*, that they spread, in their gracious efficacy, to the ends of the earth, and to the closing period of time. Nay, they will diffuse their blessed influence even to the celestial world, and have no other limits of their duration than the ages of eternity.

Most affectionately concerned for the welfare of mankind, he spent his strength, not barely in relieving them, when his aid was implored; but in *seeking* the afflicted, and *offering* his assistance. With great fatigue ‡, he travelled to remote cities; and with no less condescension, he visited the meanest villages, that all might have the benefit and comfort of his presence. Though multitudes of miserable objects were brought to him from every quarter, yet he was pleased even to prevent the wishes of the distressed, and *went about doing good*.

* 2 Cor. iii. 11. † Is. lxiv. 6. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 22.

‖ *Luke* i. 35.—Which is spoken, in *contradistinction* to the state of all other births; and implies the *universal* prevalence of original corruption, this *one* instance only excepted. For, if other infants were holy at their first formation, and made after the image of GOD, this remark had been trivial and impertinent, if not droll and burlesque; like saying with great solemnity, "The child shall have a mouth and a head; aye, and eyes in the one, and lips to the other."

§ *Zech.* iii. 9. *Behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one stone shall be seven eyes; behold! I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.*

* John iv. 34. † John ii. 17.

‡ *JESUS being* weary *with his journey*, ἐκαθέζετο οὕτως, John iv. 6.—οὕτως is thus explained by a *Greek* commentator, ἁπλῶς, ἢ ὡς ἔτυχε. Our LORD sat down, *without ceremony* and *without complaint*, even on the rough place: contented to use it, just as he found it; neither desiring a softer seat, nor wishing for any better accommodation.—I rather think, the adverb refers to the preceding adjective κεκοπιακώς, which signifies a state of very great fatigue; weakening a person to such a degree, that he can hardly walk with *steady* steps, or even sit in an *upright* attitude. The sacred historian seems to mean, that our LORD sat in such a posture, as spoke the lassitude of his body; declared

He gave ſight *, and all the agreeable ſcenes of nature, to the blind; health, and all the choice comforts of life, to the diſeaſed. He expelled malevolent raging dæmons; and reſtored, what is more precious than the light of the body, or the vigour of the conſtitution, the calm poſſeſſion of the intellectual faculties.——What *greatly ſurpaſſed* all the preceding bleſſings, he releaſed the wretched ſoul from the dominion of darkneſs, and from the tyranny of ſin. He made his followers partakers of a divine nature, and prepared them for a ſtate of never-ending bliſs.

Such priceleſs treaſures of wiſdom and beneficence flowed from his tongue, and were poured from his hand!—How different theſe triumphs of mercy, from the trophies erected, by wild ambition, in the bloody field! If *Heathens* celebrated thoſe mighty butchers, who made cities their ſlaughter-houſe; made half the globe their ſhambles; and meaſured their merit, by the devaſtations they ſpread; how ſhould *Chriſtians* admire this heavenly BENEFACTOR, who roſe upon a wretched world, with healing under his wings! who diſtributed, far and near, the unſpeakably-rich gifts of knowledge and holineſs, of temporal happineſs and eternal joy!

Nor were theſe righteous acts his ſtrange work, but his *repeated*, his *hourly*, his almoſt-*inceſſant* employ. Sometimes we hear him preaching in the temple, or publiſhing his glad tidings in the ſynagogues. Sometimes we ſee him teaching in private houſes, or bringing forth the good tidings of his goſpel on the deck of a ſhip. At other times, he takes a mountain for his pulpit; the heavens are his ſounding-board; and *all that have ears to hear*, are invited to be his audience.—Does he lay aſide this ſolemn office? It is only to carry on the ſame deſign, in a more condeſcending and *familiar* manner. If he meets with the *Phariſees*, he diſcovers their errors, and reproves their vices; he confutes their objections, and (in caſe they are not abſolutely inacceſſible to wiſe counſel) rectifies their miſtakes. If he vouchſafes to be preſent at a feaſt, he furniſhes the richeſt, incomparably the richeſt part of the treat. *Honey and milk are under his tongue* †. He inculcates lowlineſs of mind on the vain ‡; he recommends diſintereſted charity to the ſelfiſh ‖; and promiſes pardon to the weeping penitent §.——Is he retired from other company, and ſurrounded only by his choſen attendants? His converſation is a ſermon. Whether he ſit in the inner chamber, or travel on the public road, or walk through the corn-fields, he is ſtill proſecuting his great work; training up his diſciples for their ſacred function; and imparting to them, what they may communicate to others.—Is he retired from *all* company? Even then he does not diſcontinue his labours of love, but adds the fervent interceſſions of the night, to the charitable toils of the day. Yes, when all but himſelf lay ſunk in ſoft repoſe, this ADVOCATE for a guilty world was engaged in an exerciſe of benevolence; which, though ſecret and unobſerved as the falling dews, was far more beneficial to our beſt intereſts, than thoſe pearly drops to the languiſhing herbs.

Moſt charming and unparallelled benignity! He *forgot* his daily food, *neglected* his neceſſary reſt, to ſpend and be ſpent for the ſalvation of mankind. Neither the hardſhips of continual ſelf-denial, nor the calumnies of envenomed tongues, could divert him from purſuing this favourite buſineſs.—He ſought none of your honours, coveted none of your rewards, O ye children of men! What *he* ſought, what *he* coveted, was, to wear out his life in your ſervice, and lay it down for your ranſom. This was all his deſire, and this indeed he deſired earneſtly.——He longed (beneficent, bleſſed BEING!) he longed for the fatal hour. He ſeverely rebuked one of his diſciples, who would have diſſuaded him from going as a volunteer to the croſs. He was even *ſtraitened* *, under a kind of holy uneaſineſs, till the dreadful work was accompliſhed; till he was *baptized with the baptiſm of his ſufferings*, bathed in blood, and plunged in death.

By this moſt meritorious obedience and death, what did he not *deſerve?* what did he not *procure?* He procured thoſe ineſtimable bleſſings, the pardon of ſin, and reconciliation with GOD; procured them (O! love unmerited and unmeaſurable!) for prodigals, for traitors, for rebels.——To this it is owing, that we, who were enemies againſt GOD, may call the KING of heaven our Father; may have free acceſs to him in all our difficulties; and may hope to reign with him in everlaſting glory.

Was ever goodneſs like this goodneſs †? Were ever bleſſings comparable to theſe bleſſings; or purchaſed with ſuch a price?—Hide, hide, your diminiſhed heads, ye little tranſitory donations of ſilver and gold. The riches of a thouſand mines, beſtowed to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, are the moſt contemptible trifles, if mentioned with the charity of the *teaching*, the *healing*, the *bleeding* JESUS. Kingdoms given away in alms, if viewed with this infinitely noble beneficence, would make juſt the ſame figure, as a ſpark from the ſummer-hearth, under the potent and boundleſs blaze of noon.——This is indeed *love that paſſeth knowledge*. ‡.

Amidſt all theſe miracles of power and of love, (any one of which would have entitled him to univerſal admiration, and everlaſting honour) how *humble* was our SAVIOUR! O humility—virtue dear to the

clared the failure of his ſpirits; and *ſhewed* him to be ſpent with the heat of the day, and the toil of travelling. Which circumſtance gives a moſt beautiful *heightening* to his charity and zeal, ſo generouſly and ſo ſucceſsfully exerted in the following conference.

* Εχαρισατο τα βλεμματα, is the delicate and noble expreſſion of the evangeliſt, *Luke* vii. 21. *He made them a preſent of ſight.* Silver and gold had he none; but theſe were his gifts, ſuch were his alms.

† Cant. iv. 11. ‡ Luke xiv. 8.

‖ Luke xiv. 12. § Luke vii. 48.

* *Luke* xii. 50. The original word συνεχομαι ſeems to expreſs the condition of a perſon wedged in, on every ſide, by a tumultuous throng of people. His hands are hampered, and his body is confined in a moving priſon; he is cruſhed, and hurried to and fro: he pants for breath, and is almoſt ſtifled in the croud.—How muſt ſuch a one long to be *diſengaged* from theſe *very uneaſy* circumſtances! With equal ardour did our moſt beneficent LORD deſire thoſe ſufferings, which were to overwhelm him with diſtreſs, but exalt *us* to happineſs; were to bathe his limbs in blood, but cleanſe our ſouls from ſin.—Οι οχλοι, ſays the ſame hiſtorian, συνεχουσι σε και αποθλιβουσι, *Luke* viii. 45.

† *Codrus*, it is true, devoted himſelf to death for the *Athenians*: and *Curtius* threw himſelf into the yawning gulf, for the preſervation of the *Romans*.—But theſe died, being *mere* creatures, and *guilty* creatures: whereas the dying JESUS was perfectly innocent and ſupremely glorious.—Theſe died only a *little before* their time: but CHRIST died, though he had life in himſelf, and none could have taken it from him, had he not voluntarily reſigned it.—Theſe died for their valuable *friends*, for their affectionate *relations*, for their native *country*: but CHRIST died for ſlaves, for enemies, for the ungodly.—They died an *honourable* death: but CHRIST ſubmitted to the moſt *ignominious* execution; CHRIST died under the imputation of *horrid* crimes, and in the form of an *execrable* malefactor.——In all theſe inſtances, as the heavens are higher than the earth, ſo is CHRIST's love greater than their love: his *philanthropy* than their *patriotiſm*.

‡ *Eph.* iii. 19. This expreſſion, as alſo the *principal* circumſtance of ſuperiority hinted in the preceding note, are founded on the *divinity* of our LORD. And indeed the expreſſion is ſcarce juſtifiable, the aſſertion is hardly true, upon any other ſuppoſition. A creature dying for a creature, is, though great, yet not *incomprehenſible* goodneſs. But, when we view the ſufferings of CHRIST, and the bleſſings of redemption ſurrounded with all the ſplendor of the DEITY; they dazzle our underſtanding, and fill us with holy aſtoniſhment. They appear to be the effects of a love, never to be ſpoke of but in the language of *wonder*, never to be thought of but with an ecſtaſy of *delight*.

moſt

moſt high GOD, and peculiarly amiable in men——never didſt thou appear in ſo charming a dreſs, or ſo ſtriking a light.

At his birth, not accommodated with a magnificent *palace*, but lodged in a ſtable, and laid in a manger.——As he advanced in years, not attended with a *royal* equipage, or ſupplied from a *royal* revenue; but labouring with his own hands, and earning his bread by the ſweat of his brow.——When he entered upon his miniſterial office, not the leaſt oſtentatious *parade* appeared in the performance of all his wonderful works. So far, ſo very far from affecting the acclamations of the populace, that he often impoſed ſilence on thoſe unſpeakably-indebted lips, which were ready to overflow with praiſe, and would fain have been the trumpets of his fame.

Though a voice from heaven proclaimed him the BELOVED of his almighty FATHER; he diſdained not to own the ignoble character of the *carpenter*'s ſon *. Though PRINCE of the kings of the earth, he condeſcended to waſh the feet of mean fiſhermen, and vile ſinners †. Though PROPRIETOR and LORD of the whole world, he was content to be more deſtitute than the fowls of the air, or the foxes of the deſert ‡; more deſtitute (aſtoniſhing abaſement!) than the moſt *inſignificant* and moſt *hated* animals.

Grandeur, we find, is apt to beget expectations of ſuperior regard; conſequently, gives a keener edge to every affront, and renders the mind more tenderly ſenſible of every diſreſpect. But our LORD's *meekneſs* was as great as his dignity; and that, throughout a ſeries of ſuch *unſufferable* provocations, as were equalled by nothing, but the ſweetneſs of his forgiving grace.

When rudely affronted, he calmly bore, and kindly overlooked the inſult.——When contradicted by *petulant* and *preſumptuous* ſinners, he endured, with the utmoſt ſerenity of temper, their unreaſonable cavils, and their obſtinate perverſeneſs.——When his invitations, his moſt endearing invitations, were ungratefully and ſtubbornly rejected; inſtead of remitting, he renewed them; and, with ſtill warmer affection, importuned his hearers, not to forſake *their own* mercies, nor to forego *their own* felicity.——When all the winning arts of perſuaſion were ineffectual, he added his tears to his ſlighted entreaties; and lamented as a brother, when ſcornfully repulſed as a teacher.

Though *his diſciples* ſlept, ſtupidly ſlept, when his bitter cries pierced the clouds, and were enough to awaken the very ſtones into compaſſion; did their divine but ſlighted MASTER reſent the unkindneſs? Did he refuſe to admit an excuſe for their neglect? yea he made their excuſe; and that the moſt tender and gracious imaginable; *The ſpirit is willing, but the fleſh is weak* ‖.——When *his enemies* had nailed him to the croſs, as the baſeſt ſlave, and moſt flagitious malefactor; when they were glutting their malice with his torments and blood; and ſpared not to revile him, even in his laſt expiring agonies; far, very far from being exaſperated, this HERO of heaven repaid all their contempt and barbarity, with the moſt fervent and effectual ſupplications in their behalf. FATHER, *forgive them*, was his prayer: *for they know not what they do* §, was his plea.

Nor was his *reſignation* leſs exemplary than his meekneſs. He went out to meet afflictions, when they came in his FATHER's name, and commiſſioned from his FATHER's hand. He gave, without the leaſt reluctance, his back to the ſmiters, and hid not his face from ſhame and ſpitting. Though his ſoul, his very ſoul was penetrated with the keeneſt ſenſations of anguiſh; yet no impatient thought diſcompoſed his mind, no murmuring word forced its way from his lips. FATHER, *not my will, but thine be done* *, was his language, when the ſorrows of death compaſſed him, and pains, inexpreſſibly ſeverer than the pains of diſſolution, came upon him. *When they gaped upon him with their mouth, and ſmote him upon the cheek reproachfully. When his face was foul with ſpitting, and on his eyelids was the ſhadow of death. When GOD delivered him to the ungodly, and turned him over into the hands of the wicked. Yea, when the ALMIGHTY ſet him for the mark of his arrows, and brake him with breach upon breach. When the weapons of his wrath cleft his very reins aſunder, and poured his gall upon the earth* †. Amidſt all this exquiſite diſtreſs, he ſinned not by the leaſt irregular perturbation; but bowed his head, and dutifully kiſſed the divine rod, and cordially bleſſed his very murderers.

Thus did the whole choir of *active* and *paſſive* virtues abound and ſhine in our LORD; abound with the richeſt variety, and ſhine with the higheſt luſtre: infinitely ſurpaſſing that curious aſſemblage of coſtly gems, which ſtudded the *Aaronic* breaſt-plate ‡; and, as far as earthly things can repreſent heavenly, typified the ſplendor and perfection of our REDEEMER's righteouſneſs.

In all this, he acted and he ſuffered, as GOD's *righteous ſervant*, and as his people's *righteous ſurety*.——By all this, he fulfilled every jot and tittle of the divine law; nay, he more than fulfilled, he *magnified* it. He gave it (if I may apply the moſt beautiful alluſion that ever was uſed, to the moſt momentous ſubject that ever was diſcuſſed) *good meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together, and running over* ‖.

He defied the moſt vigilant of his enemies to convince him of ſin.——A more malignant, a far more ſagacious adverſary than the ſcribes and Phariſees, could detect no blemiſh in our LORD JESUS. *The prince of this world*, that infernal tyrant, who had deceived and enſlaved all the nations of the earth, *came and found nothing in him* §; not the leaſt corruption in his nature, not the leaſt defect in his obedience.

He hath done all things well ¶, was the general acclamation of mankind; or, as the words may be rendered, he hath done all things *finely* and *gracefully* †; with every circumſtance that can conſtitute the propriety and dignity, the utility and beauty of action.

I have glorified thee on earth ††, was his own profeſſion before the moſt high GOD. I have glorified thee, in all that I acted, in all that I uttered, in all that I ſuffered. I have diſplayed the magnificence of thy majeſty, the riches of thy grace, and the honour of *all* thy attributes. Inſomuch, that *whoſo ſeeth ME, ſeeth the FATHER* ‡‡; whoever is properly acquainted with my perſon and my work of redemption, ſees the inviſible and knows the incomprehenſible DEITY; ſees his venerable, his amiable, his adorable perfections, in the cleareſt mirror, and in the brighteſt light ==.

* Matth. xiii. 55. † John xiii. 14. ‡ Matth. viii. 20.

‖ Matth. xxvi. 41. § Luke xxiii. 34.

* Luke xxii. 42.

† Theſe tragical images are borrowed from the book of *Job*, who was an eminent type of a ſuffering SAVIOUR; and, though they are the very eloquence of wo, they do not exaggerate, they cannot expreſs, that inconceivable anguiſh, which wrung a bloody ſweat from our bleſſed MASTER's body, and forced from his lips that melancholy exclamation,—*My ſoul is ſorrowful,—exceeding ſorrowful,—ſorrowful even unto death.* See *Job* xvi.

‡ Exod. xxviii. 17, 18, 19, 20.

‖ Luke vi. 38. § John xiv. 30. ¶ Mark vii. 37.

† Καλως. †† John xvii. 4. ‡‡ John xii. 45.

== Therefore CHRIST is ſaid to be απαυγασμα της δοξης, *Heb.* i. 3. In other objects, we have only ſome obſcure footſteps, or dim traces; here we have the *whole glory* of the GODHEAD. And not barely the glory, but *the very brightneſs* of the FATHER's glory; or, all the divine perfections beaming forth with *adequate*, that is, with ineffable and infinite ſplendor.

GOD

GOD also, who is the supreme standard and unerring judge of excellency, bore his testimony to our blessed MEDIATOR. He spoke it once; yea twice, and with a voice from heaven.——In the constitution of the material world, when it came forth from the CREATOR's hand, Omniscience itself could discern no flaw. Neither could Justice itself, upon the strictest inquiry, discover any failure in the obedience of our SURETY. As therefore it was said, concerning the works of creation, *They are all very good* *; so it was said, concerning our SAVIOUR, and by the same almighty MAJESTY, *In him I am well pleased* †.

You took notice, and very justly, how much the productions of nature *exceed* and *eclipse* the attempts of human skill. We are pleased with the performances of the painter: but do they equal the native blush of the rose, or the artless glow of a pea-blossom? We are charmed with a fine piece of enamelling; but is it fit to be compared with the natural polish of a thousand shells which are formed in the ocean, or a thousand seeds which spring from the earth? We admire the virtues of the ancient saints; men "that were honoured in "their generation, and the glory of their times ‡." We admire the meekness of *Moses*, and the magnanimity of *Elijah*, the exalted piety of *Isaiah*, and the enlarged wisdom of *Daniel*; the active spirit of *Joshua*, and the passive graces of *Jeremiah*. But what proportion, put them all together,—what proportion do they all bear to HIS obedience, *who is gone into heaven, angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto him* ‖? who is called the HOLY ONE and the JUST §; not only by way of emphasis, but by way of *exclusion*; because no person is worthy of the character, no duties deserve to be mentioned, when CHRIST and his merits are under consideration.

If then we talk of merit, what *merit* must there be in such immaculate sanctity of soul, and such exemplary holiness of conduct; such ardent zeal for GOD, and such compassionate good-will to man; such consummate worthiness, and extensive usefulness; such as were utterly unknown before; have been absolutely unequalled since; and never will, nor can be parallelled throughout all ages!—O my *Theron!* what is the *drop* of a bucket to the unfathomable waves of the ocean? What is a *grain* of sand to the unmeasurable dimensions of the universe? What is an hour or a *moment* to the endless revolutions of eternity? Such are all human endowments, and all human attainments, compared with HIS righteousness, who is *fairer than the children of men* ¶; *the chiefest among ten thousand* +; *and who received not the* SPIRIT *by measure* +.

Think not, that what I have written is the language of rant. It is a paraphrase, though, I must confess, but a scanty paraphrase, on *David*'s practice and *David*'s faith: *My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day* ++, *for I know not the numbers thereof.* The glorious righteousness of CHRIST, and the great salvation obtained thereby, he declares, shall be the chosen, the principal subject of his discourse. And not on a Sabbath only, but on *every* day of the week, of the year, of his life. And not barely at the stated returns of solemn devotion, but in every social interview, and *all the day long.*——Why will he thus dwell, perpetually and invariably dwell, on this darling theme? Because *he knows no end thereof.* It is impossible to measure the value, or exhaust the fulness of these blessings. The righteousness is unspeakable, the salvation is everlasting. To compute the duration of the one, numbers fail; to describe the excellency of the other, words are at a loss.

And is this righteousness designed for *us?* Is this to be our wedding-dress, this our beautiful array, when we enter the regions of eternity? Unspeakable privilege!—Is this what GOD has provided to supply, more than supply our loss in *Adam!* Boundless benignity!—Shall *we* be treated by the Judge of the world, as if we had performed all this unsinning and perfect obedience? Well might the prophet cry out, like one lost in astonishment, *How great is his goodness!*—Is not your heart enamoured, my dear *Theron*, with a view of this incomprehensibly-rich grace? What so excellent, what so comfortable, what so desirable, as this gift of a SAVIOUR's righteousness? Though delineated by this *feeble* pen, methinks, it has dignity and glory enough, to captivate our hearts and fire our affections; fire them with ardent and inextinguishable desires after a personal interest and propriety in it.——O! may the eternal SPIRIT reveal our REDEEMER's righteousness, in all its heavenly beauty and divine lustre! Then, I am sure, we shall esteem it above *every thing*; we shall regard it as the *one thing* needful; we shall count *all things* in comparison of it, worthless as the chaff, and empty as the wind.

To an immortal and fallen soul, every thing else is empty as the wind; but here sinners may *suck and be satisfied with this breast of consolations*: yea thousands and thousands of millions may *milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of its glory* *.——Here we shall find the doctrine of *supererogation* no longer a chimera, but a delightful reality. Here indeed is an immense surplusage, an inexhaustible fund of merit †, sufficient to enrich a whole world of indigent and miserable creatures; sufficient to make their cup run over with a superabundant fulness of peace and joy, so long as

* Gen. i. 31. † Matth. iii. 17. ‡ Ecclus xliv. 7.

‖ 1 Pet. iii. 22. § Acts iii. 14.

¶ Psal. xlv. 2. + Cantic. v. 10. +- John iii. 34.

++ *Psal.* lxxi. 15. I cannot but observe, that *righteousness* and *salvation* are frequently connected, by the author of the *psalms*, and by the prophet *Isaiah*: in order to intimate, that the one is founded on the other; the latter derives its origin from the former; there can be no salvation without a righteousness, a real, proper, *law-fulfilling* righteousness.—At the same time, I am sensible, that the word righteousness *may* signify GOD's goodness in making, and faithfulness in performing his promise unto *David*. Salvation *may* likewise denote the delivery of that afflicted hero from all his persecutors, and his establishment on the throne of *Israel*.

But if we should confine the sense to these narrow limits, how *comfortless* the favour even to *David* himself, considered as an immortal being! How much more *insignificant* to us and others, on whom the ends of the world are come! And how very *unworthy* of that infinite GOD, who is the Father of the spirits of all flesh; who sees, at one view, whatever is, or has been, or shall exist; who therefore, when he speaks, speaks to all his children, in every period of time, and in every nation under heaven. As much as a tutor, when delivering his lectures, addresses himself to all his pupils, whether they sit at his right hand or his left, before him or on every side.

Whereas, if righteousness signifies the meritorious obedience of CHRIST, and salvation implies the benefits of his redemption, the sense is no longer shrivelled, impoverished, and mean; but *rich, august*, and *magnificent*. It pours consolation among all people, kindreds, and tongues. It is worthy of that GOD, who seeth the things and regardeth the persons, which are not as though they were. It comports exactly with that revelation, in which CHRIST is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the ending, the sum total.

This note is already too long; otherwise I should take leave to gratify my inclination, and give a sanction to my sentiment, by transcribing *Vitringa*'s exposition of *Is.* xlv. 8.

* Is. lxvi. 11.

† Yet here is no *rich fund* (as a learned writer asserts, no fund at all, *for the Pope's treasury of meritorious supererogating actions*: unless CHRIST and the *Pope* are to be placed upon the same footing; unless the ineffably-excellent obedience of a divine REDEEMER, and the miserably-defective duties of sinful men, are to be deemed equally valuable.—Since this will hardly be admitted by *Protestants*; I believe, *Aspasio* may safely call the obedience of CHRIST, *the true supererogation*; as Mr *Ambrose* has called the blood of CHRIST, *the true purgatory*.

time

time ſhall laſt, and when time ſhall be no more. For, to uſe the apoſtle's weighty argument, *if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in life by one, JESUS CHRIST* *. If *one* offence, committed by one *mere* man, made all his poſterity chargeable with guilt, and liable to death; HOW MUCH MORE ſhall the *manifold* inſtances of our *divine REDEEMER*'s obedience; of his long, uninterrupted, conſummate righteouſneſs;—how much more ſhall they abſolve all his people from condemnation and puniſhment, and entitle them to the honours and joys of immortality!

Which will appear in a clearer light, if, to the perfection of his obedience, we add the *majeſty* of his *perſon*. A proper ſubject this for ſome future letter.—In the mean time, let me deſire my friend, the friend of my boſom, to contemplate our *LORD JESUS* under that lovely and auguſt character, GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS †. And, for my part, I will not ceaſe to pray, that a ſenſe of this ſuper-eminently grand and precious righteouſneſs may be written on my *Theron*'s heart.—On thoſe living tables, may it be like figures cut on a rock of ſolid marble, or inſcribed on the bark of a growing tree; be *laſting* in its duration as the former, and *ſpreading* in its influence as the latter.——It will then be a ſure proof, that his name is written in the book of life; and it ſhall then be a pleaſing pattern for

the affection,
the gratitude,
and the friendſhip, of
his ASPASIO.

P. S. You give a moſt aſtoniſhing account of the *preſſure* of the atmoſphere. Aſtoniſhing indeed! that we ſhould be continually ſurrounded, continually overwhelmed with ſuch a tremendous load; and not be cruſhed to death, no, nor be ſenſible of the leaſt weight. ——This, I think, may ſerve to repreſent the ſtate of a ſinner, *unawakened* from carnal ſecurity. Loads, more than *mountainous loads* of guilt, are upon his ſoul, and he perceives not the burden. For this reaſon, he is under no apprehenſions of the vengeance and fiery indignation, which he deſerves; he has no ſuperlative eſteem for the atonement and merits of the *REDEEMER*, which alone can deliver him from the wrath to come. But, if once his conſcience *feels*, what his lips, perhaps, have often repeated; "We do earneſtly repent us of theſe our miſ-"doings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, "the burden of them is intolerable;" then how will he prize ſuch a text: *The LORD laid on CHRIST the iniquity of us all!* How will he long for an intereſt in the LAMB of GOD, *which taketh away the ſin of the world!* Then that *JESUS* who has *finiſhed the tranſgreſſion, and brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs*, will be all his ſalvation, and all his deſire.

* Rom. v. 17. † Exod. xv. 11.

LETTER VIII.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

My dear THERON,

I HAVE juſt been reading that exquiſitely-fine piece of ſacred hiſtory, *the life of Joſeph*. A hiſtory,—filled with ſurpriſing incidents, and unexpected revolutions;—adorned with the moſt heroic inſtances of triumphant virtue, both amidſt the allurements of temptation, and under the preſſures of affliction;—animated with ſuch tender and pathetic, ſuch melting and alarming touches of natural eloquence, as every reader muſt *feel*, and every true critic will *admire*.

When I came to that remarkable injunction, with which the generous viceroy diſmiſſed his brethren; *Ye ſhall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt* *;—I pauſed,—I pondered,—I was ſtruck. Certainly this was injoined not by way of oſtentation; but on account of the pleaſure, which, he knew, it would yield the good old patriarch.——Was it ſome kind prompting angel, or the voice of gratitude and devotion, that whiſpered in my ear? "Should not the children of men likewiſe tell one "another of *all the glory* †, which their REDEEMER "poſſeſſes in heaven and on earth? Will not this afford "them the ſublimeſt pleaſure here, and be a ſource of "the moſt refined ſatisfaction for ever and ever?"

Though I had almoſt determined to write no more, till you could make a demand upon the foot of *value received*; willingly I recede from my intended reſolution, and obey this pleaſing hint.—But *who can declare the noble acts of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, or ſhew forth all his praiſe?*—However, if I may but *liſp out* his adorable name, and preſent my friend with a *glimpſe*, or a *broken* view of his divine perfections, even this will be deſirable and delightful; far more deſirable and delightful, than to behold *Rome* in its magnificence, St *Paul* in the pulpit, or King *Solomon* on this throne *.

Let me take the *lark* for my pattern; which, as I was lately returning from an evening-ramble, attracted my obſervation.—Warbling her *CREATOR*'s praiſe, ſhe mounted in the ſerene ſky. Still ſhe warbled, and ſtill ſhe mounted, as though ſhe meant to carry her tribute of harmony unto the very gates of heaven. Having reached, at laſt, her higheſt elevation, and perceiving herſelf at an immenſe diſtance from the ſtarry manſions, ſhe dropped on a ſudden to the earth; and diſcontinued, at once, both to ſing, and to ſoar. Now the morning appears, and is awakening the world, our little ſongſter returns her throat, and re-exerts her wings.—As I have endeavoured, very imperfectly endeavoured, to ſtrike out a ſhadowy draught of our *LORD*'s complete obedience? I would, though unequal to the taſk, once more reſume my pen, and attempt—nothing like a diſplay, but only a faint *ſketch* of his *eſſential dignity*.

* Gen. xlv. 13.

* *To ſee the glory of CHRIST*, is the grand bleſſing, which our *LORD* ſolicits and demands for his diſciples, in his laſt ſolemn interceſſion, *John* xvii. 24. It is that which will complete the bleſſedneſs of heaven, and fill its inhabitants with joy unſpeakable and glorious.—Surely, then, we ſhould endeavour to *anticipate*, in ſome degree, that celeſtial bliſs; and *habituate* our ſouls to this ſacred exerciſe, which will be our buſineſs and our reward to endleſs ages.

Should the reader deſire aſſiſtance in this important work, I would refer him to a little treatiſe of Dr *Owen*'s, entitled, *Meditations on the glory of CHRIST*.—'Tis little in ſize, not ſo in value. Was I to ſpeak of it, in the claſſical ſtyle, I ſhould call it, *aureus, gemmeus, mellitus*. But I would rather ſay, it is richly repleniſhed with that *unction from the HOLY ONE*, which tends to enlighten the eyes, and chear the heart; which ſweetens the enjoyments of life, ſoftens the horrors of death, and prepares for the fruitions of eternity.

* Theſe, if I remember right, are the three things, which St *Auguſtine* declared, would, of all others, moſt eminently gratify his *curioſity*.

First let me observe, that, for some time past, we have been visited with the most uncomfortable weather; *dewless nights*, and *sultry days*. The firmament was more like a glowing furnace, than the region of refreshing rain.—The earth lay *parched* with thirst, and *chapped* with heat. The meadows were drained of their humidity, and all the flowers hung their fading heads.—The streams, which used to flow parallel with the verdant margin, abandoned their banks; and sunk, diminished and discoloured, to the bottom of their oozy channels. ——Nature in general seemed to be resigning the "robe "of beauty, for the garment of heaviness." *Drought* was in all our borders; and *famine*, we feared, was not far behind.——Though clouds of dust obscured the air, tarnished the hedges, and almost smothered the traveller; yet not one cloud of *fleecy white* appeared, to variegate the blue expanse, or give us hopes of a reviving shower*.

It reminded me of that awful threatening, denounced by *Moses* on a wicked people: *The heaven, that is over thy head, shall be brass; and the earth, that is under thee, shall be iron* †.——It made me apprehensive of that terrible state, which the prophet so emphatically describes: *The field is wasted, and the land mourneth. The seed is rotten under the clods, and the harvest perisheth. The garners are laid desolate, and the barns are broken down.—The new wine is dried up; the oil languisheth; and all the trees of the field are withered.—How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed. Yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. Because the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness* ‡.——But, blessed be the divine *PROVIDENCE*, our fears are vanished, and a most joyful change has taken place. The *LORD* hath *sent a gracious rain upon his inheritance, and refreshed it, when it was weary* ‖.

Yesterday in the afternoon, the wind shifting to the south, roused the *dormant* clouds, and brought some of those agreeable strangers on its wings.—At first, they came sailing in small, and thin, and scattered parties. Anon, the flying squadrons advanced in larger detachments, more *closely* wedged, and more *deeply* laden. Till, at last, the great rendezvous completed, they formed into a body of such depth, and extended their wings with such a sweep, as darkened the sun, and overspread the whole hemisphere.

Just at the close of day, the gales which escorted the spongy treasures, retired; and consigned their charge to the disposal of a profound *calm*. Not a breeze shook the most tremulous leaf. Not a curl ruffled the smooth expansive lake. All things were still, as in *attentive expectation*. The earth seemed to gasp after the hovering moisture. Nature, with her suppliant tribes, in expressive pleading silence, solicited the falling fruitfulness; nor pleaded long, nor solicited in vain.

The *showers*, gentle, soft, and balmy, descend. The vessels of heaven unload their precious freight, and enrich the penurious glebe. Through all the night, the liquid sweetness, incomparably more beneficial than trickling silver, distils; shedding herbs, and fruits, and flowers.——Now the sun, *mild* and *refulgent*, issues through the portals of the east. Pleased, as it were, to have emerged from the late aggravated darkness, he looks abroad, with peculiar gaiety, and the most engaging splendors. He looks through the disburdened air, and finds a gladdened world, that wants nothing but his *all-cheering* beams, to render its satisfaction complete.

The glory comes! Hail to thy rising ray,
Great lamp of light, and second source of day!
Who robe the world, each nipping gale remove,
Treat every sense, and beam creating love *.

At his auspicious approach, the freshened mountains lift their heads and smile. The garden opens its aromatic stores; and breathes, as from a fuming altar, balm to the smell, and incense to the skies. The little hills, crowned with springing plenty, *clap their hands* on every side. The moistened plains, and irriguous valleys, *laugh and sing*. While their waters, lately exhausted, again *are made deep*, and *the rivers run like oil* †.

The whole earth, *saturated* with the bounty of heaven, and *flushed* with humid life, wears a thousand marks of gratitude and complacency. Washed by the copious rain, how bright and vivid is the universal verdure! The *green carpet* below may almost vie with the *blue canopy* above.—The forest, and every tree, burnish their colours, and array themselves in their finest apparel: which, as on a day of general festivity, is delicately decked with gems; gems of unsullied lustre, and of genial moisture.——From every pasture, and from all the grove, the voice of *pleasure* and of *melody* resounds. While the officious zephyrs waft the floating harmony, blended with native perfumes; gently waft them to the senses, and touch the very soul with transport.

Could there be a more brilliant appearance, or more exuberant demonstrations of joy, even to celebrate the anniversary of *nature's birth?* With what admirable propriety has the *psalmist* compared yonder orient sun, in all his sparkling grandeur, to a young exulting *bridegroom* ‡; who comes forth, with every heightened ornament from his chamber, to shew himself in the most distinguished period of his life, and to receive the blessing which consummates his happiness!

This most charming and equally majestic-scene, recalls to my memory that fine description of the MESSIAH, extant in the last lovely strains of the *Israelitish swan* ‖ :—*HE shall be* welcome and salutary *as the light of the morning; when the sun ariseth*, to chase the malignant shades, and pour day through the reviving world. He shall be as the light of *a morning*, that is most serenely fair; *without* either storms to disturb, or *clouds* to obscure the glorious, the delightful dawn.——Yea, his appearance shall be *more beautiful*, and his influences *more beneficial* §, *than the clear shining* of that grand luminary, *after* a night of settled gloom, and

* At such a juncture, how pertinent is the question, proposed by the almighty *MAJESTY?* Job xxxviii. 37. 38. *Who can number*, muster or arrange, *the clouds in wisdom?* so as to have them ready at hand, on any emergency. *And who can empty those bottles of heaven*, in copious but seasonable effusions upon the earth? *when*, as in the case described above, *the dust* of the roads *is attenuated into powder*, נצקת לעפר *and the clods* of the valley *are glued fast together*, ידבקו.

† Deut. xxviii. 23. ‡ Joel i. 10. &c.

‖ Psal. lxviii. 9.

* These beautiful lines are borrowed from the SEA-PIECE, canto IV. A *narratory*, *philosophical*, and *descriptive* poem, written by my ingenious friend, Dr *Kirkpatrick*.

† Ezek. xxxii. 14. ‡ Psal. xix. 5.

‖ *Israelitish swan*—In allusion to those well-known lines of the poet,

Multa Dircæum levat aura cygnum.

And not without a reference to the *popular* notion, that the swan sings the most melodious notes in its last moments. *Fuit hæc facundi senis quasi cygnea vox.* TULLY.

§ *More beautiful, more beneficial, than the clear shining*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 4.—Thus we have ventured to translate, or rather to paraphrase, the words ממטר. That the prefix מ often occurs in the acceptation of *comparative pre-eminence*, is plain from a very remarkable passage in Psal. xix. 10. Where our inspired author, quite ravished with the love of the sacred oracles, declares, *They are desirable* beyond *gold, even* beyond *the droppings of the honeycomb*.

If this sense is admitted, we shall have a fine comparison, and a grand advance upon it; acknowledging the *insufficiency* even of the strongest and brightest images, to represent the glory of CHRIST's kingdom, and the benignity of his administration.—Perhaps, the translation may be too free and daring, and not improve itself to the exact *critic*. The sense, however, is unquestionably just; agreeable to the whole tenor of scripture; and can want no recommendation to the intelligent *Christian*.

showers

ſhowers of inceſſant *rain*. When his beams ſhed animating warmth, and vital luſtre, *on the* tender *graſs* impearled with dews, and on all the green treaſures *of the* teeming *earth*.

As we have already contemplated the bleſſed JESUS, under the amiable character of the JUST ONE; the foregoing paſſage of ſcripture repreſents him to our faith, in the more majeſtic quality of THE LORD OF GLORY; or rather, unites the two grand peculiarities, which render him *unparallelled* in his perſonal, and *all-ſufficient* in his mediatorial capacity.

Great, unſpeakably great and glorious would our SAVIOUR appear, if we had no other manifeſtations of his excellency, than thoſe which preceded his myſterious incarnation.—In the ancient ſcriptures, he ſtands characterized, as the ſupreme object of GOD's ineffable complacency; veſted with a glory, prior to the birth of time, or the exiſtence of things; even *the glory, which he had with the FATHER, before the world was* *—He is every where exhibited, as the ultimate deſire of all nations; the ſole hope of all the ends of the earth; the ſeed, of ineſtimable and univerſal importance, in whom all people, nations, and languages ſhould be bleſſed.—In thoſe royal, or rather divine *acts and monuments*, he is publicly recognized, as the RULER of GOD's people; whoſe dominion is an everlaſting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation. And how auguſt, how venerable, is this SOVEREIGN! ſince it was the higheſt honour of the moſt eminent ſaints, and renowned monarchs †, to act as his *harbingers*. The ſplendor of the temple, the richneſs of its ornaments, and the ſolemnity of its ſervices, were the enſigns of his grandeur; were his ſacred *regalia*, intended to uſher him into the world with becoming ſtate.

Every inſpired prophet was his *herald*; deputed to blazon his perfections, or foretell his coming. Let us hear one ſpeaking the ſentiments of all.——GOD the SAVIOUR *came from Teman, and the HOLY ONE from mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praiſe* ‡. Thunders ſounded his trumpet, and lightnings waved his banners. *Before him went the peſtilence*, for the deſtruction of his enemies; but, for the deliverance of *Iſrael, he rode upon his horſes and chariots of ſalvation. The mountains ſaw him, and they trembled; the everlaſting hills, and they bowed their heads. The abyſs uttered her voice*, and acknowledged his ſovereignty through her deepeſt caverns; *the towering ſurges* ‖ *lifted up their hands*, and remained in a ſuſpended poſture, while his people paſſed through their opening lines.——Indeed, both depth, and height, and every creature, have paid him homage, and done him ſervice. And ſhall not we, my dear *Theron, ſubmit to his righteouſneſs?* Submit! ſhall we not embrace it; rely on it; and, with joyful hearts, with triumphant tongues, ſay, *There is none*, there is nothing, *like it* *!

Does not all mankind agree to eſtimate the merit of the practice, according to the *dignity* of the perſon? If a neighbour of inferior rank viſit ſome poor afflicted wretch, in a coarſe garret, and on a tattered bed; it is no very extraordinary favour. But if a lady of the firſt diſtinction, or a nobleman of the higheſt order, perform the ſame office; it is a much more remarkable, a much more admired inſtance of ſelf-denying charity. On the foot of this calculation, to what a *ſupereminent* height will the worthineſs of our LORD's obedience riſe! It will riſe, like ſome magnificent edifice, whoſe baſis reſts upon the centre, whoſe dimenſions fill the hemiſphere; and whoſe turrets glitter in the ſky. Or rather, it will extend itſelf to immenſity; where length, and breadth, and all dimenſions are loſt. Eſpecially, if we conſider—the *names* he bears, and the *honours* he receives;—the *works* he has done, and thoſe *mightier* works he is appointed to do.

The *names* he bears.——The title by which JESUS of *Nazareth* is diſtinguiſhed in the heavenly world; the name written on his veſture, and on his thigh, is *KING of kings and LORD of lords* †.——The deſcription, which the incomprehenſible JEHOVAH gives of the Surety for ſinful men, runs in this exalted ſtrain; *The man that is MY FELLOW* ‡. Which the apoſtle explains, in that memorable and majeſtic clauſe; *He thought it no robbery to be equal with GOD* ‖.

* John xvii. 5.

† *Moſes*, for inſtance, and *Joſhua*, *David*, and *Solomon*, were types, ſtrongly-marked types, of our great *LAWGIVER* and *DELIVERER*, of our divine *RULER* and *PREACHER*.

‡ See *Hab.* iii. The greateſt part of which ſublime ode refers to the wonderful works recorded by *Moſes* and *Joſhua*. It ſeems, eſpecially in the exordium, to be an imitation of that grand and majeſtic deſcription, with which the *Jewiſh* legiſlator introduces his laſt ſolemn benediction, *Deut.* xxxiii.—Theſe works are by *Aſpaſio* aſcribed to *CHRIST*. And, I think, it is demonſtrably certain, that JESUS CHRIST is the *JEHOVAH* celebrated in the books of *Moſes*, and in the writings of the prophets. It is *CHRIST*, who dwelt in the burning buſh, and walked in the burning fiery furnace. It is *CHRIST*, who wrought the miracles in *Egypt*, and the wonders in the field of *Zoan*. The temporal deliverer, and the eternal *REDEEMER* of *Iſrael*, are one and the ſame.—He is that *Captain of the hoſts of the LORD*, who gave the nations as duſt to their ſword, and as driven ſtubble to their bow, *Joſh.* v. 14.—He is that *mighty One*, who puniſhed the ſtout heart of the king of *Aſſyria*; who cut down the thickets of his foreſt, and lopped his bow with terror, *If* x. 34.—He gave *Moſes* his commiſſion; gave *Moſes* his law; and was both the LORD, and the end, of that ſacred, ſignificant, myſterious œconomy. Compare 1 *Cor.* x. 9. with *Numb.* xxi. 6, 7. See *Dan.* iii. 25. *Heb.* iii. 3, 4.

‖ חם which, I think, is put in oppoſition to חמור and forms a beautiful contraſt, *ver.* 10.

* 1 Sam. xxi. 9. † Rev. xix. 16.

‡ *Zech.* xlii. 7. עמיתי *Contribulis vel coequalis: my fellow, or my equal.*—The original expreſſion occurs no where, but in this verſe of *Zechariah*, and in the book of *Leviticus*. In one text it is explained by *brother*, or partaker of the ſame nature. In every other place, I believe, it will be found to ſignify, not barely a *neighbour*, but an *equal*; one who ſtands upon the ſame level, with regard to the claims of equity, and the common rights of life.—In either ſenſe, it militates ſtrongly for divinity of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*.

‖ *Phil.* ii. 6. Some writers, I am aware, have endeavoured to interpret away this evidence of our LORD's divine nature; but I think with great injury to the context, and no leſs violence to the phraſe.

Αρπαγμον, as far as I can obſerve, denotes, not the *prize* or *ſpoil*, but the *act* of plundering or taking the ſpoil: *ipſa rapiendi actio*. Vid. STEPH. *Theſaur. Græc. ling.*—If ſo, the text moſt naturally implies, that CHRIST counted it no act of robbery; no invaſion of another's prerogative; but looked upon it as his unqueſtionable right, to be *equal with GOD*, and to receive divine honours.—— *Nevertheleſs* (αλλα, Rom. v. 14.) he was ſo far from tenaciouſly inſiſting upon, that he willingly relinquiſhed the claim. He was content to forego the magnificent diſtinctions of the CREATOR, and to appear in the form of a *creature:* nay, to be made in the likeneſs of the *fallen* creatures; and not only to ſhare the diſgrace, but to ſuffer the puniſhment, due to the *meaneſt* and *vileſt* among them all.—An example of humility, worthy to be diſplayed by the eloquence of an apoſtle, or the tongue of an archangel! worthy to be the everlaſting pattern, and the everlaſting praiſe of all believers.

But however αρπαγμος be tranſlated, the ſtreſs of the argument, I apprehend, lies upon the word ισα. If this ſignifies a *real* and *proper* equality, the proof ſeems, to me at leaſt, irrefragable.——How ſhall we determine the exact ſignificancy of this important word? by having recourſe to *Homer's* works, or to *Heathen* authors? This, in caſe the *ſacred* writers will decide the queſtion, is like going from *Jeruſalem* to *Athens* for the ſolution of a religious doubt, even while the college of apoſtles is ſitting at the former place.——The word occurs five or ſix times in *their* writings. They uſe it, it is true, in the adjective form; but the adjective is very ſufficient to ſettle the ſignification of the adverb. If I know the meaning of ισος, I ſhall be at no loſs to underſtand the import of ισα.—See *Matth.* xx. 12. *Luke* vi. 34. *John* v. 18. *Acts* xi. 17. *Rev.* xxi. 16. In all which places it expreſſes, not

—The *HOLY GHOST*, ſpeaking by the prophet *Iſaiah* of the virgin's ſon, enumerates ſeveral grand diſtinctions, both of his perſon, and his office. He ſtyles the child that ſhould be born, *the WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR, the EVERLASTING FATHER, the MIGHTY GOD, the PRINCE OF PEACE* *.—The ſame inſpired writer, though eloquent above all orators, and more ſublime than the loftieſt poet, cries out in rapturous aſtoniſhment, *Who can declare his generation* †? What pencil can pourtray, what language can expreſs, his matchleſs excellencies? And may we not with equal propriety demand, Who can declare the meritorious perfection of his righteouſneſs? It is precious beyond compariſon; beyond imagination precious.

The *honours* which our *LORD* receives, are proportioned to the illuſtrious characters which he ſuſtains.—*John* the Baptiſt, than whom a greater prophet, or a better judge, was not born of woman, profeſſes himſelf unworthy, *to ſtoop down and unlooſe the latchet of his ſhoes* ‡; unworthy, though a burning and ſhining light in his generation, to perform the meaneſt ſervice to this *PRINCE* of heaven.——*Stephen*, who leads the van in the noble army of Chriſtian martyrs, beheld ſuch a repreſentation of his crucified MASTER's glory, as enabled him to *exult* with divine *delight*, even amidſt the furious aſſaults of his perſecutors, and under the violent blows of his murderers ‖. Aſſured, that *JESUS* has all power in heaven and earth, by an act of the moſt ſolemn worſhip, he *commits* his departing *ſoul*, that moſt important of all truſts, to his *REDEEMER*'s hand §. Nor by the firſt martyr alone, but in all churches of the ſaints, and in every age of Chriſtianity, has the *LORD JESUS* been addreſſed, as the conſtant object of his people's *adoration*; and acknowledged, as the ever-faithful *depoſitary* of their eternal intereſts.

When *Iſaiah* beheld a viſionary manifeſtation of CHRIST ¶, the firſt-born ſons of light were waiting around him, in poſtures of dutiful ſubmiſſion. Theſe celeſtial beings, whoſe very *feet* are too bright for mortals to view, veil their *faces* before his infinitely ſuperior effulgence. The ſeraphs, who are all zeal and all love, celebrate his perfections, and cry one to another, *The whole earth is full of his glory.*——And is not *heaven* alſo filled with his glory? does not *heaven* likewiſe reſound with his praiſe? The beloved diſciple, in a viſion no leſs clear and far more magnificent, beholds the *LAMB* that was ſlain, ſtanding in the *midſt* of a reſplendent *throne*; moſt beautifully adorned with a circling rainbow, and terribly dignified by the blaze of lightnings, and the ſound of thunders. Before this auguſt throne, and at the diſpoſal of the once ſlaughtered *SAVIOUR*, are *ſeven lamps of burning fire*; expreſſive of the *DIVINE SPIRIT*, in all the variety of his miraculous gifts, and ſanctifying graces ⸸.—Four and twenty elders, clothed in white raiment, with crowns on their heads, and the harps of *GOD* in their hands, fall proſtrate in deepeſt homage before the *LAMB*. They ſtrike the golden ſtrings, and ſing that ſublime euchariſtic hymn: *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the ſeals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to GOD by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and haſt made us, unto our GOD, kings and prieſts* +.

Behold the hierarchies of angels: they are in number ten thouſand times ten thouſand.——*Hark!* they raiſe their voice, and awaken all the powers of harmony.—*Who* is the ſubject, and *what* is the burden of their ſong? *Worthy is the LAMB that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and bleſſing.*—Nor theſe alone, but every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and ſuch as are in the ſea, join the immenſe chorus. They cry, in loud reſponſive ſtrains of melody and devotion, *Bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the LAMB for ever and ever* *.

This, you obſerve, is the devout acknowledgment, not only of the cherubim, the ſeraphim, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, but of *every creature*.——The ſun, the moon, and the ſtars, which garniſh the *heavens*;—beaſts and creeping things, mountains and hills, fruitful trees and all cedars, which repleniſh the *earth*;—metals and minerals, gems and foſſils, the ſubterraneous riches of nature, or things which are *under the earth*;—even all thoſe objects, which my *Theron* lately contemplated, do, in their way, magnify the LORD JESUS. They bear witneſs to his power, as their CREATOR; they are ſubſervient to his intereſts, as our MEDIATOR; and, in *this* manner, they glorify his ſacred name.

Under ſuch views of the bleſſed REDEEMER, enlarged and elevated even to aſtoniſhment, is it poſſible to *over-rate* the worth of his mediatorial obedience? Is it poſſible to lay *too much* ſtreſs on his expiatory ſacrifice, or aſcribe *too much* efficacy to his vicarious righteouſneſs?

To the honours which he receives, let us add the *works* which he has done. By theſe, in the days of his fleſh, were diſplayed the greatneſs of his glory, and the might of his majeſty.

Behold! ſays the almighty FATHER; *my ſervant*, he who condeſcends to become my ſervant in the matchleſs work of redemption; *ſhall deal prudently*, ſhall conduct himſelf with all the dignity and all the ſanctity of wiſdom. In conſequence of which, *he ſhall be exalted, be extolled, and be very high* †.——The paraphraſe of the *Jewiſh* commentators on this beautiful climax is, though inadequate, not contemptible. "The MESSIAH," they ſay, "ſhall be higher than *Abraham*, more illuſtri-"ous than *Moſes*, and exalted above the angels of light, "even above the *prime miniſters* ‡ of heaven."——What follows, is an attempt to render this expoſition ſomewhat *leſs defective*.

Here, could you open my chamber-door, and peep upon your friend, you would find him in the ſame attitude, and under the ſame perplexity, which were formerly obſerved in *Phocion*. Sitting one day, amidſt an aſſembly of the people, and preparing to make a public oration, he appeared uncommonly thoughtful. Being aſked the reaſon, "I am conſidering," ſaid he, "how I "may *ſhorten*, what I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak."—The compaſs of my ſubject would demand many volumes; whereas the limits of my letter will allow but a few paragraphs.

Our LORD gave ſight to the *blind*. He poured day upon thoſe hopeleſs and benighted eyes, which had never been viſited with the leaſt dawning ray.——The *dumb*, at his command, found a ready tongue, and burſt into ſongs of praiſe. The *deaf* were all ear, and liſtened to the joyful ſound of ſalvation.——The *lame*, lame from their very birth, threw aſide their crutches, and full of tranſport and exultation, leaped like the bounding roe ‖.——He reſtored *floridity* and

not a bare *reſemblance* or *likeneſs* only, but a real and proper *equality*.

* Iſ. ix. 6. † Iſ. liii. 8. ‡ Mark i. 7.
‖ Acts vii. 56. § Acts vii. 59.
¶ *Iſ.* vi. 1, 2. *&c.* compared with *John* xii. 41.
⸸ Rev. iv. 5. + Rev. v. 9. 10.

* Rev. v. 11, 12, 13. † Iſ. lii. 13.
‡ *Prime miniſters*, this is almoſt a literal tranſlation of their words, מלאכי השרת
‖ We have the fineſt repreſentation of this event, given us by the inſpired hiſtorian, *Acts* iii. 8. *And he leaping up, ſtood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praiſing GOD.*——The very language ſeems to exult, in a *redundant flow* of expreſſive phraſes; juſt as a poor cripple, who never knew either the comfort of bodily vigour, or the pleaſure of local motion, may be ſuppoſed to do, when ſuddenly

beauty to the fleſh, emaciated by conſuming ſickneſs, or encruſted with a loathſome leproſy.—All manner of *diſeaſes*, though blended with the earlieſt ſeeds of life, and rivetted in the conſtitution by a long inveterate predominancy;—diſeaſes, that baffled the ſkill of the phyſician, and mocked the force of medicine;—*theſe* he cured, not by tedious applications, but in the twinkling of an eye; not by coſtly preſcriptions, or painful operations, but by a *word* from his mouth, or a *touch* from his hand; nay, by the *fringe* of his garment, or the bare act of his will.

Any *one* of theſe miracles had been enough to endear the character, and eternize the memory of another perſon. But they were *common* things, matters of *daily* occurrence, with our divine MASTER. The years of his public miniſtry were an unintermitted ſeries of ſuch healing wonders; or, if any intermiſſion took place, it was only to make way for more invaluable miracles of ſpiritual beneficence.

Behold him exerciſing his dominion over the *vegetable* creation. A *fig-tree*, adorned with the moſt promiſing ſpread of leaves, but unproductive of the expected fruit, *withers away* at his rebuke. It is not only ſtripped of its verdant honours, but dried up from the very roots *, and periſhes for ever. A fearful, yet ſignificant intimation of that final ruin, which will overtake the *ſpecious* hypocrite; who, while laviſh in outward profeſſion, is deſtitute of inward piety.

His eye pierced through the whole *world of waters*; diſcerning the fiſh that had juſt ſwallowed a piece of ſilver coin, and guided its courſe to *Peter*'s hook †. 'Tis true, when the gatherers of the *ſacred tax* came, to collect his ſhare for the reparation of the temple, he had not a ſufficiency of money to ſatisfy ſo ſmall a demand ‡; yet he takes occaſion from this moſt abject poverty, to manifeſt the immenſity of his riches. He makes the great deep his *revenue*, and bids the ſcaly nations bring him their *tribute*. Never was ſuch indigence aſſociated with ſuch magnificence! And never, never let us forget, that the indigence was ours, the magnificence all his own!

The *waters* themſelves, it may be ſaid, are far more unmanageable than their inhabitants. Who can controul that *outrageous element?* which has deſtroyed ſo many gallant fleets, with the armies they bore; and which would laugh at the oppoſition of the united world.—The *LORD JESUS* walks upon its rolling ſurges ‖, and ſpeaks its moſt tempeſtuous agitations into a calm. *The waves of the ſea are mighty, and rage horribly*; but yet the *LORD*, who loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, *is mightier* *.

The *winds* are yet more ungovernable than the madding ocean. When theſe are hurled † abroad, to ſhatter the foreſts, and ſhake the ſhores, who can *curb* their rage? what can *withſtand* their impetuoſity? Even the boiſterous winds hear the SAVIOUR's voice; and, as ſoon as they hear, *obey*. His voice, more powerful to reſtrain, than brazen dungeons to confine, chides the furious whirlwind. The furious whirlwind is awed into immediate ‡ ſilence. That which a moment ago heaved the billows to the clouds, and filled with outrage the howling firmament, now gently whiſpers among the ſhrouds, and ſcarcely curls the ſmooth expanſe.

Something there is, even within the narrow compaſs of our *own breaſts*, which affords room for more ſignal exertions of *DEITY*, than the turbulent billows, or the reſiſtleſs ſtorm. Agreeably to the ſuggeſtion of a prophet; *For lo! he that formeth the mountains? and createth the wind; and*, as a more pregnant proof of divine perfection, *declareth unto man what is his thought, the GOD of hoſts is his name* ‖; the poſſeſſor of ſuch ſurpaſſing power and wiſdom muſt unqueſtionably be the ſupreme *LORD*. And who is this, but *JESUS CHRIST? He knew what was in man* §. He diſcerned the ſecrets of the heart; diſcerned the latent purpoſe, before it diſcloſed itſelf in action; even before it was uttered in ſpeech; nay, while it lay yet an unformed embrio in the mind.

His glance pierced into *futurity*; eſpied events, in all their circumſtances ¶, and with the greateſt perſpicuity, before they came into being. The *hidden* things of darkneſs were open, and the *contingencies* of to-morrow were preſent, to his all-pervading eye. Nay, the unthought-of revolutions even of diſtant ages, the aſtoniſhing cataſtrophe of diſſolving nature, and the awful proceſs of everlaſting judgment, he clearly foreſaw, and particularly foretold.

ſuddenly and unexpectedly bleſſed with both. He would exert his new-acquired powers again and again; firſt in one attitude, then in another: ſometimes to try, whether he was really healed, and not under the pleaſing deluſion of a dream; ſometimes from a tranſport of conſcious delight, and to expreſs the ſallies of joy that ſprung up in his heart.

Though I acknowledge Mr *Pope*'s deſcription to be extremely beautiful,

——The lame their crutch forego,
And leap exulting like the bounding roe;

yet I cannot perſuade myſelf, that it is to be compared with St *Luke*'s draught, either in the variety of figures; in the richneſs of colouring; or in that exuberance of ſtyle, which, on this occaſion, is ſo happily ſignificant, and ſo *perfectly pictureſque*.

* Mark xi. 20.

† *Matth.* xvii. 27. How wonderful is this ſeemingly-little miracle! or rather, what a *cluſter* of wonders is comprized in this *ſingle* act!—That any fiſh, with money in its mouth, ſhould be catched,—with money juſt of ſuch a value,—and in the very firſt fiſh that offered itſelf!—What a pregnant diſplay of *omniſcience* to know, of *omnipotence* to over-rule, all theſe *fortuitous* incidents!

‡ About fourteen-pence.

‖ *He treadeth upon the waves of the ſea*, is one of the prerogatives aſcribed to the moſt high GOD, *Job* ix. 8. The original word גלים ſignifies a ſea, that rolls *mountain-high*; and ſuch, we have reaſon to ſuppoſe, were the waves on which our LORD walked; ſince the veſſel to which he bent his courſe, was βασανιζομενον, *laſhed, battered, tormented*, by their vehement concuſſions, *Matth.* xiv. 24.

* Pſal. xciii. 5.

† This is the literal tranſlation of that beautiful *Hebrew* phraſe, which occurs *Jonah* i. 4.—The ſacred writer, deſcribing the ſtormy meſſenger, which was diſpatched to arreſt a fugitive ſervant, ſays, החיל—The *LORD hurled forth* a great wind. The ſame expreſſion is applied to *Saul*, (1 Sam. xviii. 11.), when he darted his javelin at *David*, with a deſign to transfix and nail him to the wall.—What an elegant, and how awful an image! Storms and tempeſts, with all their irreſiſtible fury and dreadful ravages, are like *miſſive weapons* in the hand of JEHOVAH; which he launches with greater eaſe, and ſurer aim, than the moſt expert warrior emits the pointed ſteel.

‡ *Immediate*—This circumſtance, as very much *aggrandizing* the miracle, is, with great hiſtorical propriety, remarked by the evangeliſt. The ſea is known to have a prodigious *ſwell*, and very tremendous agitations, for a conſiderable time after the tempeſtuous wind ceaſes. On this occaſion, and in obedience to its *MAKER*'s will, it departs from the *eſtabliſhed* laws of motion.——No ſooner is the word ſpoken, but there is a *calm*; not an advancing, but an *inſtantaneous* calm; not a partial, but a *perfect* calm, *Matth.* viii. 26. *Mark* iv. 39.

‖ Amos iv. 13.

§ *John* ii. 25. This all-diſcerning intelligence of the DEITY, is very emphatically expreſſed by the pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* cxxxix. 1. 2. *&c.* tho' the ſentiment in *one* clauſe ſeems to be ſomewhat weakened by our verſion. *There is not a word in my tongue*, would have a nobler turn, and more extenſive meaning, if rendered, BEFORE *the word is on my tongue, thou, O LORD, knoweſt it altogether.*

¶ *In all their circumſtances.*——See a very remarkable exemplification of this particular, *Mark* xiv. 13. *There ſhall meet you*,—not barely a *perſon*, but the ſex and age are both ſpecified;—not two, or ſeveral, but *one* man;—not within any given ſpace of time, but at the *very inſtant* of your arrival;—not empty-handed, but bearing a *veſſel*;—not of wood or metal, but an earthen *pitcher*;—filled, not with wine or milk, but with *water*;—carrying it into *that very* houſe, where the preparation was made, and the paſſover was to be celebrated.—What a multitude of *contingencies!* all minutely foretold by our LORD!

Nor does he only *penetrate* the receſſes, but *over-rule* the operations of the ſoul.——He ſo *intimidated* a multitude of ſacrilegious wretches, that they fled, not before his drawn ſword, or bent bow, but at the ſhaking of his ſingle ſcourge *.——He ſo *awed*, by one ſhort remonſtrance †, an aſſembly of conceited and oſtentatious *Phariſees*, that they could neither gainſay, nor endure the energy of his diſcourſe. Though not to endure, was a tacit acknowledgment of guilt, and muſt cover them with public confuſion.—With a word, the moſt *mild* and *gentle* ‡ imaginable, he flung ſuch terror into a band of armed men, as blaſted all their courage, and laid them *ſtunned* and *proſtrate* on the ground.

All *hearts are in his hand. He turneth them, as the rivers of water, whitherſoever he will* ‖; with as much eaſe, and with the ſame efficacious ſway, as the current of the rivers is turned by every inflection of the channel.——*Follow me*, was his call to *James* and *John*: *Follow me* §, was all he ſaid to *Levi* the publican. Though the firſt were engaged in all the ardour of buſineſs; though the laſt was ſitting at the very receipt of cuſtom; yet both he and they, without any demur, or the leaſt delay, left their employ, left their neareſt relations, and reſigned their *earthly all*, to attend a poor and deſpiſed *MASTER*.——Their acquaintance, no doubt, would remonſtrate a thouſand inconveniencies; their enemies would not fail to cenſure them, as raſh enthuſiaſts; but all theſe conſiderations were lighter than duſt, were leſs than nothing, when ſet in competition with *two words only* from *JESUS* of *Nazareth*. Impreſſed, deeply impreſſed by his powerful ſummons, ſuch loſs they counted gain, and ſuch obloquy glory.

He planted bowels of compaſſion in the unfeeling avaricious wretch; and *elevated*, beyond the height of the ſtars, deſires that lay *grovelling* even below the mire of the ſwine. The *ſlaves* of ſin he reſtored to the *liberty* of righteouſneſs; and unhappy creatures, who were degenerated into the likeneſs of the devil, he renewed after the image of the bleſſed GOD.—Theſe were the effects of his perſonal preaching; theſe are ſtill the conqueſts of his glorious goſpel; and do not theſe declare his dominion over the intellectual œconomy? that the *world* of *minds*, as well as of material nature, is open to his inſpection, and ſubject to his control?

The *dead* ſeem to be more remote from human cogniſance, than the ſecrets of the breaſt; leſs liable to any human juriſdiction, than the warring elements. What potentate can iſſue a *writ* of *releaſe* to the grave? or cite the diſlodged ſoul, to re-enter the breathleſs corpſe?—Yet this, even this, our mighty MEDIATOR executed. He opened the eyes, which were *ſunk* in their ſockets, and *ſealed* in the tomb. He bid the heart, that had forgot its vital motion, ſpring into renewed and vigorous life. The crimſon flood, long congealed by the icy hand of death; which had not only loſt its pulſe by *ſtagnation*, but likewiſe changed its very texture by *putrefaction* *; circulates, at his order, all florid and mantling with health, through the wondering veins.——The *ſpirit*, which had taken its flight into the *inviſible* ſtate, had taken its place in eternal habitations, returns, at our *REDEEMER*'s ſignal, to the tenement of mouldering clay; and, by the amazing viſit, proclaims his ſovereignty over thoſe *unknown realms*, and their myſterious inhabitants.

As he recalls from, ſo he admits into, the abodes of future happineſs. In the very loweſt depths of his humiliation, he diſpoſed of the *ſeats* of *bliſs*, and the *thrones* of *glory*. His hands, when ſwollen with wounds, and nailed to the tree, evidently ſuſtained *the keys of hell and of death* †. Then, even then, he opened and he ſhut either the gates of the grave, or the portals of paradiſe. What he ſpeaks to the penitent thief, is the language of ſupreme authority; *To-day ſhalt thou be with him in paradiſe* ‡. 'Tis a royal *mandamus*, not an humble petition.

Does our LORD's ſuperiority extend to thoſe malignant beings, the devil and his angels?—Even theſe, in ſpite of all their formidable ſtrength ‖, and inextinguiſhable rage, he makes his footſtool. He brake the teeth of thoſe infernal lions; and reſcued the helpleſs prey, on which their bloody jaws were cloſing. At his command, they abandon their conqueſts; and relinquiſh, however *indignant*, however *reluctant*, their long-accuſtomed habitations. His *ſingle* command, more forcible than *ten thouſand* thunderbolts, diſpoſſeſſes a whole legion § of thoſe fierce and haughty ſpirits; drives them, all terrified and deprecating ſeverer vengeance, to ſeek reſt in ſolitary deſerts, are to herd with the moſt ſordid brutes.

As the bleſſed *JESUS* treads upon the necks of thoſe powers of darkneſs, he receives the willing ſervices of the *angels of light*. They that *excel* ¶ in ſtrength, and are *active* as flames of fire, even they fulfil his commandment, and hearken unto the voice of his words.——They graced the ſolemnity of his birth; they attended him, after his temptation in the

* *John* ii. 14. 15. *&c.* St *Jerome* looks upon this miracle, as one of the greateſt, which our SAVIOUR wrought. And indeed the circumſtances are very extraordinary.—That *one* man ſhould undertake ſo *bold*, and execute ſo *hazardous* a taſk;—one man, without a *commiſſion* from *Cæſar*; without any *countenance* from the *Jewiſh* rulers; without any *arms*, either to terrify the multitude or defend himſelf.—That he ſhould caſt out the whole tribe of mercenary traffickers; wreſt, from thoſe worſhippers of wealth, their darling idol; and trample under foot their great *Diana*—And all, without tumult or oppoſition; not one of the ſacrilegious rabble, daring to "move the hand, or open the "mouth, or peep."—Whoever reflects on the *fierce* and *ungovernable* nature of an incenſed populace; or conſiders the *bitter* and *outrageous* zeal of *Demetrius* and the craftſmen, on a leſs irritating occaſion; may poſſibly find himſelf almoſt, if not altogether, of the *Latin* father's opinion.

† John viii. 7. ‡ John xviii. 6. ‖ Prov. xxi. 1.

§ *Mark* ii. 14. He ſaid in the beginning, *Let there be light*: there was light: *Let there be a firmament*; 'twas ſpread abroad: *Let there be a world*: it aroſe of nothing.—In the days of his fleſh likewiſe, he ſpeaks, and it is done. His word is a work. He ſays to the diſciples, *Follow me*: they come:—to the leper, *Be clean*: he is cleanſed:—to the paralytic, *Ariſe, take up thy bed, and walk*: 'tis all performed, as ſoon as commanded.—Surely then we muſt confeſs, this is *the voice of a GOD, not of a man!* Τυφλω is our LORD's *uſual* word, when he grants a miraculous cure: which exactly correſponds with that admired and magnificent expreſſion of *Gen.* i. 3.

* John xi. 39. † Rev. i. 18. ‡ Luke xxiii. 43.

‖ *Milton*, deſcribing the power of the apoſtate angels, ſays,

——*The leaſt of whom could wield*
Theſe elements: and arm him with the force
Of all their regions. Book VI. 221.

§ Mark v. 9.

¶ Would any one ſee a ſketch of the glory and excellence of the angelic nature? Let him ſee it, in that inimitably fine ſtroke of the ſacred pencil: *I ſaw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory*, Rev. xviii. 1. The laſt clauſe is, I think, one of the moſt maſterly touches of deſcriptive painting, extant in hiſtory, poetry, or oratory. *Milton* gives us a ſtricture of the ſame kind, and on the ſame ſubject. But the *poetic flight*, though very ſublime, is abſolutely inferior to the *apocalyptic viſion*.

——*On he led*
His radiant files, dazzling the moon.

In this caſe, we have a *whole* brigade of celeſtial warriors; in the former, only a *ſingle* angelic being. Thoſe are repreſented, as irradiating the *night*, and outſhining the *moon*: this, as exceeding the brightneſs of the *ſun*; diffuſing additional ſplendors on the *day*; and illuminating, not a vaſt plain, not a vaſter kingdom, but the *whole face* of the globe.—If *ſuch* be the luſtre of the ſervant, what images can diſplay the majeſty of the LORD? who has *thouſand thouſands* of thoſe glorious attendants *miniſtering unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtanding before him*? Dan. vii. 10.

wilderneſs;

wilderneſs; they were the firſt joyful preachers of his triumphant reſurrection, and now he is ſeated on the right hand of the MAJESTY in the higheſt,

——They ſtand with wings outſpread,
Liſt'ning to catch their Maſter's leaſt command,
And fly through nature, 'ere the moment end.

Behold him, now, doing according to his will, in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;---ſwaying the ſceptre over the legions of hell, and the powers of nature;----exerciſing dominion in the hearts of men, in the territories of the grave, and manſions of diſembodied ſpirits. Then let my *Theron* determine,---under ſuch views of our SAVIOUR's unequalled majeſty, and unbounded ſovereignty, let him determine,---whether it be ſafer to reſt our infinite and eternal intereſts on *our own* righteouſneſs, rather than on his.

We have ſelected ſome few manifeſtations of our REDEEMER's *excellent greatneſs*. Even the evangelical hiſtorians give us no larger a proportion of his aſtoniſhing deeds, than the firſt-fruits bear to a copious harveſt. Yet, were they all particularly enumerated, and circumſtantially diſplayed, they would appear inconſiderable, compared with thoſe far *more diſtinguiſhed* trophies of almighty power, which he has decreed, in ſome future period, to erect *.

He will gather to his ſacred fold, the people of his ancient church; though they are *diſperſed* into all lands, and moſt inveterately *prejudiced* againſt the truth of his goſpel.---How mighty was his hand, how illuſtriouſly outſtretched his arm, when he made a path through the ſurges of the ocean, drove the torrent of *Jordan* backwards, and fetched rivers of waters from the flinty rock! Far more mighty will be its operations, when he ſhall remove the ſeemingly-unſurmountable obſtructions to the general *reſtoration* of the *Jews*; ſhall throw all their religious apprehenſions into a new channel; and cauſe ſtreams of penitential ſorrow to ſtart from their ſtony eyes, confeſſions of unfeigned faith to iſſue from their blaſphemous lips.---Yet thus it will aſſuredly be. In the volume of the divine book it is written, *They ſhall look on him, whom they have pierced, and mourn* †. They ſhall adore as the MESSIAH, the once deſpiſed *Galilean*: and fix all their hopes of final felicity on that very PERSON, whom their fathers ſlew and hanged on a tree.

Amazing revolution in the religious world! Yet this, together with the deſtruction of *Antichriſt*, and the illumination of the benighted *Gentiles*, may paſs for *ſmall* incidents, compared with thoſe ſtupendous events, which will dignify, and ſignalize the cloſing ſcene of affairs.

Then ſhall the LORD JESUS be manifeſted in unſpeakable glory; and exert ſuch acts of omnipotence, as ſhall be the *terror* of hell, the *joy* of heaven, the *wonder* of eternity.---Then will he put an end to time, and bid the ſprings of nature ceaſe to operate. Then ſhall his tremendous trumpet rend the univerſal vault, and pierce the dormitories of the dead.---Then will he *ſhake the earth out of its place* *, and before his majeſtic preſence the *heavens ſhall flee away* †.---Then ſhall, not *a nation* only, but multitudes, multitudes of nations, *be born in a day* ‡; yea rather, in an hour, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.---All that are aſleep in the beds of death; even thoſe who, periſhing in *tempeſts*, are ſunk to the bottom of the ocean; or, ſwallowed up by *earthquakes*, are buried at the centre of the globe; all ſhall hear his voice; and hearing, ſhall awake; and awaking, ſhall come forth.---Every human body, though *ages* have revolved, ſince it gave up the ghoſt; though *worms* have devoured the fleſh, and diſſolution mouldered the bones; though its parts have been *grinded* by the teeth of beaſts, or *conſumed* by the rage of fire; diſſipated in *viewleſs* winds, or ſcattered over the *boundleſs* globe; loſt to our ſenſes, and loſt even to our imagination; yet will every human body then be reſtored; its limbs re-aſſembled, and not an atom wanting; its frame rebuilt, and never be demoliſhed more.

Then ſhall the unnumbered myriads of departed ſpirits return from their ſeparate abodes; and, commiſſioned by HIM *who is the reſurrection and the life*, reanimate each his organized ſyſtem.---Then ſhall *Satan* and his accomplices, thoſe execrable and horrid criminals, be dragged from their dungeons of darkneſs, and receive their doom at the REDEEMER's tribunal.---Then will miſery and happineſs, both *conſummate*, and both *everlaſting*, be awarded by the SAVIOUR's ſentence.---Then will he conſign over the

* Job ix. 6.

† How grand is the idea, when *David* prays! *Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down; touch the mountains, and they ſhall ſmoke.* —Much grander is the image, when he ſays, *The ſprings of waters were ſeen, and the foundations of the world were diſcovered, at thy chiding, O LORD, at the blaſt of the breath of thy diſpleaſure.*---Tranſcendently and inimitably grand is this deſcription, though given us by the moſt plain and artleſs writer in the world: *I ſaw a great white throne, and* HIM THAT SAT ON IT, *from whoſe face the heavens and the earth fled away, and there was no place found for them,* Rev. xx. 11.

In *Virgil*'s admired repreſentation, *Jupiter* hurls his thunder, and a mountain falls at the ſtroke;

——Ille flagranti
Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo
Dejicit. Georg. I. 331.

In *Homer*'s more terror-ſtriking piece, *Neptune* ſhakes the wide-extended earth. The mountains tremble to their centre; the ocean heaves its billows; and cities reel on their foundations.

——Αὐταρ ἐπὶρδε Ποσειδαων ἐνοσιχθων
Γαιαν απειρεσιην, ὀρεων τ' αιπεινα καρηνα,
Πασαι δ' ἐσσεισθη πόδες πολυπιδακος Ἰδης
Και κορυφαι, Τρωων τε πολις, καὶ νηες Αχαιων.

Iliad. Υ. 57.

Here the SON of the eternal GOD *appears* only, and all nature is alarmed: nor heaven nor earth can keep their ſtanding; they flee away, like the frighted roe.—How *grovelling* are the loftieſt flights of the *Grecian* and *Roman* muſe, compared with this magnificence and elevation of the *prophetic* ſpirit!

Let us conſider the paſſage a little more attentively. *Volet hæc ſub luce videri.* Maſterly performances, the more cloſely they are examined, the more highly they charm.——It is not ſaid, a few herds of the foreſt, a few kings, or armies, or nations; but the *whole ſyſtem* of created things.—It is not ſaid, they were thrown into great commotions, but they *fled* entirely away; not, they ſtarted from their foundations, but they *fell into diſſolution*; not, they removed to a diſtant place, but *there was found go place for them*; they ceaſed to exiſt; they were no more.—And all this, not at the ſtrict command of the LORD JESUS; not at his awful menace, or before his fiery indignation; but at the *bare preſence* of his majeſty, ſitting with ſerene but adorable dignity on his throne.

If this is not the *true ſublime*, in its utmoſt ſcope, force, and beauty, I muſt confeſs, I never ſaw it, nor ever expect to ſee it.

‡ Iſ. lx. 8.

The dignity of our LORD, conſidered as the CREATOR PRESERVER of all things, is not mentioned *here*; becauſe ſomething of this kind is profeſſedly attempted, in *the Deſcant upon* Creation, ſubjoined to the firſt volume of *Meditations among the* Tombs, &c. To which I beg leave to refer my readers; and ſhall rather than make amends for the preſent omiſſion, by tranſcribing the paſſage from the *Night-Thoughts*: which preſents us with a magnificent diſplay of this great truth.

——THOU, by whom all *worlds*
Were made, *and* one redeem'd; *whoſe regal power*
On more than adamantine baſis fix'd;
O'er more, far more than diadems and thrones
Inviolably reigns; beneath whoſe foot,
And by the mandate of whoſe awful nod,
All regions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,
Of high, of low, of mind and matter, roll
Through the ſhort channels of expiring time,
Or ſhoreleſs ocean of eternity.

Night-Thoughts, No. IX.

† Zech. xii. 10.

ungodly

ungodly world, and the rebellious angels, to the flames of hell, and to agonies of deſpair. Then will he inveſt the *righteous* with the inheritance of heaven, and inſtate them in the fulneſs of joy. His word is fate; *immutability* ſeals, and *eternity* executes, whatever he decrees.

And has *this* JESUS, ſo glorious, ſo majeſtic, ſo adorable,—has HE vouchſafed to take our nature, and become our righteouſneſs? was HE made under the law? did HE fulfil all its demands? give perfect ſatisfaction to the *penal*, and yield perfect obedience to the *preceptive*? oh purpoſe, that the merit of *all* might be made over to us?——Aſtoniſhing condeſcenſion! ineffable grace! What thanks are due to ſuch infinitely rich goodneſs!—What a remedy is here, for the impotence and guilt of fallen man!—What a ſure foundation of hope, and what an abundant ſource of joy, to every one that believeth?

It is declared by the oracle of GOD, That *ſuch an* HIGH PRIEST *became us*, was abſolutely neceſſary for our obnoxious and ruined condition, *who is holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners,—and made higher than the heavens* *. It appears, I flatter myſelf, from the letter already in your hand, that CHRIST fully anſwered the former character; and from this epiſtle, I hope it will appear, that he is the very perſon deſcribed in the latter clauſe.

Eſtimate now, my dear friend, eſtimate if you can, the glory and excellency of this ſublime PERSON. Then may you learn how to ſtate the *worth* of his righteouſneſs, and the *degree* of affiance ſuited to his merits. Rather you will perceive, that his ſpotleſs birth, his perfectly-obedient life, his exquiſitely-bitter death, are a ſatisfaction of unknown dignity; *precious* †, far beyond all the graces of men, and all the duties of angels; *able* to ſave to the uttermoſt, all that rely on them, and come unto GOD through them.

Conſonant to this, are the ſentiments of that penetrating critic and profound ſcholar, Dr *Lightfoot;* who, treating of our SAVIOUR's obedience, ſays,—"Add to all "this the dignity of his perſon, who performed this obe- "dience; that he was GOD as well as man; and his "obedience is infinite; ſuch as in its validity ſubdued "Satan, and in its all-ſufficiency ſatisfied the juſtice of "GOD."——After which, our celebrated author makes this important and delightful improvement; "Think, "*Chriſtian*, what a ſtock of obedience and righteouſneſs "here is for thee, to anſwer and ſatisfy for thy diſobe- "dience and unrighteouſneſs, if thou become a child of "the covenant. Here is enough for every ſoul that "comes to him, be they never ſo many. Like the wi- "dow's oil in the book of *Kings*, there is enough and "enough again, as long as any veſſel is brought to re- "ceive it ‡."

We need not wonder, that *Gentiles*, who are ignorant of the REDEEMER; that *Jews*, who treat him with contemptuous ſcorn; that *profeſſors* of religion; who deny his eternal GODHEAD; place little, if any confidence in his righteouſneſs. But it is ſtrange, that *Chriſtians*, who know the SAVIOUR; who acknowledge his divinity; and believe him to be exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe;—it is exceedingly ſtrange, that they do not *rejoice* in him; *make* their *boaſt* of him; and ſay, with a becoming diſdain, of every other dependence, *Get ye hence* ‖!

Such an aſſemblage of divine perfections, muſt *warrant*, muſt *demand*, the moſt undivided, and the moſt unbounded confidence.——There never was, no, not in all ages, not in all worlds, any thing greater or richer, *more* dignified, or exalted, than the obedience of our LORD.——Nay, it is impoſſible to imagine, what could be *ſo* ſuited to our wants, *ſo* proper for our reliance, or *ſo* ſure to anſwer, more than anſwer all our expectations.

Remember what the apoſtle affirms, and you will not wonder at my aſſertion. *In HIM dwelleth all the fulneſs of the GODHEAD bodily.* How comprehenſive and exalted is this deſcription! It collects into a point all the rays of majeſty and honour. It expreſſes in a ſentence, I ſay not whatever this pen has written, but whatever of dignity and excellence the Bible itſelf contains,—*the* GODHEAD, the very nature and eſſence of the DEITY;—*the fulneſs* of the GODHEAD; unerring wiſdom, almighty power, and whatever the great JEHOVAH challenges as his own;—*all* the fulneſs; every adorable attribute, in the moſt ample meaſure, and in the higheſt degree;—all this *dwells*, not viſits occaſionally, but ſtatedly, invariably, eternally reſides;——dwells in CHRIST JESUS *bodily*, with an union inconceivably cloſe and intimate; inſomuch that the GODHEAD inhabiting, and the manhood inhabited, make but one and the ſame PERSON.

Therefore, adds the ſacred diſputant, *Ye are complete in* HIM *. Never was any concluſion more weighty in itſelf, or founded on more ſolid principles.——Ye are not only pardoned, but reconciled; and not only reconciled, but juſtified; nay, ye are,—and what can be ſaid or deſired more?—ye are COMPLETE. And not barely before men or angels, but before infinite purity and omniſcience itſelf. *Ye are made* (amazing and charming truth!) *the righteouſneſs of* GOD † in this wonderful SAVIOUR.——What a fountain is this, or rather what a ſea of fathomleſs depth, to obliterate all ſins, and ſupply all wants! What a mirrour of GOD's ſtupendous grace, and ever to be adored loving-kindneſs!

Here let our meditations fix, and here let all our expectations center. From this, not from any thing of our own, let us derive our peace, our joy, our ſupreme complacency.——Into this ſubject we can never dive too deeply. Of this ſubject we can never think too magnificently. The righteouſneſs of CHRIST is the master-pillar, on which our eternal welfare reſts. Nay, is the only ſupport, which preſerves us from ſinking into endleſs perdition.

There hangs all human hope; that nail ſupports
Our falling univerſe.

This renders his interceſſion prevalent. He is an advocate, a ſucceſsful advocate with the *FATHER*. Why? Becauſe he is JESUS CHRIST *the righteous* ‡.—From hence reſults his ability to juſtify. He ſhall juſtify many, ſaith the LORD JEHOVAH. On what conſideration? Becauſe he is my *righteous ſervant* ‖.—This, and no other, is the meritorious cauſe of our ſalvation. *Judah ſhall be ſaved;* ſhall eſcape damnation, and inherit glory. On what account? On account of *the righteous BRANCH raiſed up unto David* §.—Since then our acceptance, juſtification, and ſalvation; ſince our comfort in time, and our happineſs to eternity, *all* depend upon the righteouſneſs of CHRIST; how ſhould we delight in contemplating its *faultleſs*, its *matchleſs*, its *tranſcendent* excellence!——Grand! all-ſufficient! in every reſpect perfect!——Nothing equal to it, on earth, in heaven, throughout

* Heb. vii. 26.

† This is expreſſed by the ſacred hiſtorian, with an energy which no tranſlation can equal; τον τιμιον τε τετιμημενε ον ετιμησαντο απο υιων Ισραηλ. Matth. xxvii. 9.

‡ *Lightfoot*'s works, vol. 2. p. 1258.

‖ Iſ. xxx. 22.

* Col. ii. 9, 10.

† 2 Cor. v. 21.

‡ 1 John ii. 1.

‖ Iſ. liii. 11.

§ *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. I believe, it will be needleſs to obſerve, that the ſalvation, mentioned in this and other paſſages of like import, is not limited to a *temporal* deliverance, but extends to a far more ſpiritual and *eternal* happineſs. The temporal is only a ſubordinate bleſſing; a kind of appendage to the other: ſomewhat like the *halo* round the globe of the moon, or that *faint* and *ſecondary* rainbow of colours, which frequently attends the glowing rainbow.

out the universe!—surpassing the enormity of our guilt! surpassing the reach of our imagination! surpassing all that we can express or conceive! being truly, properly, absolutely DIVINE!

And is this righteousness mine? is this righteousness yours, *Theron?* is this righteousness free for *every* sinner? Pleasing, captivating, rapturous thought!—Who can forbear exulting and triumphing, in this boundless, this infinite blessing? On *such* an occasion, methinks, some sallies of enthusiasm, or even some starts of tautology, are the language of sensibility, of proptiety, of nature. *Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD*, the *LORD* himself, *hath done it.* Our justifying righteousness is finished; finished by *JEHOVAH*, sojourning in human clay. *Shout ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains; O forest, and every tree therein. For the LORD hath* most marvellously *redeemed Jacob, and* no less illustriously *glorified himself in* the recovery of *Israel* *.——O for the tongue of a seraph!—But even this would be defective; such ardour cold, and such energy languid.

I have done; I add no more; I leave it—to some future letter? to some more labour'd essay? No; but to the hymns of heaven, and the adorations of eternity, to supply the deficiency of my acknowledgments.——In the mean time, let me entreat my *Theron* to contemplate our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, under that most illustrious character, described by the prophet, *A PRIEST upon his THRONE* †; dignifying the sacerdotal censer by the regal diadem; adding all the honours of his *eternal divinity*, to the sacrifice of his *bleeding humanity.*——Then, I promise myself, you will find it almost impossible, not to adopt the emphatical and ardent protestation of the apostle; *GOD forbid, that I should glory*, that I should confide, *save only in the* obedience and the *cross of CHRIST JESUS my LORD!*

* Is. xliv. 23. † Zech. iv. 13.

When you made the tour of *France* and *Italy*; and, crossing the *Alps*, gained the summit of some commanding ridge;—when you looked round, with astonishment and delight, on the *ample plains*, which, crouded with cities, and adorned with palaces, stretch their beauteous tracts below; when you surveyed the *famous rivers*, that roll in silent but shining dignity; stating the boundaries of kingdoms, and wafting plenty through the gladdened nations; when you shot your transported view to the *ocean*; whose unmeasurable flood meets the arch of heaven, and terminates the landscape with inconceivable grandeur;—did you, then, chuse to forego the pleasure resulting from such a prospect, in order to gaze upon the *naked crag* of some adjacent rock? or, could you turn your eyes from those magnificent objects, and fasten them with pleased attention upon a *shallow puddle*, that lay stagnating at your feet?

You, who have beheld the scene, can accommodate the simile, with peculiar advantage. For which reason, I shall wave the application; and only beg leave to transcribe a wish, that is now warm on my heart, and is often breathed in supplication from my lips:—May the FATHER of our spirits, and the Fountain of wisdom, *give us an* enlightened *understanding, to* KNOW *him that is true*; grant us the inestimable blessing, *that we may* BE IN *him that is true, even in his SON JESUS CHRIST. For this SAVIOUR is the true GOD, and* that privilege is *life eternal* *.

My *Theron* needs no argument to convince him, that such a prayer is an act of *rational* and *real* friendship; is the most genuine and substantial proof, that I am

His truly affectionate,

ASPASIO.

* 1 John v. 20.

LETTER IX.

THERON *to* ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

YOUR two letters have reached my hand; and I hope they have not missed my heart. I might inform you, what pleasure they gave me, and how highly I esteem them. But you desire no such compliments: you desire to see me impressed with the sentiments, and living under their influence. This would be the most acceptable acknowledgment to my *Aspasio*, because it would be the most happy effect to his *Theron*. May every day, therefore, bring a fresh accession of *such* gratitude to me, and of *such* satisfaction to you.

To watch for my soul, and pray for my salvation, I am thoroughly convinced, is the truest instance of rational and exalted friendship. Every claim to that amiable character is *defective* and *vain*, if it does not extend to our spiritual interests, and our everlasting welfare. For which reason, I need not entreat *you* to continue and perpetuate this best expression of social kindness. Or if I do, it is rather to testify how much I prize the favour, than to prompt your affectionate and ready mind.

Your last found me at a friend's house, which lies pretty near the *western ocean.*—Yesterday waked by the lark, and rising with the dawn *, I strolled into the fragrant air, and dewy fields; while, as *Shakespear*, with his usual sprightliness, expresses himself,

——————*Jocund day*
Stood tip-toe on the misty mountain's top.

Sweet was the breath of morn, and sweet the exhalations of the freshened flowers;—grateful were the soft-salutes of the cooling zephyrs, attended with the charm of earliest birds;—delightful the sun, painting with his orient beams the chambers of the firmament, and unveiling the face of universal nature.

My mind, but little affected with these inferior entertainments, was engaged in contemplating an object of infinitely-superior dignity; in contemplating that adorable *BEING*, who raised—from *nothing* raised this stupendous system of things; and supports—with his *word* supports the magnificent frame; who, (to speak in the language of his own *SPIRIT*) *openeth the eyelids of the morning, and commandeth the day-spring to know its place* *; commandeth the light, by its punctual and pleasing ministrations, to draw aside the curtain of darkness, and discover the skies shining with glories, and disclose the earth, blooming with beauties.

* *Evandrum ex humili tecto lux suscitat alma,*
Et matutini volucrum sub culmine cantus. VIRG.

Lux alma——A lovely expression! describing the mildness, the beauty, and the chearing efficacy of the rising sun. It is, I think, incapable of an *equal* translation; but reminds me of a very fine comparison in our *sacred eclogues*, which represents the charming appearance, and the benign influence of the gospel-church, at its first opening on the *Gentile world*,—*Who is this that looketh forth as the morning?* Cant. vi. 10.

* Job xxxviii. 12.

FATHER of light and life, ſaid my tranſported mind,

——*Thou GOOD SUPREME!*
O teach me what is good! teach me THYSELF.
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low purſuit! and feed my ſoul
With faith, *with conſcious peace, and virtue pure,*
Sacred, ſubſtantial, never-fading bliſs *.

Wrapt in wonder, and loſt in thought, I rambled careleſsly along, till I was inſenſibly brought to the ſhore: which, in theſe parts, is prodigiouſly high and ſtrong; perfectly well fitted, to ſtand as an everlaſting *barrier* †, againſt the impetuous ſtroke of conflicting winds, and the ponderous ſweep of daſhing ſurges.——Not that the omnipotent *ENGINEER* has any need of theſe impregnable ramparts. *Here*, it is true, they intervene; and not only repaſs the rolling invader, but ſpeak the amazing majeſty of their MAKER. In *other* places, all ſuch laboured methods of fortification are laid aſide. The CREATOR ſhews the aſtoniſhed world, that he is confined to no expedients; but orders all things *according to the pleaſure of his own will*. He bids a low bank of deſpicable ſand, receive and repel the moſt furious ſhocks of aſſaulting ſeas: and, *though the waves thereof toſs themſelves* with incredible fierceneſs, *yet can they not prevail*; though *they roar*, and ſeem to menace univerſal deſtruction, *yet can they not paſs over* ‡ this ſlighteſt of mounds.

A winding paſſage broke the declivity of the deſcent; and led me, by a gradual ſlope, to the bottom.—The moon being in her laſt quarter, and the tide at its greateſt receſs, I walked for a while, where briny waves were wont to flow.—The ebbing waters had left a vacant ſpace, ſeveral furlongs broad; equal in *length*, to a very extended viſta; *ſmooth* on its ſurface, as the moſt level bowling green; and almoſt as *firm*, as the beſt compacted cauſey. Inſomuch, that the tread of a horſe ſcarce impreſſes it, and the waters of the ſea never penetrate it. Excluſive of this wiſe contrivance, the ſearching waves would inſinuate themſelves into the heart of the earth; the earth itſelf would be *hollow* as an honeycomb, or *bibulous* as a ſponge; and the ſea, ſoaking by degrees through all its cavities, would, in proceſs of time, forſake its bed, and mingle with the plains and mountains. But this cloſely-cemented or glutinous kind of pavement, is like *claying* the bottom of the univerſal canal. So that the returning tides conſolidate, rather than perforate its ſubſtance, and prevent the ſun from cleaving it with chinks.——Such, I hope, will be the caſe with this ſoul of mine, and the temptations that beſet me. Beſet me they do, they will. But may they never *win* upon my affections, nor gain *admittance* into my heart! Let them make me humble, and keep me vigilant; teach me to walk cloſely with my GOD, and urge me to an inceſſant dependance on *CHRIST*. Then, inſtead of being *ruinous*, they may become *advantageous*; and inſtead of ſhattering, will only cleanſe the rock, on which they daſh.

The mighty waters, reſtleſs, even in their utmoſt tranquillity, with a ſolemn ‖ but placid murmur, ſtruck my ear. The billows, ſometimes advancing to kiſs the ſand, ſometimes drawing back their curly heads into the deep, whitened, at their extremities, into an agreeable foam; which, with the reflexive repreſentation of the azure canopy, formed the appearance of a moſt ſpacious floating mantle, tinged with a beautiful blue, and edged with fringes of ſilver.—*Dignity* and *elegance*, I find, are the inſeparable characteriſtics of the CREATOR's workmanſhip. As *comfort* and *happineſs*, I ſometimes perceive, are the very ſpirit of his goſpel, and the genuine produce of his commands.

On one ſide, the *Atlantic* main rolled its ſurges from world to world.——*Immenſe*, *immenſe* diffuſion of waters! What a ſpectacle of magnificence and terror! What an irreſiſtible incitement to reverence and awe! How it fills the mind, and amazes the imagination! 'Tis the grandeſt and moſt auguſt object under the whole heavens.—It reminds me of that apocalyptic viſion, which *John*, the enraptured ſeer, beheld! *As it were a great mountain burning with fire, was caſt into the ſea, and the third part of the ſea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the ſea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ſhips were deſtroyed* *. I have not penetration enough to diſcover the ſpiritual meaning of this paſſage; but I diſcern a moſt *dreadful grandeur* in its plain and literal ſenſe. If we conſider the wonderful compaſs, and the terrible force of ſuch an enormous maſs of fire; if we conſider its horrible and deſtructive effects, on ſuch a vaſt body of waters, as the third part of the ocean; how tremendous and aſtoniſhing is the idea! Surely, nothing but divine inſpiration could ſuggeſt theſe images; as none but an almighty *BEING* can execute this vengeance. Who would not fear an eternal KING, that has ſuch weapons, and ſuch artillery, *reſerved againſt the day of battle and war* †?

Spacious as the ſea is, *GOD* has provided a *garment* to cover it. Profound as the ſea is, *GOD* has prepared *ſwaddling-bands* to inwrap it. Ungovernable as it may ſeem to us, he over-rules it with as much eaſe, as the nurſe manages a new-born *infant* ‡. An infant it is before almighty power; and to an infant it is compared by *JEHOVAH* himſelf; though, to our apprehenſion, it raves like a *ſtupendous madman*.——But if he command, it opens a peaceful bottom, and receives his people. It ſmooths the way for their paſſage, and ſtands as a bulwark for their defence. They march *through the midſt of the ſea upon dry ground, and the waters are a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left* ‖. If he reverſes his mandate, they drive down, with an irreſiſtable ſweep, upon the hoſts of *Pharaoh*, and overwhelm the chariots and horſes of *Egypt*. They pour confuſion upon Arrogance §, and diſappoint the deſigns of Perſecution and Cruelty.——If he ſays, *Be ſtill*; the bellowing ſurges are huſhed, and the gentleſt lamb is not ſo quiet. If he ſays, *Deſtroy*; even the quieſcent waters kindle into rage; they riſe in their MAKER's cauſe; and ten thouſand lions,

* THOMSON's Winter.

† Theſe doubtleſs, are "the doors and the bars," which the ALMIGHTY mentions in the courſe of his awful interrogatories to *Job*; the *maſſy* doors, which can never be forced; the *ſolid* bars, which can never be broke; and I may add, the *conſpicuous* columns on which his Providence has inſcribed that ſovereign mandate, *Ne plus ultra*. Or, as the prohibition runs in his own majeſtic words, *Hitherto ſhalt thou go, but no farther*, Job xxxviii. 10.

‡ Jer. v. 22.

‖ This is deſcribed with inimitable propriety by HOMER;

Βη δ' αυτων παρα νηας πολυφλοισβοιο θαλασσης.

And only not quite ſo beautifully by MILTON;

——*He ſaid; and as the ſound of waters deep*
Hoarſe murmur echo'd to his words applauſe.

* Rev. viii. 8. 9. † Job xxxviii. 23.

‡ Job xxxviii. 8. 9. ‖ Exod. xiv. 22.

§ *Arrogance*—This is deſcribed with exquiſite delicacy, in the Επινικιον or triumphant ſong of *Moſes*. *The enemy ſaid, I will purſue; I will overtake; I will divide the ſpoil; my luſt ſhall be ſatisfied upon them; I will draw my ſword, mine hand ſhall deſtroy them.*——What ſwelling words of vanity are here! The very ſpirit of a *Thraſo* breathes in every ſyllable of this beautiful *proſopopœia*. Never was the language of *Bluſter*, *Ferocity*, and *Rhodomontade*, ſo finely mimicked.——How noble is the turn, and how exalted the ſentiment, which follows! *THOU didſt blow with thy wind; the ſea covered them; they ſank as lead in the mighty waters.* The GOD of *Iſrael* need not ſummon all his power, or level the right-aiming thunderbolts; he only blows with his wind, and the great mountain breaks like a bubble. All this inſolent and formidable parade is quaſhed; ſinks into nothing; expires in ſhame and ruin. *Exod.* xv. 9. 10.

ſtung

ſting with hunger, and ruſhing upon their prey, are not ſo fierce. When he bids them execute any other commiſſion, the horſe broke to the bit, the ſpaniel diſciplined to the ſignal, are not half ſo dutiful and obſequious.——And ſhall *our paſſions* be more wild than the winds, more turbulent than the billows? Forbid it, almighty LORD! Thou that *ruleſt the raging of the ſea; and the noiſe of his waves*, reſtrain, ſubdue, *and* calm *the madneſs of the people.*

The eye travels hard. It wanders over a vaſt, vaſt length of fluctuating plains *. It reaches the limits of the hemiſphere, where ſkies and waves ſeem to mingle. Yet it has ſcarce made *an entry* upon the world of waters. What I here diſcern, is no more than the *ſkirts* of the great and wide ſea. Tracts incomparably broader are ſtill behind; and tracts of unbounded extent are behind even thoſe.——Great then, O my ſoul, inconceivably great, is that adored and glorious SOVEREIGN, who ſitteth upon this flood as upon a throne †; nay, who holds it, diffuſed as it is from pole to pole, in the hollow of his hand; and before whom, in all its prodigious dimenſions, it is but as the drop of a bucket.—— How ſhall reptiles of the ground ſink *low enough* in their own apprehenſions! What humiliation can be ſufficiently deep for ſinful mortals, before this "high and "holy ONE!" Yet how may they *riſe* on the wings of hope! how may they *ſoar* on the pinions of faith! when, in the language of his prophet, and in his own SON's name, they thus addreſs the everlaſting GOD. *Awake! awake! put on ſtrength, O arm of the LORD! awake*, for our ſuccour and ſecurity, *as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it, that hath cut* Rahab, *and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it, which hath dried the ſea, the waters of the great deep? that hath made the depths of the ſea, a way for the ranſomed to paſs over* ‡?

How grand, ſurpriſingly grand and majeſtic, are the *works*, as well as the attributes of an omnipotent BEING! What are all the canals in all the countries of the earth, compared with this immenſe reſervatory! What are all the ſuperb edifices, erected by royal munificence, compared with yonder concave of the ſkies! And what are the moſt pompous illuminations of theatres and triumphant cities, compared with the reſplendent ſource of day! They are a *ſpark*, an *atom*, a *drop*.——Nay, in every ſpark, and atom, and drop, which proceeds from the hand of the ALMIGHTY, there is the manifeſtation of a wiſdom and a power abſolutely incomprehenſible.

Let us examine a ſingle drop of water, the very leaſt quantity that the eye can diſcern; only ſo much, as will juſt adhere to the point of a needle. In this almoſt imperceptible ſpeck, a famous philoſopher computes no leſs than *thirteen thouſand* globules. Amazing to conceive! impoſſible to explicate!——If then in ſo ſmall a ſpeck abundantly more than ten thouſand globules exiſt, what myriads of myriads muſt float in the unmeaſured extent of the ocean!—Let the ableſt arithmetician try to comprehend in his mind, not the internal conſtitution, but only the *number* of theſe fluid particles. As well may he graſp the winds in his fiſt, or mete out the univerſe with his ſpan, as execute the taſk.—If then we are utterly unable to number (which is the *moſt ſuperficial* of all reſearches) even the moſt common works of the great JEHOVAH; how can we pretend to lay open the ſecrets, and penetrate the receſſes of his infinite mind! How can we pretend to inveſtigate the whole proceſs, and ſolve all the difficulties, of that *higheſt* and *deepeſt* of the divine ſchemes, REDEMPTION!

I have ſometimes been offended, I muſt confeſs, when you have enlarged upon the *myſterious* truths of *Chriſtianity*. But I perceive, the beam was in my own eye, when I fancied the mote was in my friend's. Is there, in every ray of light, and in every particle of matter, a depth of contrivance unfathomable by the line of any human underſtanding? And ſhall there be nothing abſtruſe or profound, nothing but what is level to our *ſcanty* apprehenſions, in the *great* * *things* of GOD's law, and the *glorious* † *things* of his goſpel? To expect this, is juſt as wiſe in itſelf, and juſt as congruous to nature, as to expect—a ſea, whoſe cavities might have been digged by our ſpade;—a ſky, whoſe arches are meaſurable by our compaſs;—a ſun, whoſe orb may be included in in our lanterns.

When therefore I read of ONE uncreated and eternal BEING, ſubſiſting in THREE divine PERSONS; when I hear of an infinitely pure and perfect GOD, made fleſh for the redemption of ſinful men; when I meditate on the righteous and univerſal JUDGE, reconciling the world unto himſelf, by the death of his own SON;—when a thouſand curious and inquiſitive thoughts are ready to ariſe on the occaſion; I will bid them firſt ſound the depths of a *ſingle* drop, and then apply their plummet to the *boundleſs* ocean. This, I am very ſure, is not weak credulity, nor wild enthuſiaſm; but the matureſt dictate of reaſon, and the very preciſion of truth.—Let then the great CREATOR make that ſublime declaration; *As the heavens are higher than the earth, ſo are my ways than your ways; and my thoughts than your thoughts* ‡. Let every human creature add that humble acknowledgment; *O the depths of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of GOD! How unſearchable* are *his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out* ‖! and not devotion only, but reaſon and truth, will ſay *Amen* to both.

You ſee, *Aſpaſio*, how I am trying to adopt *your* ſpirit. You will obſerve the willing ſcholar, though not the great proficient.——But ſtay! Is this right? to divert from ſuch commanding ſubjects, and take notice of mere punctilios?——My friend may ſpare his frowns. I am ſurpriſed and angry at myſelf. Away with the little arts of ſelf-recommendation. *Self* ſhould be forgot, ſhould be *ſwallowed up* and *loſt* in devout aſtoniſhment, when we are viewing the magnificence, and meditating on the wonders of creation.

Behind me, and far off to the north, *Cambria*'s duſky coaſts juſt, and but juſt, emerged. Loſt were all her woods and mountains. Inſtead of ornamented towns, and cultivated plains, a *confuſed* miſt, or a low-hung cloud, ſeemed to hover on the ocean's remoteſt brim.—— *Behind me!* Remembrance is rouſed at the expreſſion, and conſcience ſharpens her ſting. Ah! how often and how long, have I treated in this very manner, the nobleſt ſcenes, and the ſublimeſt joys! have *turned my back*—ungrateful and beſotted creature!—upon the heavenly country, and wandered from the regions of infinite delight! Therefore now they appear *dim*. I have ſcarcely a glimpſe of their tranſcendent excellencies. Or if I ſee them by faith, it is with frequent interminſions, and much obſcurity.—Turn me, O thou *GOD* of my ſalvation, turn me from purſuing phantoms, and attach me to thy bleſſed ſelf. Let me henceforth ſteer an invariable courſe to EMMANUEL's kingdom. May its treaſures, as I advance, *open* to my view, and its glories *brighten* in my eye. O! may ſome odours, better, far better, than *Sabæan* ſpicy odours §, exhale from the delectable hills, and the celeſtial ſhores!——But

* ——*Campoſque natantes.* LUCRET.

† Pſal. xxix. 10. ‡ Iſ. li. 9, 10.

* הרי ורותי Hoſ. viii. 12.

† Τα μεγαλεια τε Θεε Acts ii. 11.

‡ Iſ. lv. 9. ‖ Rom. xi. 33.

§ Alluding to thoſe lines in MILTON.

——*As when to them who ſail*
Beyond the Cape of Hope, *and now are paſt*
Moſambic, *off at ſea north-eaſt winds blow*
Sabæan *odour, from the ſpicy ſhore*

chiefly,

chiefly, thou eternal SPIRIT, breathe upon my ſoul, both by thy *convincing* and *comforting* influences! nor ever ceaſe to ſwell my ſails, and ſpeed my progreſs, till I arrive at *the land, that is very far off*; *and ſee the* KING, the KING of grace and of glory, *in* all *his* ineffable *beauty*.*

On my left hand, a range of *mountainous cliffs* roſe in a perpendicular direction. The huge pile extended, as far as the ſight could diſcern, its black boundaries. Here bending inwards to the land; there bellying out into the deep; every where projecting a ſhade, ſeveral leagues acroſs the ocean.

The *height* of theſe cliffs ſo prodigious, that every human creature who comes near the ſummit, ſtarts back *terrified* and *aghaſt*. Only a few ſtraggling goats venture to graze on the top: and theſe, to a perſon walking below, appear but as ſpecks of moving white. While the ſea-mews, that winnow the air about the middle ſteep, look like winged animalcules, purſuing their little ſports in a different region.—The *aſpect* of theſe cliffs ſo *wild* and *horrid*, it is impoſſible to behold them without a ſhivering dread. The ſpectator is apt to imagine, that nature had formerly ſuffered ſome violent convulſions, or been ſhattered by the flaming bolts, and that theſe are the diſmembered remains of the dreadful ſtroke; the ruins, not of *Perſepolis* or *Palmyra*, but of the world!

Amazing! What adventurous daring creature is yonder, gathering *ſampbire* from the cavities of the rocks! He has let himſelf down ſeveral fathoms beneath the black and dizzy ſummit.—He gleans a poor livelihood, from the edges of danger, ſhall I ſay? rather, from the *jaws of death*. I cannot diſcern the rope to which he clings. He ſeems to be ſuſpended over the tremendous precipice, by a thread, by a hair, by nothing.—I'll look no longer. The very ſight chills my veins. While I view his perilous elevation, I can think of nothing but a headlong downfall, and fractured bones; of brains left to reek on the pointed crags, and blood ſtreaming on the diſcoloured beach.

Suppoſe (if the mind can bear ſo ſhocking a ſuppoſition) ſome poor wretch, *expoſed* on the brow of this ſtupendous promontory; without any ſupport for his feet; and *clinging* only to a weak ſlender ſhrub, which but juſt adheres to the interſtices of the rock. What tumultuous throbbings ſeize his breaſt? what a dying paleneſs invades his cheeks? and what agonies of fear rend his heart? as he hangs, *projecting over* the ragged precipice; and ſurveys the ocean deep, wondrous deep below!——The bough gives way. His only hope fails. It yields more and more to his weight. Good heavens! *he ſinks! he ſinks!* O! for ſome friendly hand, to ſnatch him from periſhing! Millions, millions of gold, were the cheap purchaſe of ſuch a mercy.——There was a time, my ſoul, when thou waſt in a ſituation, equally ſhall I ſay? infinitely more dangerous; tottering, not only on the *verge* of *life*, but on the very *brink* of *hell*. Remember that compaſſionate arm, which was ſtretched out, in the very article of need, to reſcue thee from imminent and everlaſting perdition. Never forget that gracious voice, which ſaid,—in accents ſweeter than the muſic of the ſeraphic choir,—"Deliver him from going "down into the pit. Let his health be reſtored, and his "day of grace be prolonged."

In ſome places, the hideous ruins not only *tower* to the ſkies, but *lean* over the ſtrand. Prominent and frightfully pendulous, they nod horror, and threaten deſtruction on all below. A perſon congratulates himſelf, when he has got clear of the bending precipice; and can hardly forbear thinking, that the enormous load is withheld by ſome unſeen hand, till the *execrable wretch*, doomed to a moſt aſtoniſhing vengeance, is come within reach of the blow. And truly, if he had the ſtrength of the elephant, or the firmneſs of the behemoth, this muſt grind him to powder, or even cruſh him into atoms.

How awful to conſider, that there is a day coming, when wicked potentates, and haughty monarchs, will beg of yonder ſeas, to *yawn* compaſſionately deep, and hide them in their darkeſt abyſſes; hide them from the piercing eye, and avenging ſword, of inflexible juſtice!——That there is a day coming, when the ſoft voluptuary, the wanton beauty, and all the ungodly of the earth, will beſeech thoſe tremendous ridges, with all their unſupportable burden of craggy rocks, to *ruſh down* upon their guilty heads*; if, by this means, they may be ſcreened from the infinitely more dreaded weight of divine indignation.

Vain are their cries; and vainer ſtill would be their refuge, ſhould their paſſionate requeſts be granted. Can floods *conceal* the impious wretches, when the caverns of the ocean ſhall be laid bare, and the foundations of the world be diſcovered? Can rocks *ſecrete* an obnoxious rebel, when rocks, with all their marble quarries, and adamantine entrails, ſhall diſſolve like melting wax? when hills, that plunge their roots to the centre, and loſe their towering heads in air, ſhall ſtart from their affrighted baſe †, and flee away, like a withered leaf!——Good GOD ‡! what racking anguiſh muſt they *feel!* what inexpreſſibly-ſeverer torment muſt they *fear!* who can implore, ardently implore as a moſt deſirable favour, what imagination itſelf ſhudders to conceive.

In ſome places, theſe mountainous declivities lift their brow aloft; plant their baſis deep; and, inſtead of *portending* a fall, *defy* the fury of the moſt impetuous elements. Firmly conſolidated, and ſtedfaſtly

Of Araby *the Bleſs'd, and many a league*
Chear'd with the grateful ſmell old ocean ſmiles.

Book IV. 159.

* Iſ. xxxiii. 17.

* Rev. iv. 15, 16.

† This brings to our remembrance a moſt ſublime deſcription of the divine POWER, which ariſes in a beautiful climax, and terminates in this grand idea. *The voice of the* LORD *is mighty in operation, the voice of the* LORD *is a glorious voice. The voice of the* LORD *breaketh the cedars; yea the* LORD *breaketh the cedars of* Lebanon. *He maketh them alſo to ſkip like a calf;* Lebanon *and* Sirion *like a young unicorn.* Pſal. xxix. 4, 5, 6.

The voice of the LORD *is mighty in operation.* This is the general propoſition; which, in the following ſentences, we ſee moſt magnificently illuſtrated.—*The voice of the* LORD *breaketh the cedars:* when he ſpeaks in thunder, and bids the lightning execute his orders, the trees, the cedar-trees, thoſe ſturdieſt productions of the earth, are ſhivered to pieces.—*Yea, the* LORD *breaketh the cedars of Lebanon;* which, for ſtateline's and ſtrength, ſurpaſs the oaks of the foreſt, ſurpaſs every tree of the field, almoſt as much as the oak exceeds a ſhrub.—It is a ſmall thing with JEHOVAH, to rend the trunks, to tear up the roots, and make thoſe maſſy bodies *ſkip like a calf*; even *Lebanon* and *Sirion*, the mountains on which they grow, tremble before their GOD. They are thrown into ſtrange commotions; they are ready to ſpring from their foundations; and, with all their load of woods and rocks, appear like ſome affrighted or ſome ſportive animal, that *ſtarts* with horror, or *leaps* with exultation.

‡ *Good GOD!*—This exclamation is introduced on a very ſerious occaſion, and uſed with an apparent air of reverence. Under which circumſtances, perhaps, it may be *ſometimes* allowable, and not diſhonourable to the divine MAJESTY. But, when it is admitted into ordinary converſation, on trifling occurrences, and with a levity of temper; it is itſelf a very great offence, and diſcovers a very irreligious ſpirit.—It is ſo *great an offence*, that the GOD of heaven and earth declares himſelf the avenger of all ſuch tranſgreſſors. *He will not hold them guiltleſs*, or he will aſſuredly puniſh them. And if GOD condemn, who ſhall acquit? If HE will puniſh, who can deliver from his hand?—It diſcovers a *very irreligious ſpirit*; is a moſt dangerous ſymptom; ſomewhat like a plague-ſpot on the converſation. It ſhews, that there is no ſaving health, no life of GOD in the ſoul. Was there any ſenſibility in the conſcience, any grace in the heart, it would be impoſſible to treat ſo wantonly and ſo preſumptuouſly, *that glorious and fearful name*, THE LORD THY GOD, Deut. xxviii. 58.

eſtabliſh-

eſtabliſhed, they have withſtood the united, the repeated aſſaults of winds and waves, through a long ſeries of revolving ages.—The ſacred writers, I obſerve, ſelect almoſt all the ſtriking images which the whole creation affords; in order to communicate their heavenly ideas, with the greateſt advantage. *Iſaiah*, deſcribing the *ſecurity* of the righteous, takes his compariſon from the grand ſpectacle before my eye: *He ſhall dwell on high; his place of defence ſhall be the munitions of rocks* *; inacceſſible as thoſe lofty ridges, immoveable as their everlaſting foundations.

Should it be aſked, what theſe munitions of rocks may ſignify?——I find two places of refuge and ſafeguard pointed out in ſcripture; to either of which, I believe, the metaphor is applicable. *He had horns*, ſays one of the divine Pindarics, *coming out of his hand; there was the hiding of his power* †. Uncontrollable and omnipotent power was lodged in the great *JEHOVAH*'s hand; and this was the ſure defence, this the impregnable garriſon, for all his people.——The church of *CHRIST* is ſaid to be *in the clefts of the Rock* ‡: that *ſpiritual Rock*, of which the *Iſraelites* drank in the wilderneſs; whoſe ſacred clefts were opened, when the bloody ſpear tore up the REDEEMER's ſide, and cut a wide and deadly paſſage to his heart. Surely, *the inhabitants of this Rock* have reaſon to *ſing* ‖. What ſhould diſquiet them! Who can deſtroy them? Why ſhould not the voice of joy be in your dwellings, and that hymn of holy triumph in their mouths? *We have a ſtrong city. Salvation hath GOD appointed*, ſalvation itſelf, *for walls and bulwarks* §.——Happy ſhould I think myſelf, if I was intereſted in this *SAVIOUR*, and eſtabliſhed on this Rock.

Yonder, on the ſummit of the moſt conſpicuous cliff, is erected a grand and ſtately pile. At the top, my glaſs diſcovers a ſuperb lantern; at the foot, are the huts of fiſhermen, ſurrounded with various ſorts of nets.——It is, I ſuppoſe, a *light-houſe*: intended to appriſe the ſailor of devouring gulfs, and deſtructive ſhoals; or elſe to conduct him into a ſafe road, and ſecure harbour.

Both the ſituation and deſign of the building read me a leſſon; the one of awful admonition, the other of comfortable inſtruction.——*Comfortable inſtruction.* How maſſy and ponderous is the edifice! yet there is not the leaſt reaſon to be apprehenſive of a failure in the foundation. Was the ſtructure ten thouſand times larger, the ſolid rock would ſupport it, with the utmoſt eaſe and the utmoſt ſteadineſs. Such is *CHRIST*, ſuch are his merits, ſuch his glorious righteouſneſs, to thoſe wiſe and bleſſed ſouls, who reſt all the weight of their everlaſting intereſts on him alone. *Such*, did I ſay? Much ſurer. For *the mountains may depart, and the hills may be removed* *; but this divine baſis can never ſink, can never be ſhaken.—*Awful admonition.* For it recalls to my memory that alarming yet welcome text †, which you ſtyled the ſpiritual light-houſe: which has been as ſerviceable to my diſtreſſed mind and bewildered thoughts, as ſuch an illuminated watch-tower to the wandering and benighted mariner. May I often view it! ever attend to its faithful direction; and be led, by its influences, into the haven, the deſired haven of peace and ſalvation!

Let me once again ſurvey thoſe vaſt but noble deformities; thoſe rude but majeſtic elevations of ſtone.——*Fortifications*, reared by an almighty hand, to protect us at once from warring elements, and invading enemies. ——*Ramparts*, which overlook and command the ocean; which, viewed by diſtant mariners, ſeem to touch and prop the ſky; which have ſurrounded our iſle ever ſince the univerſal deluge, and will be her never-failing defence even to the general conflagration.——If ſome opinionated engineer ſhould take it into his head, to ſuſpect the ſtability of theſe unſhaken and everlaſting bulwarks; if he ſhould make propoſals for ſtrengthening them with buttreſſes, or girding them round with cramping-irons! how would his project be received? with approbation and applauſe? or with contempt and indignation? "Fool that he is! to think of enlarging, corroborating, "or improving the *finiſhed* and *magnificent* works of na"ture, by the *puny* piddlings of art!"—Such, ſo fooliſh and prepoſterous was my once favourite conceit, of adding my own performances, in order to increaſe the juſtifying efficacy of *CHRIST*'s obedience. What a diſparagement was this to the great, the divine foundation! which, for the ſupport and ſecurity of burdened and endangered ſinners, is *ſufficient*,—is *ſelf-ſufficient*,—is *all-ſufficient*.

How *changeable* is the face of this liquid element! Not long ago, there was nothing, from this ſtony boundary, to the horizon's utmoſt verge, but the wildeſt tumult and moſt horrible confuſion. Now the ſtormy flood has ſmoothed its rugged brow, and the watery uproar is lulled into a profound tranquillity. Where *rolling mountains* ruſhed and raged, threatening to daſh the clouds, and deluge the earth; there the *gentleſt undulations* play, and only juſt wrinkle the ſurface of the mighty baſon. Where the dreadful abyſs opened its wide and unfathomable jaws, to ſwallow up the trembling ſailor, and his ſhattered veſſel; there a calm and clear expanſe diffuſes its ample boſom, alluring the fiſh to baſk in the ſun, and inviting the ſea-fowl to watch for their prey.

In this fair floating mirror, I ſee the picture of every cloud, which paſſes through the regions of the ſky. But in its uncertain and treacherous temperature, I ſee more plainly the inconſtant and ever-variable condition of human affairs.——I durſt not be ſurety to the mariner, for peaceful ſeas and ſoothing gales. I could not aſcertain the continuance of this halcyon weather, ſo much as a ſingle day, or even to the next hour. And let me not fondly promiſe myſelf an *uninterrupted* tenor of ſerenity in my mind, or of proſperity in my circumſtances.——Sometimes, indeed, my heart exults under the ſmile of heaven, and the favour of GOD.

* Iſ. xxxiii. 16.

† *Hab.* iii. 4. *Horns* were an emblem of *ſtrength*. *A horn of ſalvation* is put for a mighty and effectual ſalvation, *Luke* ii. 69. *Thou haſt heard me from among the horns of the unicorns*: thou haſt reſcued me from the moſt potent and formidable enemies, *Pſal.* xxii. 21. Here the word ſeems to denote that power of JEHOVAH, to which nothing is impoſſible; and more than ſeems, if we conſult the next clauſe.—*There was the hiding of his power*; or, as it may be rendered, *his powerful hiding*, a moſt ſecure refuge, a ſanctuary abſolutely inviolable. I have accommodated this paſſage to a different ſenſe, *Meditat.* above *p.* 43. But the true ſignification, moſt ſuitable to the context, and moſt ſubſervient to the prophet's deſign, is, I apprehend, given by *Theron*. It is ſomewhat like an exalted ſentiment in the *Night Thoughts*; which, with a ſmall alteration, may ſerve as a paraphraſe on the text:

And nature's ſhield the hollow of his hand.
A Chriſtian's ſhield the hollow of his hand.

‡ *Cant.* ii. 14. Should the reader have an inclination to ſee this ſacred, but myſterious book explained, I would refer him to Dr GILL's *Expoſition of the Canticles*: which has ſuch a copious vein of ſanctified invention running through it, and is interſperſed with ſuch a variety of delicate and brilliant images, as cannot but highly entertain a *curious* mind: which preſents us with ſuch rich and charming diſplays of the glory of CHRIST's perſon, the freeneſs of his grace to ſinners, and the tenderneſs of his love to the church, as cannot but adminiſter the moſt exquiſite delight to the *believing* ſoul.——Conſidered in both theſe reſpects, I think, the work reſembles the paradiſiacal garden, deſcribed by MILTON; in which

Bloſſoms *and* fruits *at once of golden hue*
Appear'd, with gay enamell'd colours mix'd.

‖ Ii. xlii. 11. § Iſ. xxvi. 1.

* Iſ. liv. 10.

† See *Rom.* ix. 30. 31. 32. and above, *Letter* V.

But ſoon; ah! too ſoon I am clouded with fear, and oppreſſed with corruption. I ſigh out that paſſionate acknowledgment, *Wretched man that I am!* and add that wiſhfull inquiry, *Who ſhall deliver me?*—For this diſordered ſtate of things, the afflicted patriarch's complaint, is the moſt appoſite motto, and the moſt wholeſome memento; *Changes and war are around me* *.——But there is a world, where diſaſtrous revolutions will be known no more; where our enjoyments will no longer *fluctuate* like the ocean, but be more ſtedfaſt than the rocks, and more immoveable than the ſhores.

Here I ſee an immenſe collection of waters, in a ſtate of deep repoſe. Could I extend my view to ſome remoter tracts, I ſhould behold every thing ſmoother and calmer ſtill. Not a furrow ſinks, nor a ridge ſwells the ſurface of the ocean. 'Tis all like a glaſſy plain. The waves are aſleep. Echo is huſhed. Not a gale ſtirs. The ſea ſtagnates; the mariner is *becalmed*; and the veſſel ſcarcely creeps.—— Whereas, could I ſurvey the the ſtraits of *Magellan*, or the gut of *Gibraltar*, I ſhould find a very ſtriking difference. There the waters preſs in with vehemence, and ruſh forwards with impetuoſity. All is there in ſtrong agitation, and rapid progreſs. The ſhip is *whirled* through the narrow paſſage; and rides, as it were, on the wheels of the ſurge, or on the wings of the wind.——This, my dear *Aſpaſio*, is a true image of what I have been, and of what I am. Some months ago, when I was inſenſible of guilt, all my prayers were liſtleſs, and all my religion was a ſpiritual lethargy. I felt not in my heart, what I uttered with my tongue. *Hoſannahs* were but an empty ceremony, and confeſſions froze on my formal lips.——But, ſince the *SPIRIT* of *GOD* has awakened me from my dream, and convinced me of my ſinfulneſs, I can no longer be ſatisfied with indolent and yawning devotions. Trials and temptations put ſtrong cries into my mouth. My ſoul mourns before the *LORD*; my deſires plead with the bleſſed *GOD*; and I am ready to ſay, as the patriarch of old, "I cannot, "I muſt not, *I will not let thee go, unleſs thou bleſs me* †."

I ſee no flocks of ſheep, with ſober aſſiduity, nibbling the graſſy plains. No ſportive lambs, with innocent gaiety, friſking along the ſunny banks. Here are no ſtables for the generous ſteed, nor paſtures for the luſty heifer. Nevertheleſs, theſe watery regions are ſtocked with colonies of *proper* and *peculiar* inhabitants:—who are clothed and accoutred in exact conformity to the clime: not in ſwelling wool, or buoyant feathers; not in a flowing robe, or a full-trimmed ſuit; but with as much compactneſs, and with as little ſuperfluity, as poſſible. They are clad, or rather *ſheathed* in *ſcales*, which adhere cloſely to their bodies, and are always laid in a kind of natural oil. Than which apparel nothing can be more *light*, and at the ſame time nothing more *ſolid*. It hinders the fluid from penetrating their fleſh; it prevents the cold from coagulating their blood; and enables them to make their way through the waters, with the utmoſt facility. ——They have each a curious inſtrument ‡, by which they increaſe or diminiſh their ſpecific gravity; ſink like lead, or float like a cork; riſe to what height, or deſcend to what depth, they pleaſe.

This is the abode of *leviathan*, hugeſt of living creatures. Before whom the broad-limbed elephant, and the tall-necked camel, are mere ſhrimps. A ſtretched-out promontory, when he ſleeps; a moving iſland, when he ſwims; "making the ſea to boil like a pot," when unweildily wallowing, he takes his prodigious paſtime. ——Here the voracious *ſhark*, that tyrant of the fluid kingdoms, and aſſaſſin of the finny nations, roams and commits his ravages; embrues his horrid fangs, and marks his rapid path, with blood.——Here dwelt that *great*, and greatly-ſurpriſing *fiſh*, whoſe fierceneſs and avidity the almighty *SOVEREIGN* employed as his purſuivant, to arreſt a fugitive prophet: whoſe ample jaws, or capacious entrails, were the dungeon to confine a rebellious ſubject, and the cabin to lodge a penitent offender: whoſe bulk, and ſtrength, and ſpeed were a kind of veſſel, tranſporting this convict to *the bottom of the mountains, and the bars of the earth* *. After the criminal was ſufficiently chaſtiſed, and properly humbled, they ſerved as a galley with oars, to convey him ſafe to land.

In the ſame element reſides (at leaſt takes up part of his reſidence) that formidable monſter, who is made without fear, and *has not his like upon earth*. He eſteemeth the appointed iron as ſtraw, and ponderous braſs as rotten wood. His heart is as hard as a piece of the nether milſtone, and his ſcales are a coat of impenetrable mail. Strength not to be reſiſted, much leſs to be ſubdued, lies entrenched in his ſinewy neck. His eyes are like the eye-lids of the opening day; and when he rolls thoſe glaring orbs, there ſeems to be another morn riſen on midnoon. His teeth are terrible, jagged for rapine, and edged with death. His throat is as a burning furnace; clouds of ſmoke are poured from his noſtrils, and flakes of fire iſſue from his mouth. None, no not the moſt reſolute, dares provoke him to the combat, or even ſtir him up from his ſlumbers. He laugheth at the ſhaking of the ſpear, and *ſorrow marcheth in triumph before him* †. Whenever he raiſeth himſelf, the mighty are afraid; where-ever he advanceth, ruin is there.—— If a mere creature is capable of ſpreading ſuch alarm and dread, how *greatly* is the creator himſelf to be feared? who can turn the moſt harmleſs inhabitant of the ocean into a ravenous alligator, or a horrid crocodile! who can arm every reptile of the ground with all the force and rage of a lion!

'Tis impoſſible to enter on the muſter-roll, thoſe ſcaly herds, and that minuter fry, which graze the ſea-weed, or ſtray through the coral groves. They are innumerable, as the ſands which lie under them; countleſs, as the waves which cover them.——Here are uncouth animals, of *monſtrous* ſhapes ‡, and *amazing* qualities ‖. Some that have been diſcovered by the

* Jonah ii. 6.

† *Job* xli. 22. לפניו תדון דאבה *Mœror*, ſays *Bochart*, *præcidit tanquam metator et comes, tumidique anteambulo regis.* Terror and anguiſh are a kind of *advanced guard* to this monarch among the reptiles: or, they go before the monſter, as the man bearing a ſhield went before the *Philiſtine* giant.——The original word occurs in no other part of the divine book. I cannot recollect any expreſſion, which ſo fully repreſents its meaning, as *Homer*'s κοθεων, or *Xenophon*'s γαυριασθαι; both which are intended to deſcribe the ardour and action of a high-mettled prancing ſteed.—The whole paragraph is a ſketch of the *crocodile*'s picture. It exhibits a few circumſtances, culled from that inimitable deſcription, extant in the book of *Job*; which are given, either in the ſacred writer's *own* words, or elſe in a *paraphraſtic* explanation of their ſenſe.

‡ *Monſtrous ſhapes*:—Such as the *ſword-fiſh*; whoſe upper jaw is lengthened into a ſtrong and ſharp ſword: with which he ſometimes ventures to attack the ſhips, though armed with thunder; and is capable of piercing their ſides, though ribbed with oak. This may be called the *champion* of the waters; who, though never exceeding ſixteen feet in length, yet, confiding in a weapon at once ſo truſty and ſo tremendous, ſcruples not to give battle even to the whale himſelf.——The *ſun-fiſh* has no tail; ſeems to be all head; and was it not for two fins, which act the part of oars, would be one entire round maſs of fleſh.——The *polypus*, remarkable for its numerous feet, and as many claws; by which it has the appearance of a mere inſect, and ſeems fitted only to crawl. At the ſame time, an excreſcence, ariſing on the back, enables it to ſteer and purſue a ſteady courſe in the waves. So that it may paſs under the two-fold character of a *ſailor* and a *reptile*.—*Horace* intimates, that the *Britiſh* ocean is famous for producing ſea-monſters;

Te belluoſus qui remotis
Obſtrepit oceanus Britannis.

‖ *Amazing qualities*.——Among theſe may be reckoned the *torpedo*, which benumbs on a ſudden, and renders impotent, whatever fiſh it aſſaults; and, which is a more extraordinary property, ſtrikes even the fiſherman's arm, when he offers to lay

* Job x. 17. † Gen. xxxii. 26.

‡ The air-bladder.

inquisitive eye of mast; and many more, that remain among the secrets of the hoary deep.—Here are sholes and sholes, of various characters, and of the most diversified sizes; from the *cumbrous* whale, whose flouncings tempest the ocean, to the *evanescent* anchovy, whose substance dissolves in the smallest fricassee.——Some, lodged in their pearly shells, and fattening on their rocky beds, seem attentive to no higher employ, than that of imbibing moist nutriment. These, but a small remove from vegetable life, are almost rooted to the rocks, on which they lie reposed. While others, active as the winged creation, and swift as an arrow from the *Indian* bow, shoot along the yielding flood, and range at large the spacious regions of the deep.

Here is the *tortoise*, who never moves but under her own portable pent-house. The *lobster*, which, whether he sleeps or wakes, is still in a state of defence, and clad in jointed armour. The *oyster*, a sort of living jelly, ingarrisoned in the bulwark of native stone. With many other kinds of sea-reptiles, or, as the psalmist speaks, *things creeping innumerable* *.—I am surprised at the variety of their figure, and charmed with the splendor of their colours. Unsearchable is the wisdom, and endless the contrivance, of the all-creating GOD!—Some are rugged in their form, and little better than hideous in their aspect. Their shells seem to be the rude production of a disorderly jumble, rather than the regular effects of skill and design. Yet we shall find, even in these *seeming* irregularities, the *nicest* dispositions. These abodes, uncouth as they may appear, are adapted to the genius of their respective tenants, and exactly suited to their particular exigencies. Neither the *Ionic* delicacy, nor the *Corinthian* richness, nor any other order of architecture, would have served their purposes half so well, as this coarse and homely fabric.

Some, on the other hand, are extremely neat. Their structure is all symmetry and elegance. No enamel in the world is comparable to their polish. There's not a *room of state*, in all the palaces of *Europe*, so brilliantly adorned, as the dining-room and the bed-chamber of the little fish, that dwells in *mother of pearl*. Such a lovely mixture of red, and blue, and green, so delightfully staining the most clear and glittering ground, is no where else to be seen. The royal power may covet it, and human art may mimic it; but neither the one nor the other, nor both united, will ever be able to equal it.

But what I admire more than all their streaks, their spots, and their embroidery, is, the extraordinary provision made for their *safety*.——Nothing is more relishing and palatable than their flesh. Nothing more heavy and sluggish than their motions. As they have no speed to escape, neither have they any dexterity to elude the foe. Were they naked or unguarded, they must be an easy prey to every free-booter that roams the ocean.——To prevent this fatal consequence, what is only cloathing to other animals, is to them a *cloathing*, a *house*, and a *castle*. They have a fortification, that grows with their growth, and is a part of themselves. By this means, they live secure amidst millions and millions of ravenous jaws: by this means, they are *imparked*, as it were, in their own shell; and, screened from every other assault, are reserved for the use and pleasure of mankind.

This is the birth-place of *cod*, the standing repast of Lent. This is the nursery of *turbot*, for its exquisite relish justly styled, the pheasant of the waters. Hence comes the *sturgeon*, delicious even in pickle, and a regale for royal luxury; hence the *flounders*, dappled with reddish spots, and a supply for vulgar wants.—Here dwell the *mackarel*, decked, when haled from their native element, richly decked with the most glossy dies; the *herring*, whose back is mottled with azure, and his belly sleek with silver: the *salmon*, in plainer habit, but of larger substance, and higher esteem, than either or both the preceding.——These, when shotten and lean, wander wildly up and down the vast abyss. When *plump* and *delicate*, they throng our creeks, and swarm in our bays; they repair to the shallows, or haunt the running streams. ——Who bids these creatures evacuate the shores, and disperse themselves into all quarters, when they become worthless and unfit for our service? Who rallies and recalls the undisciplined vagrants, as soon as they are improved into desirable food? Who appoints the very scene of our ambushes, to be the place of their rendezvous? so that they come like voluntiers to our nets?—— Surely, the furlow is signed, the summons issued, and the point of reunion settled, by a providence ever indulgent to mankind; ever studious to treat us with dainties, and *load us with benefits* *.

We have wondered at † our SAVIOUR's penetration and power;—his *penetration*, which, though the sea was at a distance, and walls intervened, discerned the fish, that had just swallowed a piece of money;——his *power*, which, without any delay, brought the lawless rambler, charged with the silver spoil, to *Peter*'s hook. But is it not equally wonderful, to observe such innumerable multitudes of finny visitants, annually approaching our shores, and crouding our banks? which furnish our tables with a wholesome and delicate *repast*; at the same time that they yield to our nation a *revenue* ‡, more certain, and no less considerable, than the mines of *Peru*.

These approach, while those of *enormous* size and *tremendous* appearance abandon the shores. The latter might endanger the fisherman's safety, and would certainly scare away the valuable fish from our coasts. They are therefore restrained by an invisible hand, and abscond in the abysses of the ocean. Just as the wild beasts of the earth, impelled by the same over-ruling power, hide themselves in the recesses of the forest.——A ship, infected with a pestilential distemper, is obliged to keep off at sea; and not permitted to enter the port, till she has performed her *quarantine*. In like manner, these monsters of the deep, whose very business is destruction, are laid under a *providential* interdict: only with this very desirable difference, that, as their presence would always be pernicious, they are never suffered to come near; their quarantine is *perpetual*.

Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee ‖; *and the fishes of the*

lay hold on it, with a temporary deadness. By this means, it possesses the double advantage, of arresting its prey, and securing itself. —The *cuttle-fish*, furnished with a liquid magazine, of a colour and consistence like ink: which, when pursued by an enemy, the creature emits, and blackens the water. By this artifice, the foe is bewildered in the chace; and while the one vainly gropes in the dark, the other seizes the opportunity, and makes his escape.—The *nautilus*, whose shell forms a natural boat. The dextrous inhabitant unfurls a membrane to the wind, which serves him instead of a sail. He extends also a couple of arms, with which, as with two slender oars, he rows himself along. When he is disposed to dive, he strikes sail; and, without any apprehension of being drowned, sinks to the bottom. When the weather is calm, and he has an inclination to see the world, or take his pleasure, he mounts to the surface; and, self-taught in the art of navigation, performs his voyage without either chart or compass; is himself the *vessel*, the *rigging*, and the *pilot*.—For a more copious illustration of this amusing and wonderful subject, see *Nat. Displ.* vol. III.

* Psal. civ. 25.

* Psal. lxviii. 19. † See *Letter* VIII. *p.* 177.

‡ We are told by the afore-mentioned author, that the banks of *Newfoundland* alone, bring in to the proprietors of that fishery, a revenue of several millions every year.—And they will, in all probability, be an unimpaired resource of treasure, when the richest mines now wrought in the world, are choked up or exhausted.

‖ *Job* xii. 7, 8. The *earth* is represented, as bearing witness to the immense benignity of the blessed GOD. Some *minutes*, or a short *abstract*, of her testimony on this occasion, may be seen in *Letter* VI.

sea

ſea ſhall declare unto thee;—that the LORD is *gracious*;—that his tender mercies are over *all* his works; that to *us* he is ſuperabundantly and profuſely good: having ordered all things in the ſurges of the ocean, as well as on the ſurface of the ground, for our rich accommodation, and for our greateſt advantage.

One circumſtance relating to the natives of the deep, is very peculiar, and no leſs aſtoniſhing. As they neither ſow, nor reap; have neither the produce of the hedges, nor the gleanings of the field; they are obliged to *plunder* and *devour* one another, for neceſſary ſubſiſtence. They are a kind of authoriſed banditti, that make violence and murder * their profeſſed trade.——By this means, prodigious devaſtations enſue; and, without proper, without very *extraordinary recruits*, the whole race muſt continually dwindle, and at length be totally extinct.—Were they to bring forth, like the moſt prolific of our terreſtrial animals, a dozen only, or a ſcore at each birth; the increaſe would be unſpeakably too ſmall for the conſumption. The weaker ſpecies would be deſtroyed by the ſtronger; and, in time, the ſtronger muſt periſh, even by their ſucceſsful endeavours to maintain themſelves.——Therefore to ſupply millions of aſſaſſins with their prey, and millions of tables with their food, yet not to depopulate the watery realms; the iſſue produced by every breeder is almoſt incredible. They ſpawn, not by ſcores or hundreds, but by thouſands and by millions †. *A ſingle mother* is pregnant with a *nation*. By which amazing, but moſt needful expedient, a periodical reparation is made, proportionable to the immenſe havock.

As the ſea is peopled with animated inhabitants, it is alſo variegated with *vegetable* productions. Some ſoft as wool; others hard as ſtone. Some riſe, like a leaf-leſs ſhrub; ſome are expanded, in the form of a net; ſome grow with their heads downward, and ſeem rather hanging on, than ſpringing from, the juttings of the rocks. Theſe may, with much greater propriety, than the famous plantations of *Semiramis*, be called *penſile* gardens.——But, as my walk reached no farther than the purlieus of the ocean; as neither you nor I have ever taken a ſingle turn among thoſe ſubmarine groves; as *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, and *Jonah*, the only writers that ever made the wonderful tour, intent upon *more important* themes, have left us no memoirs relating to this curious point; I ſhall not venture to advance any thing particular on the ſubject. Only one remark I would offer in general——

The herbs and trees, which flouriſh on the dry land, are maintained by the juices, that permeate the ſoil, and fluctuate in the air. For this purpoſe, they are furniſhed with *leaves*, to collect the one; and with *roots* to attract the other. Whereas, the ſea-plants, finding ſufficient nouriſhment in the circumambient waters, have no occaſion to detach a party of roots into the ground, and forage the earth for ſuſtenance. Inſtead therefore of *penetrating*, they are but juſt *tacked* to the bottom; and adhere to ſome ſolid ſubſtance, only with ſuch a degree of tenacity, as may ſecure them from being toſſed to and fro, by the random agitation of the waves.

We ſee from this, and numberleſs other inſtances, what a *diverſity* there is in the operations of the great CREATOR's hand. Yet every alteration is an improvement, and each new pattern has a *peculiar fitneſs* of its own.——The ſame œconomy takes place, ſuch a difference of adminiſtration I mean, in his government of the rational world. In "chuſing an heritage for his people," and aſſigning a condition to each of his ſervants, there is a great variety with reſpect to individuals; yet a perfect uniformity, and complete harmony, with reſpect to the whole.——Some he calls out to a courſe of diſtinguiſhed labours. They make an illuſtrious figure in life, and appear *as a city ſet on an hill* *! Others he conſigns over to obſcurity. They are like the prophets, whom good *Obadiah* hid in a cave, and are ſtyled *his ſecret ones* †. *Thoſe*, the cedars, which ſtand conſpicuous on the top of *Lebanon*; *theſe*, the violets, which lie concealed at the foot of a brier.

St *Paul* was eminently qualified for buſy ſcenes, and the moſt extenſive ſervices. He is introduced, therefore, into places of concourſe. His miniſtry lies amidſt the moſt renowned and populous cities. Even his *impriſonment* at *Rome* ſeems to have been a providential expedient for fixing him, as it were, on the *ſtage* of public obſervation, and in the very *centre* of univerſal intelligence. Where his preaching was like plunging a ſtone into the midſt of a ſmooth canal; which affects not only the neighbouring parts of the ſurface, but ſpreads the floating circles over all the wide expanſe.——Whereas, the beloved *John*, being leſs fitted to buſtle among a croud, is ſent into the unfrequented *ſolitary* iſland; there to indulge the flights of heavenly contemplation; and receive, with uninterrupted attention, the myſterious viſions of GOD.——*Job* ſhall have thorns in his path; have the dung-hill for his ſeat; and be expoſed, as a mark, to all the arrows of tribulation. *Solomon* ſhall dip his foot in oil; ſhall be elevated on the throne of royalty; and ſurrounded with the moſt laviſh careſſes of heaven.

In all this ſeeming, this more than ſeeming contrariety, there is a diſplay, not only of ſovereign authority, but of conſummate propriety.——The great HEAD of the church, acts like a judicious *general*; and appoints ſuch a ſtation to each of his ſoldiers, as correſponds with the ability he gives. He acts like the moſt ſkilful *phyſician*; and preſcribes ſuch a remedy for all his patients, as is moſt nicely ſuited to their reſpective caſes. He knows the preciſe point of time, the particular place of abode, the peculiar circumſtances of condition, which are moſt proper for each and every of his children; and like a tender as well as unerring *father*; what he knows to be beſt, that he conſtantly allots.——I ſaid, like a general, like a phyſician, like a father. But the compariſon is low; the language is inexpreſſive; CHRIST is all that is implied in theſe relations, and unſpeakably *more*.——O! that we may rejoice in the ſuperintendency of ſuch a SAVIOUR; and not only reſign ourſelves to his will, but *thank* him for managing the helm; *thank* him for ſteering our courſe, through the changes of time, and the uncertainties of futurity. Since, whatever our froward and petulant paſſions may ſuggeſt, the LORD's ways are ſo far from being unequal, that they have all poſſible fitneſs and propriety; they are ordered "in number, "weight, and meaſure."

All is ſo very different from the proſpects, which lately preſented themſelves, that I can hardly forbear aſking, Whether I am not tranſlated into a *new world*? ——Where are the waving hillocks, covered with the CREATOR's bounty? where are the fruitful val-

* To this, I believe, the prophet alludes, in that remarkable expreſſion, *Thou makeſt men as the fiſhes of the ſea*. Thou ſuffereſt men to commit, without reſtraint or control, all manner of outrages. What ſhould be a civil community, is a ſcene of oppreſſion. The weakeſt are a prey to the ſtrongeſt, and every one ſeeks the deſtruction of his neighbour. *Hab.* i. 14.

† Mr *Petit* found 342,144 eggs in the hard roe of a carp, ſixteen inches long. Mr *Lewenhoeck* counted, in a cod of an ordinary ſize, 9,384,000 eggs.——A fecundity perfectly amazing! but admirably adapted to the preſſing exigencies of the watery world; admirably contrived for the benefit and delight of mankind!—If we advert to this peculiarity, it will give the utmoſt emphaſis to the patriarch's *metaphorical* expreſſion, and an inimitable beauty to his *prophetic* wiſh, וידגו לרב *Let theſe* my grandſons *grow into a multitude*; or, which is more exactly anſwerable to the original, *let them multiply abundantly, even like the fiſhes of the ocean*, Gen. xlviii. 16.

* Matth. v. 14. † Pſal. lxxxiii. 3.

leys,

eyes, unable vocal with his praise? No cultured field, no opening bloſſom, not ſo much as a green leaf appears. None of my late entertainments remain, but only the cooling zephyrs. Which are no longer perfumed with the *breath* of flowers, but impregnated with the *freſhneſs* of the ocean.——Yet, though all thoſe lovely landſcapes are withdrawn; though the gurling fountain is ſilenced, and the blooming garden loſt, I am not far from the origin, both of the odours which exhale from the one, and of the cryſtal which flows from the other. I am now upon the margin of that *grand reſervoir*, which ſupplies the country with its fertility, and the parterre with its beauty.——The ſea is the inexhauſtible ciſtern of the univerſe. The air and ſun conſtitute the mighty *engine*, which works, with intermiſſion, to raiſe the liquid treaſure. While the clouds ſerve as ſo many *aqueducts*, to convey the genial ſtores along the atmoſphere; and diſtribute them at ſeaſonable periods, and in regular proportions, through all the regions of the globe.

I queſtion, whether the united application of mankind could, with their utmoſt ſkill, and with all poſſible percolations, fetch a ſingle drop of *perfectly*-ſweet water * from this unmeaſurable pit of brine. Yet the action of the ſolar heat draws off, every hour, every minute, millions and millions of tons, in vaporous exhalations; which, being ſkilfully parcelled out, and ſecurely lodged in *the bottles of heaven* †, are ſent abroad, ſweetened, and refined, without any brackiſh tincture, or the leaſt bituminous ſediment;—ſent abroad upon the wings of the wind, to *diſtil* in dews, or *pour* themſelves in rain; to *ooze* from the orifices of fountains ‡; to *trickle* along the veins of rivulets; to *riſe* in the cavities of wells; to *roll*, in many a headlong torrent, from the ſides of mountains; to *flow*, in copious ſtreams, amidſt the boſom of burning deſerts, and through the heart of populous kingdoms; in order to refreſh and fertilize, to beautify and enrich, every ſoil, in every clime.

How amiable is the goodneſs, and how amazing is the power, of the world's adorable *MAKER!*——How *amiable his goodneſs!* in diſtributing ſo largely, what is ſo abſolutely neceſſary, and ſo extenſively beneficial! That water, without which we can ſcarce perform any buſineſs, or enjoy any comfort, ſhould be every one's property; ſhould ſpring up from the ſoil; ſhould drop down from the clouds; ſhould ſtream by our houſes; ſhould take a journey, from the ends of the earth, and the extremities of the ocean, on purpoſe to ſerve us.—How *amazing his power!* that this boundleſs maſs of fluid ſalt, ſo intolerably nauſeous to the human taſte, ſhould be the original ſpring, which deals out every palatable draught to mankind, and quenches the thirſt of every animal! Doubtleſs, the power by which *this* is effected, can extract comfort from our afflictions, advantage from our calamities, and *make all things work together for our good* *.

Vaſt and various are the advantages †, which we receive from the liquid element; *vaſt*, as its unbounded extent; *various*, as its ever-mutable ſurface.—The ſweet waters glide along the earth, in ſpacious currents; which not only exhilerate the adjacent country, by their humid train, and *exhaling* moiſture; but, by giving a briſk impulſe to the air, prevent the unwholeſome ſtagnation of their own vapours.——They paſs by opulent cities, and receiving all their filth, rid them of a thouſand nuiſances; which, when once committed to theſe *fluid ſcavengers*, are as effectually ſecreted, as if they were buried ever ſo deep in the earth.——Yet, though they condeſcend to ſo mean an employ, they are fitted for more honourable ſervices. They enter the gardens of a prince, and compoſe ſome of the moſt delightful ornaments of the place. They glitter upon the eye, as they float in the ample *canal*. They amuſe the imagination, as they aſcend in curious *jet d'eaus*. They yield a nobler entertainment, as, forming themſelves into ſheets of ſloping ſilver, they fall in graceful or in grand *caſcades*.—If, inſtead of beautifiers, we think proper to make uſe of them as *drudges*, they ply at our mills; they toil inceſſantly at the wheel; and, by working the hugeſt engines, take upon themſelves an unknown ſhare of our fatigue, and ſave us a proportionable degree of expence.

So forcibly they act, when collected; and moſt ſurpriſingly they inſinuate, when *detached*. They throw themſelves into the body of a plant; they penetrate the minuteſt of its organized tubes; and a paſſage through meanders, *too ſmall* for the eye to diſcern, *too numerous* and intricate even for imagination to follow.—How difficultly does a labourer that ſerves the maſon, puſh his way up the rounds of a ladder, bending under the burden of mortar on his head! while theſe ſervants in the employ of nature, carry their load to a much greater height; and climb with the utmoſt eaſe, even without the aſſiſtance of ſteps or of ſtairs. They convey the nutrimental ſtores of vegetation, from the *loweſt fibres* that are plunged into the ſoil, to the very *topmoſt twigs* that wave amidſt the clouds. They are the caterers for the vegetable world; or (if I may be allowed the expreſſion) the *butlers*, which attend the whole *boſt* of plants, to furniſh them with ſeaſonable refreſhment, and neceſſary proviſion. By means of which, *the trees of the LORD are full of ſap, even the cedars of Lebanon which HE hath planted* ‡. And, notwithſtanding their vaſt elevation, and prodigious diffuſion; though they are abandoned by man, and deprived of all cultivation; yet not a ſingle branch is deſtitute of leaves, nor a ſingle leaf of moiſture.

Beſides the ſalutary, cleanly, and ſerviceable circulation of the rivers; the ſea has a libration, no leſs advantageous, and much more remarkable.——Every day, this immenſe collection of waters, for the ſpace of five or ſix hours, *flows* towards the land; and, after a ſhort pauſe, *retires* again to its inmoſt caverns; taking up nearly the ſame time in its retreat, as it required for its acceſs.—How great is the power, which ſets the whole fluid world in motion! which protrudes to the ſhores ſuch an inconceivable weight of waters, without any concurrence from the winds, frequently in direct oppoſition to all their force! How *gracious* alſo is the Providence, which bids the mighty element perform its tumbling revolutions, with the moſt exact punctuality! Was it ſuffered to advance with a lawleſs

* I have not forgotten, what was lately affirmed in our public papers, that a certain ingenious gentleman, I think in the city of Durham, had found out the art of *ſweetening* ſea-water.—What he produced, might probably approve itſelf to the taſte, and not be without its uſefulneſs. Yet I cannot but query, whether it will be found to have all thoſe fine, balmy, ſalutiferous qualities which diſtinguiſh and recommend the *rain-water*: which has been exhaled by the kindly warmth of the ſun; has been filtrated by paſſing and repaſſing through the regions of the air; has been clarified in the higheſt and pureſt tracts of the atmoſphere; has been further refined and perfected by the ſearching agency of the winds.—I ſhould very much wonder, if the *puny* alembec could equal this *grand* apparatus of nature.

† So the clouds are *elegantly* ſtyled in ſacred writ, *Job* xxxviii. 37.

‡ We are obliged to *Clemens Romanus*, for the moſt juſt and elegant repreſentation of fountains and their uſefulneſs, that perhaps any where exiſts. Αντλοι το πηγαι προς απολαυσιν ημων δημιουργηθεισαι, διχα ολιγωριας παρεχουσι τας προς ζωην ανθρωποις μαζας. 1 epiſt. ad *Corinth.* He calls *fountains*, the breaſts or teats of the earth. The compariſon, I believe, is his own; and nothing can exceed it, as to propriety and beauty.

* Rom. viii. 28.

† The high *value* which mankind ſet upon this element, and the many *benefits* they receive from its miniſtration, both theſe particulars are very ſtrongly expreſſed by the *Hebrews*: who call a pool or reſervoir of water בְּרֵכָה which denotes, in its primary ſignification, *a bleſſing*, Cant. viii. 7. Iſai. vii. 3.

‡ Pſal. civ. 16.

and unlimited ſwell, it might ſweep over kingdoms, and deluge whole continents. Was it irregular and uncertain in its approaches, navigation would be at a ſtand, and trade become precarious.—But, being conſtant at its *ſtated periods*, and never exceeding its *appointed bounds*, it creates no alarm to the country, and affords very conſiderable aids to traffic.

The tide, at its *flow*, ruſhing up our large rivers, clears and deepens the paſſage; in many places ſpreads a copious flood, where a dry and empty waſte lay before.—Is the ſailor returned from his voyage, and waiting at the mouth of the channel? The *flux* is ready to convey his veſſel to the very doors of the owner; and without any hazard of ſtriking on the rocks, or being faſtened in the ſands.——Has the merchant freighted his ſhip? would he have it tranſferred to the ocean? The *reflux* tenders its ſervice; and bears away the load, with the utmoſt expedition, and with equal ſafety.—Behold, O man! how greatly thou art beloved, how *highly favoured* by thy *MAKER!* In what part of his works has he forgotten or overlooked thy welfare? Shew me a creature, point out a ſpot, in the formation or diſpoſition of which, he has not been mindful of thy intereſts? *He has made thee to have dominion over the works of his hands, and has put all things in ſubjection under thy feet. All ſheep and oxen; the fowls of the air, and the fiſhes*; yea, and the ſurges *of the ſea* *, are ſubſervient to thy benefit. Even theſe, wild and impetuous as they are, yield their willing back, to receive thy load; and, like an indefatigable beaſt of burden, carry it to the place which thou ſhalt nominate.

What preſerves this vaſt flood in a ſtate of perpetual *purity?* It is the univerſal ſewers, into which are diſcharged, the refuſe and filth of the whole world. That which would defile the land, and pollute the air, is tranſmitted to the ocean, and neither miſchief nor inconvenience enſue.—Thoſe ſwarms of *locuſts*,—which, while living, were a plague to *Pharaoh*, by their loathed intruſion; and when dead, might have cauſed a more dreadful plague, by their noiſome ſtench;—ſwept into the ſea, were neither peſtilential, nor offenſive. How then is this receptacle of every nuiſance kept clean? Why does it not contract a noxious taint, and diffuſe a deſtructive contagion? ſuch as would render it a *grave* to the aquatic, and *bane* to the terreſtrial animals?—'Tis owing, partly to its inceſſant motion, partly to its ſaline quality. By the one, it is ſecured from any *internal* principle of corruption; by the other, it works itſelf clear from every *adventitious* defilement.

A directory this, and a pattern for me!—Thus may divine *grace*, like the penetrating power of ſalt, cure the depravity of my heart, and rectify the diſorders of my temper! ſeaſon my words, and make all my converſation ſavoury!—Thus may a continual courſe of *activity*, in my ſecular and my ſacred vocation, prevent the pernicious effects of indolence! Let me daily exerciſe, or be attempting to exerciſe, the graces of Chriſtianity, leſt faith become feeble; leſt hope contract dimneſs; and charity wax cold.

Now the tide begins to flow. Wave riſes upon wave, and billow rolls over billow. Nothing can divert, nothing retard its progreſs; no, not for a moment. Tho' *Canutus* be in the way †; though his royal authority, and ſtrict prohibition, nay, though all the forces of his kingdom oppoſe; it will never diſcontinue the advancing ſwell, till it has reached the deſtined point.—So, may I *always abound* in communion with GOD, or in beneficence to men; reſigning one religious or charitable employ, only to enter upon another; and be *thus* preſſing forward, *ſtill* preſſing forward to the prize of my high calling in *CHRIST JESUS*;—differing from thoſe regular viciſſitudes of the ocean, only in one particular; that *my* endeavours never ebb, *my* ſoul never draws back. Since this would be, if *temporary*, to my grievous loſs; if *final*, to my aggravated perdition.

Conſider the ſea in another capacity, and it *connects* the remoteſt realms of the univerſe, by facilitating an intercourſe between their reſpective inhabitants.——What ſhort-ſighted beings are mankind! how extremely ſuperficial their views! how unavoidable therefore their frequent miſtakes! The ancients looked upon this bottomleſs deep, as an unpaſſable * gulf. If our forefathers were ſo egregiouſly miſtaken in this inſtance; let us not too peremptorily pronounce upon any difficult or myſterious point; leſt ſucceeding generations, or a more enlightened ſtate, ſhould cover us with a double confuſion of *childiſh* ignorance, and *fooliſh* conceit.

We have clearly demonſtrated, and happily experienced, the very reverſe of that grey-headed ſurmiſe to be true. The ocean, inſtead of being a bar of ſeparation, is the great bond of union. For this purpoſe, it is never *exhauſted*, though it ſupplies the whole firmament with clouds, and the whole earth with rains; nor ever *overflows*, though all the rivers in the univerſe are perpetually augmenting its ſtores, and pouring in their tributary floods.—By means of this element, we travel farther, than birds of the ſtrongeſt pinion fly; and diſcover tracts, which the *vulture's eye has never ſeen* †. We make a viſit to nations, that lie drowned in their midnight ſlumbers, when every induſtrious perſon on *this* part of the globe is beſtirring himſelf in all the hurry of buſineſs. We cultivate an acquaintance with the ſun-burnt *Negro*, and the ſhivering *Icelander*. We croſs the flaming line, we penetrate the frozen pole, and wing our way even round the world.

This is the great vehicle of *commerce*.—Not to mention the floating caſtles, which contain whole armies; which bear the thunder, the fiery tempeſts, and all the dreadful artillery of war; what a multitude of ſhips, of the largeſt dimenſions, and moſt prodigious burden, are continually paſſing and repaſſing this univerſal thoroughfare! ſhips, that are freighted, not with ſacks, but with harveſts of corn; that carry not pipes, but vintages of wine; that are laden, not with bars of iron, blocks of marble, or wedges of gold, but with whole quarries of maſſy ſtone, and whole mines of ponderous metal. All which, lodged in

* Pſal. viii. 6. 7. 8.

† Alluding to a memorable and inſtructive ſtory, recorded of King *Canutus*: who, probably without having read, had nevertheleſs thoroughly learned, that excellent leſſon of *Horace*;

Regum timendorum in proprios greges,
Reges in ipſos imperium eſt Jovis.

Some of his abject and deſigning flatterers had the *impious aſſurance* to tell him, "his power was more than human."——To convince them of their folly, and rebuke them for their falſehood, he ordered his chair of ſtate to be placed on the extremity of the ſhore, juſt as the tide began to flow. Hither he took his ſeat, in the preſence of the *parafites*, and many other attendants. Then, with all that dignity of air, and ſeverity of accent, which ſovereign authority knows how to aſſume, he ſaid,—"Thou ſea, the land on "which I ſit is mine; nor has any one dared to invade my rights, "or diſobey my commands, without ſuffering the deſerved puniſh"ment. I charge thee, therefore, on pain of my higheſt diſplea"ſure, not to enter theſe territories, nor touch the feet of *king* "*land*'s monarch."

When the rude waves made bold to enter on the forbidden ground; nay, when thoſe uncourtly things preſumed to ruſh upon the royal ſeat, and even to daſh his Majeſty's perſon; he ſtarted from his throne, and bid every beholder obſerve the *impotence* of earthly kings; bid them remember, that HE alone is worthy of the name, whom winds, and waves, and univerſal nature obey.

* ——— *Deus abſcidit*
Prudens oceano diſſociabili
Terras. HOR.

† Job xxviii. 7.

these *volatile storehouses*, and actuated by the breath of heaven, are wafted to the very ends of the earth; wafted, enormous and unwieldy as they are, more expeditiously than the light *berlin* bowls along the roads; almost as speedily, as the nimble-footed *roe* bounds over the hills *.

Astonishing ordination of eternal wisdom! yet most graciously contrived for the benefit of mankind! I can hardly satisfy my view, in beholding this rolling chaos; I can never cease my admiration, in contemplating its amazing properties:—That an element, so *unstable* and *fugitive*, should bear up such an immense weight, as would bend the firmest floors, or burst the strongest beams!—That the *thin* and *yielding* air should drive on, with so much facility and speed, bodies of such excessive bulk, as the strength of a legion would be unable to move!—That the air and the water, acting in conjunction, should carry to the distance of many thousand miles, what the united force of men and machines could scarcely draw a single yard.——Puny and despicable are *our* attempts; but great and marvellous are *thy* works, O LORD GOD almighty! *If thou wilt work*, says the prophet, *who* or what *shall let it* †? Neither the meanness of the instrument, nor the greatness of the event. A sling and a stone shall lay the gigantic bravo in the dust ‡. An ox-goad shall do more execution than a battery of cannon ‖. Even *a worm shall thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and make the hills as chaff* §.—— GOD ALL-SUFFICIENT is his name, and out of weakness he maketh his strength perfect.—O! that we, my dear *Aspasio*,—that I especially,—may be strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might! Then, as the light air is made to act, with a more forcible impulse, than the most vigorous engines; as the fluid water is made to sustain more ponderous loads, than the most substantial works of masonry; so we, who in ourselves are nothing but *impotence*, shall be enabled to triumph over the legions of hell, and tread down all the temptations of the world.

How are the mariners conducted through this *fluid common*, than which nothing is more wide, and nothing more wild? Here is no tract to be followed; no posts of direction to be consulted; nor any shepherd's hut, where the wandering traveller may ask his way.—Are they guided by a pillar of fire in the night, or a moveable cloud in the day? as the sons of *Jacob* and *Joseph* were escorted through the eastern deserts. No; but by a mean, contemptible, and otherwise worthless *scrip!*—The apostle *James* mentions it, as a very observable fact, that the *ships, which are so great, and driven of fierce winds, yet are turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth* ¶. Is it not equally wonderful, that they should be led through such a pathless and unmeasurable waste, by so small an expedient, as the intervention of the *loadstone* †? Till this surprising mineral was discovered, and its properties were improved, navigation lay in its cradle; was, at best, a mere infant, that crept timorously along the coasts; was obliged to keep within sight of the shores; and, if driven out beyond the narrow sphere of her land-marks, could neither ascertain her situation, nor pursue her voyage. But this guide,—when every beacon on the top of the hill is vanished from the acutest ken; where nothing but skies are seen above, and seas along appear below;—*this guide* points out the proper passage. This communicates an intelligence, which shines clear in the thickest darkness, and remains steady in the most tempestuous agitations.—— This has given, not indeed birth, but *maturity* to navigation; and turned her swaddling bands into *wings*. This has emboldened her to launch into the heart of the ocean, and enabled her to range from pole to pole.

Thus does GOD, both in the operations of nature, and the administrations of providence, accomplish the most *important* ends by the most *inconsiderable* means.—When the formidable *Sisera* is to be cut off, the blow shall be given, not by some puissant champion, but by the hand of a woman *. When *Jericho* is to be demolished, those impregnable fortifications shall fall, not beneath the stroke of battering engines, but before the sound of rams horns †.——When a hundred thousand *Midianites* are to be routed, the LORD of hosts will gain his signal victory, not by numerous completely armed, but by a handful of *Israelites*, accoutred only with trumpets, lamps, and pitchers ‡.—Who would have thought, that from the root of *Jesse*, a root out of a dry ground, should arise that great tree, which *stretches her boughs unto the sea, and her height unto the heavens, and her branches unto the ends of the earth*? That the despised *Galilean* and the carpenter's son shall be the SAVIOUR of the world, and the HEIR of all things? Nay, that a person humbled like the meanest of slaves, and executed like the vilest of malefactors; nailed to a cross, and laid prostrate among the dead; that HE should restore life and immortality to ruined sinners; should open the gates of grace and glory on lost mankind? That a few *illiterate* creatures taken from the barge, the oar, and the net, should confute philosophers, and convert kings; should overthrow the strong-holds of idolatry, and plant *Christianity* on its ruins!——This is a circumstance, which, though a stumbling-block to some people, has considerably strengthened my faith. It is perfectly agreeable to the ALMIGHTY's manner. It is (if I may so speak) the distinguishing *turn* of his hand, and the peculiar *style* of his works. Whence does he raise the charmingly-beauteous flower? whence the magnificent myriads of the forest-oaks? whence the boundless and inestimable stores of the harvest? From principles which bear not the least proportion to their effects.—Besides, this most emphatically speaks THE GOD. It *shews the lighting down of his glorious arm* ‖; and absolutely precludes all the pretensions of human arrogance, or finite power. It appropriates the honour to that supreme AGENT, before whom the *easy* and the *arduous* are both alike. All men that see it must confess, THIS HATH GOD DONE.

Through this channel, are imported to our island the choice productions, and the peculiar treasures, of every nation under heaven. So that we can breakfast upon a dissolution of the *American* kernel §; and see the rich nutrimental liquor froth in our cups, without ever tempting the foaming brine. We can steep the delicately-flavoured *Chinese* leaf, in the waters of our own well; or spend the afternoon in our own parlour, and be regaled with an infusion of the finely-scented *Arabian* berry. We can season the friendly bowl with the juices of the *orange*, or refresh our clammy palate with the pulp of the *tamarind*; without feeling that fervent heat, which imparts such a poignant relish to the former; without suffering those

* A ship, under a brisk and steady gale, will sail at the rate of 216 miles in 24 hours; persevering, if the wind continues favourable, in the same rapid career, for several days together: A course, which, considering both its *swiftness* and *duration*, cannot be equalled by the ablest horse, perhaps not by the nimblest creature that treads the ground.

† Is. xliii. 13. ‡ 1 Sam. xvii. 50. ‖ Judg. iii. 31.

§ Is. xli. 14, 15. ¶ Jam. iii. 4.

† I am aware, that other expedients are used for shaping a proper course on the ocean; such as making observations from the sun by mathematical instruments. But these, I believe, are only subordinate aids to the needle. The *grand* regulator is the magnet. I have heard an experienced sailor declare, he would rather be without his *quadrant*, than without his *compass*.

* Judg. iv. 9. † Josh. vi. 3.

‡ Judg. vii. 19. ‖ II. xxv. 30.

§ Called the *cocoa*, which affords the principal ingredient of *chocolate*, and grows on a small tree in *America*.

scorch-

corching beams, which gave a fever-cooling virtue to the latter. We can pile upon our salvers a pyramid of *Italian* figs; fill the interstices with the sky-dried raisins of *Malaga*; and form a summit for the inviting structure, with the *pistacia nut* of *Aleppo*.—By this means, the eastern spices exhale their odours on our tables; and the western canes transfuse their sweetness into our viands. We clothe our bodies with the vegetable fleeces * of the south, and line our apparel with warm furry spoils from the north. We can wear the pearl polished in the abysses of the *Persian* gulf; and walk on the carpets, manufactured in the dominions of the *Great Mogul*: yet neither expose ourselves to the rage of boisterous seas, nor the more dreaded treachery of barbarous people.—In short, by this grand and beneficial expedient of navigation, every tide conveys into our ports the wealth of the remotest climes, and brings the abundance of the universe to be unladen on our quays. *London* becomes a mart of nations; and almost every private house in the kingdom, is embellished or accommodated from the four quarters of the globe.

Almost every private house—Is not this more like rhetorical flourish, than real truth? Are not all the advantages I have mentioned, the peculiar portion of the rich? Is not the sea, like high life and the gay world, somewhat *capricious* and *partial?* bestowing lavishly her favours on the wealthy, at the same time that she neglects the needy?—Quite the reverse. Like her most exalted yet most condescending CREATOR, she is no respecter of persons. She deals out her liberalities to all; to the wealthy, such as are suitable to their circumstances; to the indigent, such as are best adapted to their condition. If she ornaments the abodes of the first, she employs the hands of the last; furnishes *these* with useful labour, *those* with elegant accommodations. What a multitude of industrious people acquire a livelihood, by preparing the commodities intended for exportation! and what a multitude of dextrous artificers maintain their families, by manufacturing the wares imported from abroad!

It is reckoned a valuable species of beneficence to provide proper work for the poor.——This withdraws them from many temptations and preserves them from much wickedness. It hinders them from being a burden to themselves, and a nuisance to the public. They might otherwise be *idle*, and as vermin on the body politic; or even *mutinous*, and as vipers in the bowels of the nation. Whereas, by exerting themselves in a due subordination, and with becoming diligence, they are the very sinews of the community; or like the grand wheel in the machine of state, whose incessant activity distributes plenty, and pours innumerable conveniencies through the whole.——What a *master* then, or rather what a *mistress*, is the sea! how extensive her correspondence, and how large her demand for workmen! Into what branch of trade does she not enter? What kind of ingenious science, or useful toil, does she not befriend? How many millions of honest but needy persons are engaged in her service? And how amply are they repaid for their pains!—*They that go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters, these men see the works of the* LORD, *and his wonders in the deep.*—— They also that dwell among their own people, and abide in the villages, even they enjoy the bounty, and share the advantages of the ocean. For, though it is false philosophy, to suppose the waters *themselves* strained through subterranean passages, into the in-land countries; yet it is an undeniable truth, that their beneficial *effects* are transfused into every town, every hamlet, and every cottage.

Surely, the inhabitants of our isle have reason to turn the prediction of *Moses*, concerning the tribe of *Joseph*, into a devout and grateful acknowledgment.—*Blessed of the* LORD *is* * *our land. Blessed with the precious things of heaven, with the dew, and with the deep that coucheth beneath. With the precious things brought forth by the sun, and with the precious things thrust forth by the moon. With the chief things of the ancient mountains, and with the precious things of the everlasting hills: and with the precious things of the earth, and the fulness thereof.* †——May we also enjoy *the good-will of* HIM, *who dwelt in the bush* ‡, and the grace of HIM, who hung on the tree! May the eternal GOD be our refuge, and his everlasting arms underneath both us and our interests!—Happy then wilt thou be, thrice happy, *O England!* Thy temporal advantages, and thy spiritual privileges considered, it may truly be said, *Who*, or what nation, *is like unto thee?*

This for my country; now let me wish for myself;

GOD of all worlds! source and supreme of things!
From whom all life, from whom duration springs!
Intense O! let me for thy glory burn,
Nor fruitless view my days and months return.
Give me with wonder at thy works to glow,
To grasp thy vision, and thy truths to know:
O'er time's tempestuous sea to reach thy shore,
And live, and sing, where time shall be no more.

You see, *Aspasio*, I have been studying the volume of nature; endeavouring to read its capital characters, and learn some of its instructive lessons. The sea has been the page; but how *superficial* is my perusal, and no less *scanty* my knowledge. Little, very little have I seen or conceived, relating to those works of wonder, which the vast unfathomable deep contains ‖;—the plants it produces, and the creatures it nourishes;

* *Cotton*, which is a sort of wool, encompassing the seed of a tree.—Its fruit is of an oval form, about the size of a nut. As it ripens, it grows black on the outside; and, by the heat of the sun, opens in several places, discovering the cotton through the clefts, which is of an admirable whiteness. See CHAMB. *Dict.*

* *Is*, (so I would translate the original,) not *be*; in the *predictive*, not precatory form. This implies a fulness of faith, and distinguishes prophecy from prayer; best suits the extraordinary illumination of *Moses*; and does most honour to the omniscient SPIRIT.

† *Deut.* xxxiii. 13, 14, 15, 16. Here seems be an exact summary, and a poetical description of the riches of nature.—*The precious things of heaven*; or *rain*, which descends from the upper; and *dew*, which is formed in the lower, regions of the firmament.——*The deep that coucheth beneath*; seas, rivers, fountains, wells, which lie in the bosom of the soil; and are sources of fertility and plenty.—*The precious things brought forth by the sun*, must certainly denote the herbs, plants, trees, and all manner of *vegetables*, with their respective fruits.—*The precious things thrust forth by the moon*, may probably refer to the *mineral* kingdoms; in the formation of which, that ruler of the night may have a considerable influence. The moon is confessedly the parent of tides; and may put in motion those bituminous and saline fluids, which, circulating through the pores of the earth, and fixing in beds of homogeneous matter, are supposed to commence minerals.—As our sacred philosopher has already specified the vegetable tribes, and (if I mistake not) the beds of fossils, *the principal things of the mountains, and hills*, should signify the sheep, goats, and other valuable animals, which feed upon those vast declivities. Then, *the precious things of the earth*, may express those herds of larger cattle, which have their pasturage in the plains, valleys, and lower grounds. A sense, which recommends itself from this consideration, that the wealth of the ancients consisted chiefly in cattle.—*The fulness thereof*, may be a kind of recapitulation; a comprehensive term, including the whole produce of the terraqueous globe; the *magnificent liberality of* JEHOVAH to his people.

‡ Deut. xxxiii. 16.

‖ Should the reader desire to see this subject more largely opened, and more fully improved, I would refer him to *Contemplations on the ocean*, lately published by my ingenious and pious friend Mr *Pearsall*. In which, a refined fancy and a delicate philosophy, compose a chaplet for evangelical divinity: uniting some of their beautiful and fragrant flowers, to adorn the gospel of GOD our SAVIOUR,—to quicken and refresh the spirits of his people,—to invite and win the hearts of the disobedient.

—its

its ſtupendous rocks, and ſubterranean caves;—the heaps of pearl, which are its native growth; and the loads of gold, which it has gained by ſhipwreck.——*So* ſuperficial are my views of *CHRIST*; *ſo* ſcanty is my acquaintance with the goſpel.

You, I preſume, are ſitting at the feet of that ſublime *TEACHER*; and attending to the dictates of HIS mouth, in *whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge* *. Let me promiſe myſelf a communication of *your* thoughts, as I have freely tranſmitted a ſpecimen of *mine*. And I will make no ſcruple to acknowledge the ſuperiority of the exchange; that I receive

Χρυσια χαλκειων, παλιγκοι τιμαβουν.

Or, as the eloquent *Iſaiah* ſpeaks; *For braſs you will bring gold, and for iron you will bring ſilver* †; rendering me, by this intercourſe, your more *obliged*, though it is ſcarce poſſible for me to be more than I already am,

Your affectionate,

THERON.

P. S. Monſieur *Paſchal*, who was remarkably fond of *brevity*, makes an odd excuſe for tranſgreſſing, on a particular occaſion, his favourite rule. He entreats his friend to pardon the unuſual length of his epiſtle, by aſſuring him, *that he had not time to make it ſhorter*.——I cannot, it muſt be confeſſed, adopt this philoſopher's apology. For I have purpoſely lengthened my letter, with a view of ſetting, in this *one* circumſtance, a pattern for my *Aſpaſio*.

* Col. ii. 3.

† Iſ. lx. 17.

LETTER X.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

I Thank you for you *letter*, becauſe it entertains and improves me: I thank you for your *poſtſcript*, becauſe it is my encouragement and my apology.——I am ſet down to write, with a copious ſtock of materials. It will be far more difficult to contract, than to enlarge. I muſt therefore acknowledge myſelf obliged to your candour, for aſſigning me the *eaſier* taſk.—That prolixity, which, in others, might be ungenteel and faulty, is, in me, an act of complaiſance, and matter of duty.

Though abſent from you, I went with you in your late ramble. Your deſcriptive pen has made me partaker of the *ideal delight*: may divine grace enable me to ſhare in the *ſpiritual improvement!*—When you diſplayed the beauties of the morn, breaking forth from the obſcurity of night; when you adopted that noble aſpiration from our philoſophic poet, I could not forbear adding,—— "Thus may the gracious *GOD*, who commands the "light to ſhine out of the midnight-darkneſs, ſhine into "our hearts; and give that *incomparably-glorious* know-"ledge, the knowledge of his bleſſed *SELF!* which, tho' "diſcernable through all the tracts of creation, and de-"rivable from every work of his almighty hand; yet no "where beams forth with ſuch *complete* and ſuch *amiable* "luſtre, as in the perſon of *JESUS CHRIST* *."—Here we behold all the ſublime perfections of the *DEITY*, not only manifeſted with inimitable ſplendor, but operating for our own advantage. We behold them, as *Job* ſpeaks, *for ourſelves* †; and cannot but receive inexpreſſible refreſhment and joy from the view.

When you walked beneath the ſhade of thoſe huge, horrid, and enormous cliffs; both amuſed and alarmed at their ſtupendous magnitude, and frightful irregularity; when you caſt your eye upon the wide-expanded ſurface of the ocean;—when you ſurveyed the far more unmeaſurable arches of the ſky;—and meditated, in that awful ſolicitude, on the wildeſt and moſt magnificent appearances of nature;—I felt the ſame kind of devout aſtoniſhment with yourſelf. While the ſoul was wrapt in *penſive ſtillneſs*, and *pleaſing dread* ‡, methought I heard a voice, or ſomething like a voice, from the ſilent ſpheres, as well as from the ſounding ſeas. It ſeemed to echo back, what the mighty angel, whom *John* ſaw flying in the midſt of heaven, once proclaimed; "*Worſhip HIM, who made heaven and earth, and the* "*ſea, and the fountains of water* *. Worſhip him, who "ſtretched out that azure pavilion with ſuch amazing "grandeur; who meaſured yonder world of waters, in "the hollow of his hand; and before whom, this im-"menſe range of mountainous cliffs, is but as duſt upon "the ſcale."

When you deſcribed the *diſmal ſituation* of a wretch, expoſed on the edges of the tremendous precipice; hanging over the ragged rocks, and the unfathomable gulf; and cleaving only to a ſlender, treacherous, breaking bough: how heartily did I join in your adoring acknowledgments to that kind, interpoſing, bleſſed hand, which reſcued us both from an infinitely more threatening and dreadful danger! reſcued us, as *ſlaves*, from the dominion of the devil; ſnatched us, as *brands*, from the inextinguiſhable burnings; and bid us (O marvellous, ſuperabundant goodneſs!) bid us poſſeſs the *liberty* of righteouſneſs; bid us inherit the *kingdom* of heaven.

When you mention the paſt indolence, and the preſent fervour of your prayers, I could not forbear re-iterating my praiſes to *GOD* on your behalf. This is a proof, my dear *Theron*, that you are going in the way everlaſting; for it is written, *They ſhall come with weeping, and with ſupplications will I lead them* †. This is the work of the *HOLY GHOST*, dwelling in your heart; for what ſaith the ſcripture? *I will pour out upon them the ſpirit of grace and of ſupplication* ‡. And our *LORD* himſelf mentions this, as the indication of a true converſion; *Behold he prayeth* ‖.—Had not *Saul* prayed before? Yes; and made long prayers too. But he never, till that inſtant, was ſenſible of his undone and damnable condition; never cried to *GOD* from the depths of his diſtreſs, or from the depths of his heart; nor ever ſolicited the throne of grace, in the all-prevailing name of *JESUS CHRIST*.—His prayers, till then, were ſomewhat like the *motes*, which fluctuate to and fro in the air, without any vigorous impulſe, or any certain aim. But, in that hour, they were like the *arrow*, which ſprings from the ſtrained bow, and, quick as lightning, flies to the mark.

I was pleaſed to find you, in the proceſs of your letter, inſenſibly forgetting the narrative; and ſo en-

* 2 Cor. iv. 6. † Job xix. 27.

‡ It ſeems to have been ſuch a kind, not of *anxious* but of *pleaſing* dread, which ſeized the diſciples on the mount of transfiguration; ησαν γαρ εκφοβοι, for they were ſtruck with a profound, but delightful awe. *Delightful*, otherwiſe it is not eaſy to conceive, why *Peter* ſhould propoſe to *build tabernacles* there, or how he could wiſh to continue in thoſe circumſtances, *Mark* ix. 6.

* Rev. xiv. 7. † Jer. xxxi. 9.

‡ Zech. xii. 10. ‖ Acts ix. 11.

gaged by the ſubject, that you ſpoke not as the *relator*, but as the *beholder*. —— Thus may we always be affected, when we ſtudy the oracles of truth; ſtudy them, not as cold unconcerned critics, who are only to judge of their meaning, but as perſons *deeply intereſted* in all they contain; who are particularly addreſſed in every exhortation, and directed by every precept; whoſe are the promiſes, and to whom belong the precious privileges. ——When we enabled thus to *realize* and *appropriate* the contents of that invaluable book; then we ſhall taſte the ſweetneſs, and feel the power of the ſcriptures. Then we ſhall know, by happy experience, that our divine MASTER's words, are not barely ſounds and ſyllables, but *they are ſpirit, and they are life* *.

I was ſtill more agreeably entertained with your picture of *commerce*, and of the advantages we receive from *navigation*. One advantage, however, I can ſpecify, which is greater than any, greater than all, you have celebrated; an advantage, which will endear and ennoble navigation, ſo long as the ſun and moon endure. The goſpel, my dear friend, the *glorious goſpel* came to our iſland through this channel. The volume that comprizes it, and the preacher that publiſhed it, both were imported by ſhipping. And may we not ſay, with the enraptured *Iſaiah*? *How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good tidings; that publiſh peace; that bring good tidings of good; that publiſh ſalvation; that ſay unto Zion, Thy GOD reigneth* †! It is pleaſant to hear their voice; pleaſant to contemplate their meſſage; and pleaſant even to behold the ground on which they trod, or the very waves over which they ſailed.——This made the holy prophet rejoice in ſpirit, when he foreſaw the extenſive ſpread of his MASTER's glory, and the certain commencement of *our* happineſs. This put into his mouth that affectionate and congratulatory addreſs; which, in a very particular manner, is directed to us and our countrymen: *Sing unto the LORD a new ſong, and his praiſe from the ends of the earth: ye that go down to the ſea, and all that is therein; ye iſles, and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderneſs and the cities thereof lift up their voice; let the inhabitants of the rock ſing, let them ſhout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the LORD; and declare his praiſe in the iſlands* ‡.

We read, in *Ezekiel*, of the *moſt magnificent* fleet that ever ploughed the ſeas. The maſts were of cedar ‖, and the benches of ivory. Fine linen, beautified with embroidery, floated to the winds, and formed the ſails. Blue and purple rigged the veſſel, and clothed the meaneſt mariner.——Let us ſuppoſe, that the freight of this ſplendid navy was proportioned, in value, to its ſumptuous tackling. Yet how poor, how deſpicable were either, were both if eſtimated with the treaſures of the goſpel; thoſe *divine treaſures*, which ſpring from the imputation of our *REDEEMER*'s righteouſneſs! and which have much the ſame kindly influence on *religious practice*, as navigation, with all her improvements, has upon traffic!—Give me leave to confirm this aſſertion, by ſelecting a few inſtances, and applying them in a few interrogatories.

One of the benefits proceeding from the imputation of CHRIST's righteouſneſs, is *pardon*; pardon, not partial, but complete; a pardon of each ſin, be it ever ſo *heinous*; a pardon of all ſins, be they ever ſo *numerous*. For thus ſaid GOD the LORD, who ſent both his prophets and apoſtles, preaching peace by *JESUS CHRIST*, *I will pardon* ALL *their iniquities, whereby they have ſinned, and whereby they have tranſgreſſed againſt me* *.—To learn the deſirable nature of this bleſſing, let us ſtep back into the annals of hiſtory, and attend a traiterous unhappy nobleman to his *vindictive* exit. His body is demanded by the miniſters of juſtice. Reluctant and trembling he is conducted to the ſcaffold. There the alarmed criminal ſees the mourning block; ſees the glittering axe; ſees the coffin prepared for his corpſe; ſees thouſands of anxious ſpectators, waiting, with eager looks and throbbing hearts, the fearful cataſtrophe. In a word, he ſees death advancing, with all the ſolemnities of *horror* and *woe*.——Time elapſes. The preparatory ceremonies are diſpatched. The fatal moment is arrived. No longer reſpite can be allowed. He muſt ſubmit to immediate execution. Accordingly he proſtrates himſelf to receive the ſtroke. But—ſeized with new terrors, at the poiſed axe, and approaching blow, he ſtarts from the dangerous poſture.——Again he bends, and again ſnatches his neck from the impending edge. A third time he lifts his pale countenance, to the pitying crouds, and departing light.—Once more he bows to the block, and once more raiſes his head, in *wiſhful expectation* of the royal clemency.—Had a meſſenger appeared, at the critical inſtant, with a ſhout of joy upon his tongue, and a ſealed pardon in his hand; O! how tranſporting the news! *inexpreſſibly welcome* the favour!—What was denied to his paſſionate deſires, denied to the importunate ſolicitations of his friends, is freely offered to us in the goſpel of *CHRIST*: a pardon of infinitely higher conſequence, which obliterates millions and millions of rebellious acts; which extends its bleſſed effects, not merely through the little ſpan of life, but beyond the gates of the grave,—beyond the boundaries of time,—through all the ages of eternity.

How unfathomable is that immenſe flood, on which my *Theron* lately exerciſed his contemplation! The plumbing plummets, with all their length of cordage, are unable to find a bottom. Were the hugeſt millſtones, or the higheſt towers, or the moſt ſpacious cities, caſt into that prodigious gulf, they would be totally overwhelmed, and irrecoverably loſt. Therefore the inſpired prophet, to ſhew the *boundleſs* extent of the divine mercies in *JESUS CHRIST*, and to denote the *fulneſs* of their pardon who are cleanſed in the REDEEMER's blood, hath illuſtrated both by this grand ſimilitude: *Thou wilt caſt all their ſins into the depths of the ſea* †;—not one, or a few, but *all* their ſins;——not barely behind thy back, but into the *ſea*;—and not into the ſhallow parts, but in the very *depths* of the ocean;—ſo that they ſhall never riſe up in judgment; never be taken notice of; no, nor ever be remembered any more.

With an act of total indemnity, let us join a thorough *reſtoration* to *favour*.——If the wrath of an earthly king be as *the roaring of a lion* ‡; how much more tremendous is *his* indignation, who is able to caſt both body and ſoul into hell! If the favour of an earthly ſovereign be as *dew upon the graſs*; how much more deſirable and delightful HIS loving-kindneſs, whom all things in heaven and earth obey!——By the righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*, we are freed from all foreboding apprehenſions of the former, and eſta-

* John vi. 63.

† Iſ. lii. 7. Never did language beſpeak an *enraptured* ſoul, more ſignificantly than this ſacred exclamation. The prophet is all wonder and all joy. He is ſo enamoured with his ſubject, and ſo captivated with the glory of the *goſpel*, that he can never ſay enough of its excellencies.——*Good tidings*; the very beſt, that earth could receive, or heaven proclaim. *Good tidings of good*; a moſt comprehenſive good; a collection of every bleſſing; or all good things in one. *Publiſh peace*; peace with GOD, the everlaſting King; and that ſweet peace of conſcience, which the whole world cannot give. *Publiſh ſalvation*; or that gift of righteouſneſs which is the meritorious cauſe, together with that ſpirit of liberty and ſpirit of adoption, which are the rich and grand conſtituents of ſalvation. *That ſay unto Zion, Thy GOD reigneth*; not ſin and Satan, not luſt and appetite, oppreſſive tyrants and worſe than *Egyptian* taſk-maſters; but the all-wiſe and infinitely gracious JEHOVAH; he, even he ſetteth up his pure, his peaceful, his ſpiritual kingdom, in the believer's heart, in the *Gentile* nations, and in all lands.

‡ Iſ. xliii. 10. 11. 12. ‖ Ezek. xxvii. 5. *&c.*

* Jer. xxxiii. 8. † Mic. vii. 19. ‡ Prov. xix. 12.

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blished in the comfortable poſſeſſion of the latter. The goſpel renews and ratifies that joyful proclamation of the angelic hoſt, *Peace on earth, and good-will to men* *. GOD is not only pacified towards believers, but well pleaſed with them in his dear SON. They are the objects of his complacential delight, and he rejoices over them to do them good.

Nay, they are made children, *ſons and daughters of the LORD almighty* †; and if ſons, then heirs of GOD, and joint heirs with CHRIST ‡.—The chief captain mentioned in the *Acts*, purchaſed his freedom of the imperial city *Rome*, with a great ſum of money ‖. If ſuch a little tranſient immunity was ſo valuable in his eſteem, who can expreſs the worth, who can conceive the dignity, of this divine adoption? Yet it belongs to tho e who receive the goſpel, and are intereſted in CHRIST.—— They have acceſs to the omnipotent BEING; ſuch free and welcome acceſs, as a beloved child to an indulgent father. To him they may fly for aid, in every difficulty; and from him obtain a ſupply, in all their wants.—GOD, as the ſacred charter runs, IS THEIR GOD. All his lovely, all his adorable perfections, are their glorious inheritance, and exceeding great reward. That eternal power, to which nothing is impoſſible, exerts itſelf as their *guard*; and that unerring wiſdom, from which nothing is concealed, acts as their *guide*. His very juſtice is no longer an incenſed adverſary, demanding vengeance or meditating deſtruction; but a faithful *guarantee*, to provide for the punctual execution of the REDEEMER's treaty, and their complete enjoyment of its various bleſſings.—What a privilege is this! Rather what a *cluſter* of privileges is here! Weigh the kingdoms of the world; caſt all the glories of them into the ſcale; and they will be found, when compared with theſe divine prerogatives, *emptier* than the bubble that burſts, *lighter* than the ſpark that expires.

In the goſpel are given exceeding great and precious promiſes. Of ſuch *value*, that they were procured by the blood of CHRIST; of ſuch *certainty*, that they are ratified by the oath § of JEHOVAH. So *durable*, that, though all fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof as the flower of the graſs, this word of our GOD abideth for ever ¶; ſo *efficacious*, that there are no ſuch cordials to revive our fainting, and no ſuch bulwarks to ſecure our endangered ſouls. With theſe the Bible is as richly repleniſhed, as the clear midnight-ſky is beſpangled with ſtars. They *are all yea and amen*, conſigned over as a ſure unalienable portion, *to them that are in* JESUS CHRIST †.

Another benefit, given in conſequence of the REDEEMER's righteouſneſs, is the *ſanctifying* SPIRIT. A moſt comprehenſive bleſſing this! Our SAVIOUR intimates, that it includes every heavenly gift, is an aſſemblage of all good things +.—How ſingular a comfort muſt it be to blind *Bartimeus*, to have his eyes opened, and behold the all-chearing light of the ſun ++! So, and far more comfortable, are the enlightening influences of the bleſſed SPIRIT, when they ſhine upon the wretched creature, who ſits in darkneſs and the ſhadow of death. How peculiar a mercy for the impure and abhorred *leper*, to be healed of his inveterate diſeaſe! to feel the ſoothing ſenſations of eaſe, where ſores rankled and pain raged! Inſtead of enfeebling languors and loathſome deformity, vigour braces his limbs, and comelineſs blooms in his countenance =. Equally benign and equally ſalubrious, is the agency of the divine SPIRIT, on our depraved, polluted, ſenſual minds.—— How ſignal was the recovery, and how welcome the change! when that unhappy creature, ſo wildly agitated by a *miſchievous damon*, was reinſtated in the peaceful poſſeſſion of himſelf and his faculties! when, inſtead of unnaturally cutting his own fleſh, or committing barbarous outrages on innocent travellers, he ſat compoſed and attentive at the feet of JESUS *! receiving heavenly inſtruction from his lips, and learning the meekneſs of wiſdom from his example. So ſalutary and beneficial is the tranſforming power of the HOLY GHOST the Comforter; ſoftening the rugged, ſweetening the moroſe, and calming the paſſionate temper.—It is undoubtedly the utmoſt improvement, and the higheſt happineſs of our nature, to have the image of the bleſſed GOD reinſtamped on our hearts. This is an earneſt, and an anticipation alſo, of endleſs felicity: a *bud* which will open in heaven, and ſpread into immortal glory: a *dawn* which will ſhine more and more, till the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſes, and brightens it into everlaſting day. This bud the ſanctifying SPIRIT ingrafts, the dawn the grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST diffuſes, in the barren and benighted ſoul.

In a word, receive this righteouſneſs, and you have a title to all bleſſings, whether they be preſent or future, bodily or ſpiritual, temporal or eternal. From the neceſſary conveniencies of bread to eat, and raiment to put on; even to the crowns of glory, and the fulneſs of joy; *all, all*, are owing to our REDEEMER's righteouſneſs.—You ſee now, *Theron*, that our ſcheme has no tendency to impoveriſh your ſpiritual condition, or diminiſh your true riches; any more than thoſe tracts of water, which ſurround our iſland, are detrimental to the wealth of its inhabitants. Detrimental! No; they are an inexhauſtible ſource of treaſure. They convey to our uſe the choiceſt accommodations, and the moſt elegant delights; ſuch as would in vain be expected, if the whole ocean was converted into the fineſt meads, and moſt fertile paſtures. So—but to apply this compariſon, would foreſtal your principal queſtion.

"Do not theſe favours, though unſpeakably precious "in themſelves, tend to the introduction or ſupport of "ungodlineſs?"—Quite the reverſe. Have we *redemption* through our SAVIOUR's blood, even the forgiveneſs of our ſins? We are redeemed, not that we may ſink in ſupineneſs, or launch into licentiouſneſs, but that we may be a peculiar people, zealous of good works ‡.—Are we made the *children* of GOD? Then let our light ſo ſhine before men, that others, ſeeing our good works, may glorify our FATHER which is in heaven ‡. This is the genuine conſequence of ſuch a doctrine, and the proper effect of ſuch a benefit.—Are we veſted with ſacred *privileges*! Theſe admoniſh us, theſe urge us, to walk worthy of HIM, who hath called us to his kingdom and glory ‖. Shall the citizens of heaven be animated with no higher views, than the ſlaves of appetite, and drudges of the world?—Are we conſtituted *heirs* of the *promiſes*? The grace which they aſcertain, is intended to make us partakers of a divine nature §; and the encouragement which they adminiſter, incites us to cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, incites us to perfect holineſs in the fear of GOD ¶.—Such high immunities are a moſt endearing perſuaſive, not to diſgrace, but magnify, not to provoke, but pleaſe, their unſpeakably-beneficent AUTHOR.

I might farther obſerve, that holineſs is one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed bleſſings in our ſyſtem; nay, is the very *central* bleſſing, to which all the others verge; in which they all terminate.——Were we *choſen* from eternity?——It was for this purpoſe, that we may be holy and unblameable in love †.——Are we *called* in time? It is to this intent, that we may ſhew forth the praiſes of him, who hath called us out of darkneſs into his marvellous light +.——Are we *created again in* CHRIST

* Luke ii. 14. † 2 Cor. vi. 18. ‡ Rom. viii. 17.
‖ Acts xxii. 28. § Heb. vi. 17. ¶ 1 Pet. i. 23.
† 2 Cor. i. 20.
+ Compare *Matth.* vii. 11. with *Luke* xi. 13.
++ Mark x. 52. = Matth. viii. 3.

* Mark. v. 15. † Tit. ii. 14.
‡ Matth. v. 16. ‖ 1 Theſſ. iii. 12. § 2 Pet. i. 4.
¶ 2 Cor. vii. 1. † Eph. i. 4. + 1 Pet. ii. 9.

CHRIST JESUS? It is, to capacitate us for acceptable service, and to furnish us unto every good work *. *I will put my spirit within you, saith the LORD.* For what end? *That ye may walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them* †. Here comes in my *Theron's* favourite endowment, sincere obedience. Far, very far from discarding sincere obedience, we should only introduce it, under its due character, and in its proper order. *Under its due character*; as the fruit, not the cause, of our interest in CHRIST's righteousness. *In its due order*; as following, not preceding, the gift of justification.

These privileges, my dear friend, are salutary, as the pool of *Bethesda* ‡. They are restorative, as the waters of *Siloam* ‖: or like that sacred stream flowing from the *sanctuary*: which healed the rivers, healed the sea, and made even the desert flourish §.—If justification by the righteousness of CHRIST had a tendency to subvert the foundation of holiness, to confirm the hypocritical professor in his neglect of moral duties, or discourage the sincere convert from the pursuit of real virtue; it would, doubtless, be unworthy of any acceptation, or rather worthy of universal abhorrence. But I dare appeal, not only to the nature of the doctrine, and the reason of things, but to the experience of all;—yes, of all who *have tasted, that the LORD is gracious* ¶. "Speak, ye "who are enabled to believe, that GOD is reconciled; "has received the all-satisfying atonement; and placed "his SON's righteousness to your account! that he re"gards you as his children, and will receive you to his "glory!—Have you not, under *such* convictions, felt "your hearts exulting with conscious joy; and every "power of your souls springing forward, to glorify your "heavenly FATHER,—glorify him by every instance "of obedience, fidelity, and zeal?"

Can such invaluable benefits have a prejudicial influence on our practice, if, to the consideration of their superlative worth, we add that *unequalled price*, by which they were purchased?——HE who is high above all height, humbled himself, to be made of a woman, and born in a stable; that we might be admitted into the family of GOD, and exalted to the mansions of heaven. And will this great humiliation, which is the basis of our happiness, prompt us to look down with *contempt* on others, or entertain *arrogant* thoughts of ourselves?

The HOLY BEGOTTEN and the supreme delight of the FATHER, was numbered with transgressors, and ranked with felons; that we might be joined to the innumerable company of angels, and associated with saints in glory everlasting. And will any one make this a precedent or a plea, for *walking in the counsel of the ungodly; for standing in the way of sinners; or sitting in the seat of the scornful* †?

All manner of evil was spoken of the faultless JESUS; his blessed name was vilified by blaspheming tongues, and his unblameable conduct blackened with the foulest aspersions; on purpose that we may be applauded, when we are judged; and each hear those transporting words, WELL DONE THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT ÷! Will this embolden us to *dishonour* our LORD, and *stain* our holy profession? Shall we from hence be induced to open the mouths of his enemies, and furnish them with occasion to speak reproachfully?

HE went, galled with the lashes of the scourge, and penetrated with the pungent thorns; he went, loaded with the execrable cross, and marking the way with his precious blood; *thus* he went to his ignominious and tormenting exit; that we may enter into *Zion* with songs of triumph on our lips, and with everlasting joy on our heads. Does this invite us to go, crowned with roseBuds, to the house of *riot*; or go, muffled in disguise, to the *midnight-revel?* Will it not rather incline us, to sit down at his pierced feet, and bathe them with our tears, and take delight * in mourning for our crucified LORD?

Behold! he hangs on the cursed tree! There, there he hangs; rent with wounds, and racked with pain.—He pours his groans, and spills his blood. He bows his head, his patient princely head, and dies—astonishing, ravishing consideration! he dies for *you* and *me*. And will this harden our hearts, or arm our hands, to crucify him afresh by any allowed iniquity? Does not reason suggest, and Christianity dictate, and all that is ingenuous enforce, the apostle's important inference? *If one died for all, then they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them* †.

He thought upon us, long before the foundations of the world were laid; he remembers us, now he is exalted to the right hand of the MAJESTY in the heavens; and will never, never forget us, through all the revolutions of eternity. And is this a motive to forget his name; to disregard his word; or to imitate the shameful neutrality and indifference of *Gallio?* Impressed with a sense of this invariable and everlasting kindness, surely we shall declare ourselves, as those captives in *Babylon*, concerning their dear native city *Jerusalem*; *If I forget thee*, O blessed JESUS, *let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth* ‡.

Remember thee!
Ay, my dear LORD, while memory holds a seat
In this devoted breast—Remember thee?
Yes, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
Which youth and observation copied there,
And thy remembrance all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain ‖.

Is it possible, *Theron*, for the contemplation of such goodness, to weaken the motives, or relax the springs of obedience? As soon may *lenient balms* kill, and rankest poisons cure.——Is such a belief calculated to discourage duty, and patronize licentiousness? Just as much as *vernal showers* are fitted to cleave the earth with chinks, or summer suns to glaze the waters with ice.——When *Anthony* made an oration to the soldiers, on occasion of *Cæsar's* death; when he shewed them their honoured master's robe, transfixed with so many daggers; when he reminded them of the victories they had won, under their assassinated commander; when he farther informed them, that their murdered general had remembered them in his will,—had bequeathed all his fine gardens, and beautiful walks to their use and delight;—heavens! how they took fire! *Revenge* sparkled in their eyes; *Revenge* flamed in their bosoms; *Revenge* was all their cry. They flew to the houses of the conspirators; laid them even with the ground; and had they met the owners, would have tore them limb from limb.—Some such resentment against sin, will a sense of our adored REDEEMER's sufferings excite; especially when set home by his blessed SPIRIT, and considered in connection with those detestable iniquities which caused them, and with those invaluable blessings which were procured by them.—Nothing, nothing is so effectual, to beget the

* The sorrow, arising from such tender and grateful views of the crucified JESUS, is that evangelical godly sorrow, which *worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii. 10. And is there not reason,—when we consider the pains he felt, the curse he bore, and the blood he shed,—is there not abundant reason to say, with *Homer's* afflicted hero?

Τλαπρηϋτατόν γε νοεῖτε.
Iliad. Χ.

* Eph. ii. 10. † Ezek. xxxvi. 27. ‡ John v. 4.
‖ John ix. 7. § Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9. ¶ 1 Pet. ii. 3.
† Psal. i. 1. ÷ Matth. xxv. 21.
† 2 Cor. v. 15, 16.
‡ Psal. cxxxvii. 5, 6. ‖ SHAKESPEAR.

most

most *irreconcileable abhorrence* of all ungodliness, to make the remembrance of it bitter as wormwood, the temptations to it horrible as hell.

Let me remind you of an incident, related by your favourite historian *Xenophon*.——*Cyrus* had taken captive the young prince of *Armenia*, together with his beautiful and blooming princess; whom he had lately married, and of whom he was passionately fond. When both were brought to the tribunal, *Cyrus* asked the prince, what he would give to be reinstated in his kingdom!—He answered, with an air of indifference, "That, as "for his crown, and *his own* liberty, he valued them at a "very low rate. But if *Cyrus* would restore his beloved "princess to her native dignity and hereditary possessions, he should infinitely rejoice; and would pay (this "he uttered with tenderness and ardor) would willingly "*pay his life* for the purchase."——Could such a declaration, so highly endearing, alienate the affections of the princess, or induce her to violate her fidelity? Let her own conduct answer the query. When all the prisoners were dismissed with freedom, it is impossible to express how they were charmed with their royal benefactor. Some celebrated his martial accomplishments. Some applauded his social virtues. All were *prodigal* of their praises, and *lavish* in grateful acknowledgments. And you, said the prince, (addressing himself to his bride) what think you of *Cyrus*?—I did not observe him, replied the princess.—Not observe him! Upon what then was your attention fixed?—Upon that *dear* and *generous* man, who declared, "he would purchase my liberty at "the expence of his very life *."——Was her heart impressed, were all her thoughts engrossed, by that benevolent *offer*? And shall ours be less affected with the incomparably more tender and endearing love of *CHRIST*?——He was not only willing, but *actually* laid down his life, for us; a life immensely precious, and of higher dignity than all heavens. He laid down his life, not for amiable persons, or worthy creatures, but for vile earth, and miserable sinners;——*purchasing* thereby for us and our children, privileges of inestimable worth, and of everlasting duration.

Will not such beneficence, so unmerited, so unequalled, win † the most reluctant, and melt the most obdurate heart? The heart, which is not wrought upon by this miracle of divine compassion, must be steel, must be adamant; quite impenetrable, and absolutely incorrigible.——"O thou ever blessed, thou all-gracious RE-"DEEMER, *thy love to us is wonderful; passing*, I will "not say, *the love of women* ‡, but the power of language, "and the reach of thought! Who can hold out against "such charming attractives? who can resist such hea-"venly goodness?——Only let a *sense* of thy love be al-"ways warm, always operative on our minds. This "shall be instead of a thousand *arguments* to engage, in-"stead of ten thousand *motives* to quicken our obedience."—Other motives may produce some external services, or hypocritical performances. Terrors may extort the drudgery of the hand. Bribes may purchase the adulation of the tongue. But this conciliates the will; this proselytes the affections; this captivates the very soul; and makes all its powers *like the chariots of Amminadab* *, ready, expedite, and active in duty.

Hear the holy apostle, giving an account of himself and his spiritual state. He speaks in language somewhat similar, though greatly superior, to the profession of the *Armenian* princess.—"So great is the glory, so rich "is the grace, so superabundant are the merits of my "*REDEEMER, that I am determined to know nothing but* "*CHRIST JESUS and him crucified* †."—Ask the same zealous apostle, *What* prompted him to such indefatigable diligence, and animated him with such invincible fortitude? *Why* did he decline no toil, and dread no danger; rejoice in tribulation, and glory in reproach ‡; welcome persecution, and defy death? This is his reply; "*The* "*love of CHRIST constraineth* ‖ *me*; beareth me on, with "much the same strong, steady, prevailing influence, "which winds and tide exert, when they waft the vessel "to its destined harbour."

Shall we hear what another disciple, one of the most advanced proficients in divine love, says upon the subject? one, who learned his knowledge, not in the school of philosophy, but on his *SAVIOUR*'s bosom? *This is the love of GOD, that we walk after his commandments* §. This is the natural fruit, this the certain evidence, of love to that glorious, transcendent, and adorable *BEING*. What? Not that we supinely neglect, much less that we profanely violate, his sacred precepts; but that, with assiduity and delight, we make them the rule of our conduct.—*Charity edifieth* ¶: this divine love, far from razing the foundations, far from demolishing the structure, *buildeth up* † the fair fabric of universal godliness.

Let me borrow an illustration from your own letter. When a pebble is cast into the smooth canal, it moves the centre, and forms a circle. The first creates a second; the second breaks into a third; they continue to multiply and expand themselves, till the whole surface is covered with circular undulations. Thus, the love of an all-gracious *REDEEMER* +, when

* Εἰ μὴ καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς πριάμην ὥστε μηπόλε λαβεῖνσαι ταύτην. XENOPH. *de Cyri Instit.* lib. III.

† *Beneficia*, says one of the ancients, *qui invenit, compedes invenit.* Which fine sentiment may almost serve as a comment on the beautiful and tender declaration of GOD by his prophet *Hosea*; *I drew them* to obedience *with cords of a man, with bands of love*, chap. xi. 4. HE who made, and intimately knows our frame, knew that these motives would be most powerful in operation: most powerful on creatures capable of love, and susceptible of gratitude. Therefore he calls them, *the cords of a man*.—And if a deliverance from temporal bondage, if the settlement of *Israel* in all the plenty of *Canaan*, constituted so sweet an incitement to duty; doubtless, the everlasting benefits mentioned by *Aspasio*, together with all the endearing circumstances of their procurement, must be abundantly more engaging.—May the SPIRIT from on high rend the *veil* of ignorance and insensibility! let into our hearts the knowledge and faith of these great evangelical truths! We shall then want no *farther* demonstration, either of the propriety of the remark, or the efficacy of the principles.

‡ 2 Sam. i. 26.

* Cant. vi. 12. † 1 Cor. ii. 2.

‡ That supreme affection to the blessed JESUS, which reigned in the hearts of his primitive disciples, could never have been so emphatically displayed by any strokes of eloquence, as by their own chearful and heroic manner of expressing themselves, with relation to their sufferings.—Far from regretting, *I take pleasure*, (says the apostle) *in afflictions*; and embrace them, when occurring in my divine *MASTER*'s service, with a real complacency, εὐδοκῶ. 2 Cor. xii. 10.—*To you*, adds the same apostle, and speaks in a congratulatory strain, *it is given* (ἐχαρίσθη) as a desirable privilege, *to suffer* for the adorable *JESUS*, Philip. i. 29.——St *Luke*, recording the abusive and cruel outrages, committed on two disciples, for preaching boldly in the name of *CHRIST*, uses a phrase remarkably gallant and spirited; *They departed from the council rejoicing*, ὅτι κατηξιώθησαν ἀτιμασθῆναι, *that they were counted worthy to suffer shame*; had the *honour* of being *vilified* and *reproached*, in so venerable and glorious a cause.—This passage is a fine exemplification of the figure, which rhetoricians style *Oxymorum*. And *Horace*'s—*Dulce periculum*—*Splendide mendax*—*Quo beatus vulnere*—seem flat and jejune upon the comparison, *Acts* v. 41.

‖ Could you station a coward in the midst of a numerous *army* advancing to the battle; or rather, could you place a boat on the impetuous cataracts of the *Nile*; you would *see* what is meant by the significant word, συνέχει. 2 Cor. v. 14.

§ 2 John *ver.* 6. ¶ 1 Cor. viii. 1. † Οἰκοδομεῖ.

+ I cannot but think, the reasoning is much more just, and the principle much more efficacious, in *Aspasio*'s manner of stating the affair, than in the following famous lines:

Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake:

shed abroad in the soul by the HOLY GHOST *, will diffuse itself through every intellectual faculty, and extend to every species of duty. Till the whole heart is filled with the image, and the whole behaviour regulated by the law of the blessed *GOD*.—So that I am persuaded, there is a great deal of truth and solidity, as every one must acknowledge, there is a peculiar spirit and beauty, in the apostrophe of our poet;

Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding love!
Thou Maker of new morals to mankind,
The grand morality is love of THEE. †.

You mentioned the *loadstone*, as most signally and most extensively serviceable in the seafaring business. Such is *faith*, so efficacious, in practical *Christianity*.—This, perhaps, you think a scanty and defective principle. The property of shewing the northern part of the world, may seem equally mean and inconsiderable. But as the one is the very soul of navigation, the other is the very life of holiness.—It is somewhat like the stone, which the *Babylonian* monarch saw in his dream, *cut from the rock without hands* ‡: which, though despicable to human appearance, was mighty in operation; destroyed the superb statue; became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. Thus will faith exert and diffuse its kindly yet triumphant energy, to every corruption, that it may be subdued; to every virtue, that it may be cherished.

Faith is a real persuasion, that the blessed *JESUS* has shed his blood *for me*, and fulfilled all righteousness *in my stead*; that, through this great atonement and meritorious obedience, he has purchased, even *for my* sinful soul, reconciliation with *GOD*, sanctifying grace, and every spiritual blessing ‖.

When the *ALMIGHTY* sunk the cavities of the ocean, and replenished them with the liquid element, he provided an inexhaustible source of moisture, for the refreshment of every animal, and the nutriment of every vegetable. In like manner, where-ever he works this true faith, he plants the seed of *universal* holiness, and provides for the propagation of *every* virtue. This persuasion of the divine good-will overcomes our natural reluctance, and excites a fervent desire to please our most merciful *FATHER*. This experience of the abundant grace of *CHRIST*, attracts and assimilates the soul; turning it into his amiable likeness, "as the the wax is turned

The centre mov'd, a circle strait succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads.
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace,
His country next, and next all human race:
Wide and more wide th' o'erflowings of the mind
Take every creature in of every kind.

Self-love too often acts on the affections, as the blast on the leaves, *shrivels* and *contracts* them. But the love of CHRIST, like a vernal sun on the tender buds, *opens* and *expands* them; till they become wide, as the extent of his gracious redemption; wide, as the compass of his rational creation.—By self-love I am almost necessarily determined to *malign* the persons, who cross my inclinations, and obstruct my interests. From the love of CHRIST, I have a cogent reason, and a most prevailing inducement to love my very *enemies*.——How does St *Peter* analyze this subject? not in Mr *Pope*'s, not in Lord *Bolingbroke*'s method. *Godliness*, or a a supreme love to the gracious GOD, he represents as the root or *trunk*: then *brotherly kindness*, or an affectionate regard to relations, friends, neighbours, as some of the grand and master *branches*; after this *charity*, or a diffusive good-will to all mankind, as the spread of *boughs*, which complete and adorn the tree, 2 *Pet.* i. 7.

* Rom. v. 5.

† Night-Thoughts, No. IV. ‡ Dan. ii. 34.

‖ This definition of *faith* may possibly, at the first view, dissatisfy and alarm even some pious people; including, as they apprehend, too great a degree of *assurance*. But if they please to take it in *connection* with the explanation and adjustment, delivered in the *sixteenth Dialogue*, I hope, all cause of disapprobation or surprise will vanish. I flatter myself, that the sentiment will be found, not only comfortable for the sinner, but agreeable to scripture; and truly *unexceptionable*, as well as highly *desirable*.

"to the imprinted seal."—What will be the language of such a person?

"Did my exalted *MASTER* empty himself and become poor, that his most unworthy servant might be "*filled with all the fulness of GOD* *? And shall not I "chearfully deny myself the expensive pleasures of the "world, that I may have somewhat to bestow on his "needy children?—Has the death of *CHRIST*, as a punishment, satisfied the most rigorous justice for my sins; "as a price, has it redeemed me from every evil; and, "as a sacrifice, made my peace with *GOD* most high? "And shall I not, by these *mercies* of my dying *LORD*, "be induced to present all the members of my body, "and all the faculties of my soul, as a *living sacrifice* † to "his honour; to be employed in his service, and resigned to his will?—Do I believe, that my *SAVIOUR* "has not only rescued me from hell, but established my "title to all the *blessings* included in the promises, and all "the *felicity* laid up in heaven? And can I neglect to "seek those invaluable blessings, or forbear to aspire after "this immense felicity? Can I be so *ungrateful* as to affront, so *insensible* as to forget, the infinitely-beneficent "*AUTHOR* of both? Am I persuaded, that the *PRINCE* "of peace is entered into glory as my *forerunner* ‡, and "has prepared mansions of bliss for my final reception? "And shall I not follow him thither in my hopes and "my affections? be as a pilgrim below, and have my "conversation above?—Is not this a most sweet and effectual method of gaining my heart, and if my heart, "then all my powers, to his blessed self?"

Such, my dear *Theron*, will be the *effects* of faith. Therefore it is not in vain, much less to the discouragement of real virtue, that the scripture lays such a stress upon faith; so frequently urges the importance and necessity of faith; represents faith, as the principal work of the divine *SPIRIT*, and the great instrument of receiving salvation: Because it is a sure, a sovereign means of *purifying the heart* ‖, and never fails to *work by love* §. ——Was faith, as some people are apt to imagine, like a candle put under a bushel, or like the lamps which burn in sepulchres; it would then be an insignificant labour to inculcate it, and no better than an empty flourish of words to celebrate it. But nothing is more certain, than that faith is a *vital*, an *operative*, a *victorious* principle.

CHRIST is a store-house of all good. Whatever is necessary to remove our guilt, whatever is expedient, for renewing our nature, whatever is proper to fit us for the eternal fruition of GOD, all this is laid up in *CHRIST*. And all this is received by faith, for application, use, and enjoyment.——Accordingly, when *Zaccheus* BELIEVED, he commenced a new man; his bowels yearned with compassion; the rapacious publican became a friend to the needy, and a father to the poor ¶. When the *Macedonians* BELIEVED, how eminently was their spirit ennobled, and their practice improved! Though pressed with afflictions, their souls overflowed with joy; and even in the deepest poverty, they signalized themselves by the abundance of their liberality †.——When the *first converts* BELIEVED, the change in their behaviour was so remarkable, the holiness of their lives so exemplary, that they won the favour, and commanded the respect, of all the people ††.—In short, it is as impossible for the sun

* Eph. iii. 19. † Rom. xii. 1. ‡ Heb. vi. 20.

‖ Acts xv. 9. § Gal. v. 6. ¶ Luke xix. 8.

† 2 *Cor.* viii. 2. Here is, especially in the original, as fine an *antithesis*, perhaps, as ever was penned. Since my last notes were so copious, I shall forego the pleasure of particularizing the beauties of this clause. I leave it to the lover of sacred literature, to admire the apostle's expression, to be charmed with the spirit of the *Macedonian* believers, and to derive edification from both.

†† Acts. ii. 47.

ſun to be in his meridian ſphere, and not to diſſipate darkneſs, or diffuſe light; as for faith to exiſt in the ſoul, and not exalt the temper, and meliorate the conduct.—That my dear *Theron* may be *eſtabliſhed* in faith, may *increaſe* in faith, may *abound* in faith, is the moſt affectionate wiſh that thought can ſuggeſt, or friendſhip adopt. May his faith therefore be eſtabliſhed like the mountain-oaks, increaſe like the progreſſive ſtream, till it ſpreads and abounds like the overflowing flood *!

* Theſe images we may venture to ſtyle *beautiful*, becauſe they are borrowed from the apoſtle; βεβαιωμενοι εν τη πιστει. Col. ii. 7. ηνωκεν της πιστεως. Phil. i. 25. υπαυξανει η πιστις. 2 Theſſ. i. 3.

I intended to have cloſed my letter, and confirmed my point, by a *very memorable* ſtory. But however your patience may perſevere, my time fails, and my hand is weary. The next poſt, if nothing unexpected intervenes, ſhall bring you the ſequel. May it, when brought to my friend, be as *a nail faſtened in a ſure place*, and give the rivet of conviction to all theſe important truths! —In the mean time, or rather at all times, I remain

Cordially and invariably yours,

ASPASIO.

LETTER XI.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

FAITH in the imputed righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST is a fundamental principle, in that invaluable ſyſtem of ſacred and divine philoſophy,—THE GOSPEL: by which the heavenly TEACHER is continually training up millions of rational and immortal creatures, for the true perfection of their nature; for the final fruition of their GOD; or, in other words, for a ſtate of conſummate happineſs and everlaſting exaltation. —In this ſchool, may you and I be humble *ſtudents*, and daily *proficients!* While others are ambitious of glittering diſtinctions, and ſounding titles, may it be our higheſt aim, our greateſt glory, to anſwer the character —of BELIEVERS! By this character, the ſupreme LORD diſtinguiſhes his choſen people, and denominates their heirs of ſalvation.——This character ſtands faireſt in the book of life, and brighteſt in the annals of eternity.——This character however neglected or diſeſteemed among men, will be remembered and had in honour, when the pompous names of *ſtateſman* and *generaliſſimo* are known no more.

As faith is of ſuch ſingular and extenſive efficacy in genuine Chriſtianity, methinks, I would have all our meditations *terminate* on its glorious object, and be calculated to *invigorate* ſo beneficial a principle.——When we reflect on that ſtupendous act, the creation of the world out of nothing; let us remember, it was HIS act, who *obtained eternal redemption for us.* When we contemplate that immenſe theatre of wonders, the heavens and their ſhining hoſts; let us not forget, that they are all HIS works, who *brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs* for us.—— Do we turn our thoughts to the ocean, that ſpacious and magnificent canal, which covers more than half the globe? It was formed by HIS word, and is obedient to HIS will, who *loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood.* Do we take a view of the earth, that grand and inexhauſtible magazine, which furniſhes ſuch a multiplicity of conveniencies for ſo many millions of creatures? It is all HIS property, and wholly at HIS diſpoſal, who *emptied* * *himſelf* for our ſake, and *had not where to lay his head.*——For thus ſaith the inſpired philoſopher, thus ſaith the oracle of revelation, *All things were made* BY *him, and* FOR *him* †.

The great CREATOR has *enriched* this habitable globe with a profuſion of good. He has *adorned* it with a variety, an order, and a beauty, which are perfectly charming. He has *ennobled* it with a dignity, a ſublimity, and a grandeur, which are at once delightful and aſtoniſhing. In all this, reaſon cannot but diſcern a clear manifeſtation of power, a bright diſplay of wiſdom, and a rich demonſtration of benignity.——But will the CREATOR himſelf vouchſafe to be made fleſh, on purpoſe that he may *obey* and *die* for his guilty creatures? This is what neither the utmoſt penetration of men, nor the very ſuperior intelligence of angels, could ever have demonſtrated, diſcovered, or conceived. This exceeds whatever the elements have produced, whatever the ſun has beheld, as much as the extent and magnificence of the planetary ſyſtem exceed the dimenſions and the furniture of a ſhepherd's hut.——To reveal this, is the bleſſed peculiarity of the goſpel. To know and believe this, is the diſtinguiſhing prerogative of a Chriſtian. To *apply* this, to *dwell* upon this, to *connect* this with all our obſervations of the univerſe, ſhould be our favourite and habitual employ. This will improve wonder into devotion, and raiſe the entertainments of ſcience into the joy of ſalvation. This will render every philoſophical ſpeculation a ſtrengthener of our faith; and make the various ſcenes of nature, a guide to grace, and a ſtep to glory.——When this is done, then all things attain their proper end; and as they are *by* CHRIST, ſo they are *for* CHRIST.

But I forget myſelf, my buſineſs, and my promiſe. I am to eſtabliſh the point by inconteſtable fact, not to embelliſh it by looſe harangue. With pleaſure I addreſs myſelf to diſcharge the obligation; and exemplify, in a very memorable inſtance, the *power* of faith on *religious* practice.——From whence ſhall I fetch my exemplification? From the memoirs of the indefatigable apoſtle of the Gentiles? Here I find one, moſt conciſely, and at the ſame time moſt forcibly diſplayed.

After theſe things were ended, ſays the ſacred hiſtorian, *Paul purpoſed in the ſpirit, when he had paſſed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jeruſalem, ſaying, After I have been there, I muſt alſo ſee Rome* *.——Who can obſerve, and not admire, this plain unambitious manner of relating a ſeries of labours, the moſt ſignally ſucceſsful, and moſt extenſively uſeful? Nothing in human conduct ever ſurpaſſed the *greatneſs* of the one, and perhaps nothing in hiſtorical compoſition ever equalled the *ſimplicity* of the other.

St *Paul* had already reduced *Epheſus* and *Aſia* to the obedience of CHRIST. He had already brought *Macedonia* and *Achaia* into ſubjection to the goſpel. He had long ago erected the ſtandard, and ſpread the triumphs of Chriſtianity, in the regions of *Arabia.* Yet, as if he had hitherto achieved nothing, he bends his forces towards *Jeruſalem.* Then he marks out *Rome* for the ſeat of his ſpiritual warfare. After this he forms the ſame beneficent deſign upon *Spain:* including, in his comprehenſive plan, the metropolis and the boundaries † of the known world.——The uni-

* Εκτυωσιν ταυτην. Phil. ii. 7. † Col i. 16.

* Acts xix. 21.

† *Spain* was then ſuppoſed to be the boundary of the *weſtern*, as the *Ganges* was reckoned the extremity of the *eaſtern* world.

verſe

verſe is but juſt large enough, to be the ſcene of his action; he never diſcontinues the *charitable campaign*, but with the laſt breath of his life; and he ſpeaks of this unintermitted courſe of arduous and dangerous ſervices, as if he was only going to make ſome friendly *viſit*, or join in a party of innocent *pleaſure*; *After I have been at Jeruſalem, I muſt alſo ſee Rome* *.

Which of your *Alexanders*, which of your *Cæſars*, which of all the heroes renowned in *Grecian* or *Roman* ſtory, can vie with the zeal and magnanimity of this poor, deſpiſed tent-maker? ſo *poor*, that he was conſtrained to work with his own hands, for a morſel of bread; ſo *deſpiſed*, that he was frequently treated as the offſcouring of all things. Notwithſtanding all theſe diſcouragements, what did he not attempt, what did he not accompliſh, for the honour of his MASTER, and the good of his fellow-creatures?—He embarks in a ſhallop; he has neither ſhield nor ſpear; yet he purpoſes to command the ocean, and conquer the globe. What *greatneſs* of ſoul was here! he expects † nothing but poverty, contempt, and death; yet his heart is big with the hope of enriching, ennobling, and ſaving ages and generations. What *benevolence* of temper was this!—Should you inquire concerning this illuſtrious champion of the croſs, *Who* were his potent auxiliaries? None but the divine SPIRIT.——*What* were his mighty weapons? Nothing but the word of truth and grace.——*Whence* proceeded his intrepid, his enterprizing, his all-conquering reſolution? Only from faith, a lively faith in JESUS CHRIST.

This, I think, is a ſufficient confirmation of my doctrine.——Nevertheleſs I have another inſtance to produce; one that was exhibited in an age, when the glorious object of our faith ſhone with dim luſtre and with diſtant beams; yet it may juſtly be admired, and will hardly be eclipſed, by the moſt enlightened among the *Chriſtian* ſaints.—To keep you no longer in ſuſpenſe, the caſe, I mean, is that which *Moſes* records, and the apoſtle celebrates. BY FAITH *Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Iſaac; and he that had received the promiſes, offered up his only begotten ſon* ‡.—

As this is ſo ſingular an example of the efficacious and triumphant operation of faith; unequalled in any nation of the world, or under any diſpenſation of religion; you will give me leave to dwell a little on ſome of its marvellous circumſtances.

Abraham was an eminent and diſtinguiſhed ſervant of the moſt high GOD; favoured with peculiar manifeſtations of the divine will, and dignified with the honourable title of his MAKER's friend *. Yet even this man is haraſſed with a long ſucceſſion of troubles; and, which was reckoned in thoſe ages the moſt deplorable calamity, *goes childleſs* †.

Long he waits, worſhipping GOD with the moſt patient reſignation. At length, an oracle from the LORD gives him hope, gives him aſſurance of a ſon. Joyfully he receives the promiſe, and reſts in humble expectation of its accompliſhment.—Several years run their rounds, but no pleaſing infant prattles in his arms, or is dandled upon his knees. At laſt the handmaid becomes pregnant. But what a *diſappointment* was here! This is the ſon of the bond-woman, not of the free.

How afflicting the caſe of this excellent perſon! His kinsfolk and acquaintance ſee their olive-branches flouriſhing round about their tables. Even his ungodly neighbours have children at their deſire, and leave the reſidue of their ſubſtance for their babes. But *Abraham*, the worſhipper of the ALMIGHTY, the favourite of heaven;—this *Abraham* is deſtitute of an heir, to ſupport his name, to propagate his family, and inherit the bleſſing.—O the ſtraits! to which the believer is ſometimes reduced! How does a ſovereign Providence try his faith, as it were in a furnace of fire! not that it may be conſumed, but refined, and come forth with augmented luſtre, to the praiſe of *ever-faithful, all-ſufficient* grace.

GOD is pleaſed to renew the grant, and aſſure him more explicitly, that *Sarah* ſhall have a ſon. But this notice comes at a very late period in life; when *Sarah* is advanced in years, and too old, according to the courſe of nature, to conceive. However, the pious patriarch *ſtaggers not through unbelief*; but *hopes even againſt hope* ‖.—Is it improbable? is it difficult? nay, is it to all human appearance impoſſible? So much the fitter for the exertion, and ſo much the more proper for the diſplay of almighty power.

At laſt the gift ſo earneſtly deſired, is vouchſafed. *Sarah* has a *child*,—a *ſon*,—an *Iſaac*; one who ſhould be a ſource of conſolation and delight to his parents; ſhould *fill their mouth with laughter* §, *and their tongue with joy*.—With tender care, doubtleſs, this pleaſant plant is reared. Many prayers are put up for his long life, and great happineſs. The fond parents watch over him, as over the apple of their own eye. *Their* life is bound up in the life of the lad §.——He grows in grace, as he grows in ſtature. So amiable is his temper, and ſo engaging his behaviour, as could not fail of endearing him even to a ſtranger; how much more to ſuch indulgent parents, after ſo long a ſtate of barrenneſs, and ſo many expectations ſo frequently fruſtrated.

Now, methinks, we are ready to congratulate the happy ſire; and flatter ourſelves, that his tribulations

Omnibus in terris quæ ſunt a Gadibus uſque
Auroram et Gangen. Juv. Sat. X.

* I am quite charmed, I muſt confeſs, with this very *ſimple*, but incomparably-*gallant* manner of the apoſtle's ſpeaking. Far beyond all the pomp of panegyric, it diſplays the hero.

When a handful of *Spartans* undertook to defend the paſs of *Thermopyla* againſt the whole army of *Perſia*; ſo prodigious, it was reported, were the multitudes of the *Perſians*, that the very flight of their arrows would intercept the ſhining of the ſun. *Then*, ſaid *Dieneces* one of the *Spartan* leaders, *we ſhall have the advantage of fighting in the ſhade*.—Juſt before the battle of *Agincourt*, news was brought to King *Henry*'s camp, that the *French* were exceedingly numerous, and would take the field with more than ſix times the number of the *Engliſh* troops. To which the brave Captain *Gam* immediately replied, *Is it ſo? Then there are enough to be cut in pieces, enough to be taken priſoners, and enough to run away*.——A commanding officer, I think, among the royaliſts, being beſieged by the parliamentary forces, was ſummoned to ſurrender the caſtle. The ſummons he rejected, and treated with contempt. Upon this, the enemy threatened, that, if he perſiſted in his reſolution, the walls ſhould, without farther delay, be battered to the ground. *What if they are?* was his anſwer. *I am not obliged to rebuild them.*

Such calm and undaunted ſentiments, amidſt circumſtances of the moſt imminent danger, argue an uncommon *fortitude* and *ſuperiority* of mind. But, if we conſider the nature of the apoſtle's enterprize; that it was nothing leſs than an open attack on the empire of Satan; a declared war againſt the whole idolatrous world; all which was to be attended with perſecution and impriſonment, was to end in martyrdom and death;—if we conſider this, I believe, nothing will appear, at once ſo humble and ſo exalted, ſo modeſt yet ſo magnanimous, as the turn and air of *his* expreſſion; *After I have been at Jeruſalem, I muſt alſo ſee Rome.*

* 2 Chron. xx. 7. Iſ. xli. 8.

† There was ſo much gall in this calamity, that it embittered every other ſpecies of happineſs. Viſited by this affliction, the patriarch could taſte no joy in his late ſignal victory; all his worldly proſperity was inſipid; and he ſeems to have been incapable of reliſhing any other comfort; *What wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go childleſs?* Gen. xv. 2.—I would entreat the reader to take particular notice of *this* circumſtance. It will have the ſame effect upon the repreſentation of *Abraham*'s obedience, and the whole ſeries of his difficulties, as a *magnifying* glaſs has upon the objects to which it is applied.

† Acts xx. 23. ‡ Heb. xi. 17. ‡ Rom. iv. 18, 20.

‖ *Pſal.* cxxvi. 2. This is the import of the *Hebrew* name *Iſaac*.

§ Gen. xliv. 30.

have

have an end: that the ſtorms which ruffled the noon of life, are blown over; and the evening of his age is becoming calm and ſerene.—But let *not him that girdeth on his harneſs, boaſt himſelf, as he that putteth it off* *. Our warfare on the earth is never accompliſhed, till we bow our head, and give up the ghoſt. The ſharpeſt, the ſevereſt trial is ſtill behind. GOD, the ſupreme and uncontrollable GOD, demands the child. 'Tis the will of heaven, that he make his exit, juſt as he arrives at manhood. "Where now, *Abraham*, are all thy plea-"ſing proſpects? How often didſt thou ſay, in thy fond "delighted heart, *This ſame ſhall comfort us concerning our "trouble* †? Many have been my ſorrows; but this "child ſhall dry up my tears, and bring me to my grave "in peace——Alas! this lovely flower is to be cut "down, in its faireſt, fulleſt bloom. All thy ſhining "hopes are overcaſt in a moment."

Abraham ‡, ſays GOD,—*Abraham* knows the voice. It is the voice of condeſcending goodneſs. He had often heard it with a rapture of delight.—Inſtantly he replies, "*Here I am.* Speak, LORD; for thy ſervant is "all attention:" hoping, no doubt, to receive ſome freſh manifeſtation of the divine *good-will* to himſelf and his family; or ſome new diſcovery of the method, in which the divine *wiſdom* would accompliſh the promiſes, *I will multiply thy ſeed; I will make thy ſeed as the duſt of the earth; and in thy ſeed ſhall all the families of the earth be bleſſed.*

Take thy ſon; adds GOD. And might not *Abraham* reaſonably expect, that, ſince his ſon was advanced to years of maturity, he ſhould be directed how to ſettle him in the world with honour and advantage, where to find a virtuous and fruitful partner of his bed?—He is commanded, not barely to take his *ſon*, but his *only* ſon; his ſon *Iſaac*; whom he *loved*. How muſt therefore affecting images awaken all that ſoft complacency, and all that tender triumph, which are known only to the fondly-feeling heart of a parent! Muſt not ſuch an introduction, ſo remarkably endearing, heighten his expectation of ſome ſignal mercy, to be conferred on the beloved youth; and would it not render the bleſſing peculiarly acceptable, more than doubly welcome?

Was he not then ſtartled? was he not horribly amazed, when, inſtead of ſome renewed expreſſion of the divine favour, he received the following orders? *Take now thy ſon,—thy only ſon,—Iſaac,—whom thou loveſt;—and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of* ‖.—

Was ever meſſage ſo alarming? each word more piercing to parental ears, than the keeneſt dagger to the heart. Every clauſe brings an additional load of miſery; till the *whole* command ſwells into the moſt accumulated and aggravated wo.

Abraham, take thy ſon.—Who but *Abraham* could have forbore remonſtrating and pleading, on ſuch an occaſion?—*Ananias*, being charged with a commiſſion to *Saul* the perſecutor, takes upon him to argue the caſe with his almighty SOVEREIGN: LORD, *I have heard by many concerning this man, how much evil he hath done to thy ſaints at Jeruſalem; and here he hath authority from the chief prieſts, to bind all that call upon thy name* *. Sure, it can never be ſafe or expedient to preſent myſelf voluntarily before him, who came hither breathing out threatenings and ſlaughter againſt me. What is this but to court danger; and run with open eyes into ruin?—Thus *Ananias*: and with how much greater appearance of reaſon might *Abraham* have replied?

"LORD, ſhall I loſe my child? loſe him, almoſt as "ſoon as I have received him? Didſt thou give him, "only to tantalize thy ſervant? Remember, gracious "GOD, the name he bears. *How* ſhall he anſwer its "chearing import; *how* ſhall he be a ſource of ſatisfac-"tion to his parents, or the father of many nations, if "thou takeſt him away in his unmarried ſtate, and the "very prime of his years?

"If ſin lies at the door, let me *expiate* the guilt. Let "thouſands of rams, let every bullock in my ſtalls, bleed "at thy altar. My wealth, bleſſed LORD, and all my "goods, are *nothing* in compariſon of my *Iſaac*. Com-"mand me to be ſtript of my poſſeſſions; command me "to roam, as a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and "I will magnify thy holy name. Only let my child, my "dear child be ſpared.

"Or, if nothing will appeaſe thy indignation but hu-"man blood, let *my death* be the ſacrifice. Upon me be "the vengeance. I am old and gray-headed. The beſt "of my days are paſt, and the beſt of my ſervices done. "If this tottering wall tumbles, there will be little or no "cauſe for regret. But, if the pillar of my houſe, and "the foundation of my hopes,—if *he* be ſnatched from "me, what good will my life do me? *O my ſon! my ſon! "would GOD I might die for thee* †!

"If it muſt be a blooming youth, in the flower of his "days, be pleaſed, moſt merciful GOD, to ſelect the "victim from ſome *fruitful* family. There are thoſe "who abound in children. Children are multiplied un-"to them; and though many were removed, yet would "their table be full. There are thoſe who have flocks "and herds; whereas I have only this one little lamb ‡, "the very ſolace of my ſoul, and the ſtay of my declin-"ing years; and ſhall this be taken away, while all *thoſe* "are left?"

Yes, *Abraham*; it is thy ſon, and not another's, that is marked for the victim.—What diſtreſs, had he not been ſupported by faith, what exquiſite diſtreſs muſt have overwhelmed this affectionate parent! How could he refrain from crying out, and with a flood of tears?—"If the decree cannot be reverſed, if it muſt be the fruit "of my own body, O! that *Iſhmael*, the ſon of the "handmaid.—How ſhall I ſpeak it? my heart bleeds at "the thought; at the thought even of *his* expiring ago-"nies, and untimely death. But as for *Iſaac*, the ſon "of my beloved ſpouſe, the ſon of my old age, the "crown of all my labours;—how? how ſhall I ſurvive "ſuch a loſs? The blow that goes to his heart, muſt "be fatal to us both.

"Yet, if he *muſt* die, and there is no remedy; may "he not at leaſt expire by a natural diſſolution? May not "ſome common diſtemper unlooſe the cords of life, and "lay him down gently in the tomb? May not his fond "mother and myſelf ſeal his cloſing eyes, and ſoften his "dying pangs by our tender offices?"

No, *Abraham*. Thy ſon muſt be *ſlaughtered* on the altar. He ſhall have no other bed of death, than the pile of hewn wood; no other winding-ſheet, than his own clotted gore. The ſacrificing knife, and not any common diſeaſe, ſhall bring him to his end.——And think not to ſatisfy thy ſorrowing for duels, by paying him the laſt honours of a decent interment. It is the LORD's will, that he be cut in pieces, conſumed

* 1 Kings xx. 11. † Gen. v. 29.

‡ The ſentence, with which the inſpired hiſtorian introduces this affecting narrative, is unhappily tranſlated in our Bibles, נסה את אברהם GOD did *tempt Abraham*.—This expreſſion ſeems, more than ſeems to clath with the doctrine of St *James*, chap. i. ver. 13. and cannot but ſound harſh to thoſe ears, which have been accuſtomed to underſtand by *tempter* and *tempting*, perſons utterly odious, and practices extremely pernicious.—Whereas, the true and natural ſignification of the original is, he *tried* or *explored*. GOD ſounded the depth, and meaſured the height of his ſervant's faith, in order to erect an everlaſting monument of the victorious efficacy of this ſacred principle, and exhibit an illuſtrious pattern to all them who ſhould hereafter believe.

‖ Gen. xxii. 2.

* Acts ix. 13, 14.

† 2 Sam. xviii. 33. ‡ 2 Sam. xii. 3.

to aſhes, and made a *burnt-offering*: ſo that nothing ſhall remain, to be preſerved, or embalmed. It ſhall not be in thy power to ſooth thy grief, by reſorting to his grave, and weeping at his ſepulchre, and ſaying, *Here lies Iſaac.*

"But if all muſt be executed, *GOD* grant theſe eyes "may never behold the diſmal tragedy! If my *Iſaac* "muſt be bound hand and foot for the ſlaughter, if he "muſt receive the ſteel into his boſom, and welter in his "own innocent blood, heaven forbid, that I ſhould *be-* "*hold* ſo killing a ſpectacle!"

Even this mitigation cannot be granted. Thou muſt not only be an eye-witneſs of his agony, but be the *executioner* of thy *Iſaac*. *Thy* hands muſt lift the deadly weapon; *thy* hands muſt point it to the beloved breaſts; *thy own* hands muſt urge its way, through the guſhing veins, and ſhivering fleſh, till it be plunged in the throbbing heart. *GOD* will not permit the work to be done by another. The father, the father muſt be the butcher.

Is not the wretched father *ſtunned* and *thunderſtruck*? does he not ſtand fixed in horror, and ſpeechleſs with grief? What words can be mournful enough to expreſs his ſorrows?—Unheard-of, ſhocking affair! Nature *recoils* at the very thought! How then can the beſt of fathers perform the deed?—How ſhall he anſwer it to the wife of his boſom, the mother of the lovely youth?—How can he juſtify it to the world? They will never be perſuaded, that the *GOD* of goodneſs can delight in cruelty, or authoriſe ſo horrid an action.—Will they not take up a *taunting* proverb, and ſay at every turn? "There goes the man, the monſter rather, that has im- "bued his hands in his own ſon's blood! This is he "that pretends to piety, and yet could be ſo ſavage, as "to aſſaſſinate, coolly and deliberately aſſaſſinate an only "child!"—Might not thouſands of ſuch reflections croud into his thoughts, and rack his very ſoul?

But *GOD* is unchangeable. Poſitive is his word, and muſt be obeyed; obeyed immediately too. Take *now* thy ſon. The *LORD*'s command requireth ſpeed. No time is to be loſt, in bidding adieu to his relations, or in fruitleſs ſupplications for revoking the doom.——Nay, *chearfully* as well as inſtantly muſt this command be fulfilled. The great *JEHOVAH* expects alacrity in his ſervice.——Prodigious trial indeed! Yet not too great for a faith, which the divine *SPIRIT* infuſes, and the divine *SPIRIT* ſuſtains.

The patriarch knew full well, that obedience is no obedience, unleſs it be willing and chearful. Therefore he conſults not with fleſh and blood. He is deaf to the arguings of carnal reaſon, and regards not the yearnings of paternal affection. Without a *murmuring* word, without a *moment*'s delay *, he ſets forward on his journey; not ſo much as betraying the leaſt uneaſineſs, to alarm his wife; nor heaving the leaſt ſigh, to ſurpriſe his attendants.——And canſt thou, *Abraham*, canſt thou perſiſt in thy purpoſe? can thy heart firmly reſolve, can thy hand ſteadily execute, this inexpreſſibly ſevere taſk? Moſt triumphant faith indeed! Deſervedly art thou ſtyled, *the father of the faithful* †. Thy faith is ſtronger than all the ties of affection; ſtronger than all the pleas of nature, or all the terrors of death,—even of a death far more dreadful than thy own.

And now muſt he travel, during three tedious, and, one would think, moſt melancholy days; with his *Iſaac* conſtantly before his eyes; with the bloody ſcene continually in his apprehenſions; and nothing to divert his mind from dwelling on every bitter circumſtance, and all the grievous conſequences.—*On the third day*, Abraham *lifted up his eyes, and beheld afar off the* appointed *place*. His ſervants are ordered to keep their diſtance; while himſelf, with the fire and the knife in his hands; and his ſon, with the burden of wood on his ſhoulders, *went both of them together*.—Who does not pity the ſweet youth, toiling under that load, which muſt ſoon reek with his blood, and ſoon reduce him to aſhes?—Meanwhile the intended victim, wondering to ſee all theſe preparations made, and no proper animal near, aſks this pertinent queſtion; *My father, behold the fire and the wood! but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?*—Sure, this endearing ſpeech, which diſcovered ſuch a knowledge of religion, and ſuch a concern for its duties, muſt rouſe the father's anguiſh, and ſhake his determination. How can he be the death of ſo much innocence, and ſo much piety?

Faith overcomes all difficulties. Unmoved and inflexible, the patriarch replies, *GOD will provide himſelf a lamb for a burnt-offering, my ſon* *. After this, he diſcloſes the ſtrange, the ſtartling ſecret: "Thou thyſelf, "my dear child, art deſtined to this purpoſe. The "*GOD* who beſtowed thee on my longing deſires, is "pleaſed to require thee again at my hand. The *LORD* "gave, and the *LORD* taketh away, let us both adore "the name of the LORD. Let us confide in his pro- "miſed goodneſs, and unanimouſly profeſs, *Though he* "*ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.*"——It does not appear that the amiable youth *reſiſted* or *gainſaid*. He had ſtrength enough to oppoſe, and ſpeed enough to eſcape, the attempts of an aged father. Either or both of which, the law of ſelf-preſervation might ſeem to dictate, and the light of reaſon to juſtify. But *Iſaac* knew, that his father was a prophet. In this prophetical character, he ſees and acknowledges the warrant of heaven. And ſince his *CREATOR* calls, he is content to go.——Excellent *Iſaac!* who does not admire thy courage? who is not charmed with thy reſignation? and muſt we, in a few minutes, muſt we ſee thee a pale, a bloody, a breathleſs corpſe?

Methinks, I ſhudder as we draw near the direful cataſtrophe. The altar is built; the wood laid in order; all things are ready for the ſolemn ſervice; and *Iſaac* offers his willing throat to the knife.—Nevertheleſs, that the work of deſtiny may be ſure, and no one particular relating to a ſacrifice omitted, *Abraham binds his ſon*. I have known a ſtubborn malefactor, quite unalarmed, when ſentenced to the ignominious tree; not at all impreſſed with the moſt awful repreſentations of eternal judgment: yet, when a perſon came to meaſure him for his *coffin*, the hardened wretch was hard no longer. He ſtarted, turned pale, and trembled in every joint.—Even ſuch a circumſtance makes no impreſſion on *Abraham*; neither alters his purpoſe, nor changes his countenance. He meaſures his *Iſaac*; meaſures thoſe limbs, which he had ſo frequently and ſo tenderly careſſed; and if not for the coffin, yet for immediate ſlaughter.

Having bound him,—ſurpriſing reſolution!—bound him

* For it is written, *He aroſe early in the morning*, ver. 3.

† Rom. iv. 18.

* *Abraham* in this anſwer, like many of the other prophets in their predictions, ſeems not to have *thoroughly underſtood* the import of his own words. What he himſelf meant, I apprehend, is repreſented in the paraphraſe of his ſpeech. Yet GOD ſo overruled his tongue, that it more fully expreſſed the divine decree, than the parental idea.

GOD will provide himſelf a lamb for a burnt-offering, my ſon. Thus the words are placed in the *Hebrew*. *My ſon* comes laſt, and cloſes the reply; that the tender accents may be left to vibrate on the father's ear, and the dear diſtreſſing image continue playing before his mind.——This, I think, is a delicacy not to be overlooked; and increaſes the pathos of the narrative.

† According to *Joſephus*, *Iſaac was*, when he ſubmitted himſelf to the ſlaughter, about twenty-five years old. Others think, his age was thirty-three; which makes him more exactly reſemble his ſuffering LORD. Then his father muſt be above a hundred and thirty years old. Either account will juſtify *Aſpaſio*'s ſuppoſition.

him for the ſword and for the flame, he *lays him upon the altar on the wood.* There, now, lies *Iſaac*; the dear, the dutiful, the religious *Iſaac! Abraham*'s joy; *Sarah*'s delight; the heir of the promiſes! there he lies, all meek and reſigned; expecting, every moment, the ſtroke of death to fall.—O parents! parents! do not your bowels yearn? is not humanity itſelf diſtreſſed at the ſcene? Say, thou who art a father, what thinkeſt thou of *Abraham*'s obedience; couldſt thou, to *ſuch* a ſon, have acted *ſuch* part?

See! the father, reſolute to the very laſt, unſheathes the murdering blade; makes bare the innocent boſom; and marks the place, where life may find the ſpeedieſt exit. *His heart is fixed!* he ſtretches his arm; and now, even now is aiming the mortal blow;—when,—rejoice O ye worſhippers of a gracious GOD! break forth into ſinging, ye that are in pain for the tried parent! the LORD Almighty interpoſes, in this article of extreme need *.—The ANGEL of the covenant ſpeaks from heaven, and with-holds the lifted hand, in the very act to ſtrike. GOD, who only intended to *manifeſt* his faith, and make it *honourable*, bids him deſiſt. GOD applauds his obedience; ſubſtitutes another ſacrifice in *Iſaac*'s ſtead; renews his covenant with the father; and not only reprieves the life of the ſon, but promiſes him a numerous and illuſtrious iſſue; promiſes to make him the progenitor of the MESSIAH, and thereby a public bleſſing to all the nations of the earth!

Tell me now, *Theron*, was there ever ſuch an aſtoniſhing effort of obedience? ſuch a perfect prodigy of reſignation? YET THIS HATH FAITH DONE †.—If you ſhould aſk, How was it poſſible for *Abraham* to perform all this, in the manner deſcribed? The anſwer is obvious: Becauſe *Abraham* BELIEVED; or, in other words, was fully perſuaded, that the GOD, who had given him this ſon from the *barren* womb, was able to raiſe him again from the *ſmoking* ‡ aſhes.—As the ſame GOD, who required this ſacrifice, had expreſsly declared, *In Iſaac ſhall thy ſeed be called*; the patriarch doubted not, but the promiſe would, in a way known to infinite wiſdom, be punctually accompliſhed. Hence he made no diſpute, and felt no reluctance. His faith baniſhed every uneaſy apprehenſion, and neither fear nor ſorrow had place in his breaſt. By faith he was enabled, *ſpeedily* and *chearfully*, without ſo much as a parting tear *, to obey this unparallelled precept.

And if all this, which would otherwiſe have been utterly impracticable, was wrought by faith; you need not ſuſpect, of *weakneſs* and *inſufficiency*, ſo approved a principle. Far from enervating, it will invigorate every good diſpoſition; and inſtead of damping, will give life to every religious duty.——Cheriſh faith, and you will of courſe cultivate obedience. Water this root, and the branches of univerſal godlineſs will aſſuredly partake the beneficial effects; will ſpread their honours, and bring forth their fruits.—Through the *power* of faith, the ſaints have wrought righteouſneſs, in all its magnanimous and heroic acts.—The *doctrine* of faith is called by St Paul, *a doctrine according to godlineſs* †; exquiſitely contrived to anſwer all the ends, and ſecure every intereſt of real piety.——The *grace* of faith St *Jude* ſtyles, *our moſt holy faith* ‡; intimating, that it is not only productive of holineſs, but that the moſt *refined* and *exalted* holineſs ariſes from this ſtock.

Let us then be diligent to exerciſe, and careful to increaſe, faith in JESUS CHRIST. Let us maintain the ſame zealous ſolicitude for this leading capital grace, as the renowned *Epaminondas* expreſſed for his ſhield.—When that gallant general was, in an engagement with the enemy, ſtruck to the ground; his ſoldiers carried him off, breathleſs and fainting, to his tent. The very moment he opened his eyes, and recovered the uſe of ſpeech, he aſked—not whether his wound was mortal? not whether his troops were routed? but whether his *ſhield* was ſafe?—May we be enabled, my dear friend, to keep our ſhield ſafe! May we be *ſtrong*, be *ſteady*, be *lively* in faith! Then, I doubt not, we ſhall give glory to GOD, receive comfort to ourſelves, and abound in the works of the LORD.

* Upon this moſt ſeaſonable interpoſition, the inſpired hiſtorian makes a very judicious and edifying remark; which ſeems to be greatly obſcured, if not entirely ſpoiled, by our tranſlation; *In the mount of the LORD it ſhall be ſeen.* I muſt confeſs, I have always been puzzled to find, not only a pertinent ſenſe, but any ſenſe at all, in theſe words. Whereas the original is as clear in its ſignification, as it is appoſite to the purpoſe.—בהר יהוה יראה *In the mount the LORD will be ſeen*: or *In the mount the LORD will provide.* q. d. "This memorable event gave riſe to, at leaſt is an eminent "exemplification of, that *proverbial* expreſſion, which is commonly "uſed at this day. In the mount of difficulty, or in the very criſis "of need, when matters ſeem to be irretrievable and deſperate, "*then* the LORD appears as a preſent help. Man's extremity in "GOD's opportunity." See *Gen.* xxii. 14.

† Heb. xi. 17. *By faith, Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Iſaac.*——The faith, of which ſuch glorious things are ſpoken, to which ſuch admirable achievements are aſcribed, throughout this whole chapter, was a faith in "the ſeed of the woman," the promiſed MESSIAH.—Or, could it be demonſtrated, (which, I will venture to conclude, is impoſſible) that, in all theſe heroic inſtances of obedience, there was no believing regard to CHRIST; no apprehenſion of his unſpeakable love; no application of his tranſcendent merits; our argument would not loſe its force, but ſtrike with *redoubled* energy. For, if a belief in very *inferior* manifeſtations of the divine goodneſs, faithfulneſs, and power, wrought ſo efficaciouſly on thoſe ancient worthies; how much more victoriouſly muſt the ſame principle act, under far *brighter* diſplays of all the ſupreme perfections, in the perſon of JESUS CHRIST!—I would only add, that ſo long as this chapter remains in the Bible, it will furniſh an unanſwerable confutation of thoſe objections, which ſuppoſe the doctrine of faith to have an unkindly influence on religious or virtuous practice.—Againſt all ſuch cavils, *it will ſtand faſt for evermore as the moon, and as the faithful witneſs in heaven.*

‡ He ſeems to have expected not only the certain, but the *immediate* reſtoration of his ſlain ſon; that he ſhould be revived on the very ſpot, before he left the place, ſo as to accompany his return. For he ſays to his ſervants, Not *I*, but *we* will go, and worſhip, and *return*. נשובה ver. 5.

* This account is ſo *very extraordinary*, that I ſhall not be ſurpriſed, if the reader finds ſome difficulty in giving his aſſent to it; eſpecially, as he may have accuſtomed himſelf to form very different conceptions of this remarkable affair; and may poſſibly be confirmed in a different train of ideas, by ſeeing a repreſentation of the ſtory in a celebrated *print*: where the father appears, claſping his ſon in a tender embrace; be-dewing him with his tears; and ſuffering as much through grief, as the devoted youth is going to ſuffer by the knife.—But the *engraver*, I apprehend, had not ſo attentively examined the circumſtances of the ſacred narrative, nor ſo carefully compared them with other paſſages of ſcripture, as a judicious and worthy *friend* of mine; from whom I learned to conſider this wonderful tranſaction in the above-repreſented view. And I muſt confeſs, the more I revolve it in my mind, the more I am convinced of its propriety.

I flatter myſelf, the reader will be of the ſame opinion, if he pleaſes to conſult the tenth chapter of *Leviticus*; where *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the ſons of *Aaron*, are devoured by fire from before the LORD. Yet *Aaron* is not allowed to mourn, even at ſuch a terrible and afflictive viſitation. And when, through the frailty of human nature, he could not wholly refrain, he durſt not preſume to eat of the ſin-offering. *Such things*, ſays he, *have befallen me, if I had eaten of the ſin-offering, ſhould it have been accepted in the ſight of the LORD?*—Let me add, that we find not the leaſt indication of ſuch *agonizing* ſorrow, nor indeed of *any* ſorrow at all, in the hiſtory as related by *Moſes*. Neither could *Abraham* have been a proper type of the eternal FATHER, making his only begotten SON a ſacrifice for ſin, if he had not willingly offered up *Iſaac*. Indeed to offer willingly, ſeems to have been abſolutely *neceſſary*, in every acceptable oblation, and every religious ſervice. See 2 *Cor.* ix. 7. 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 9.

† 1 Tim. vi. 3. ‡ Jude 20.

Nothing

Nothing can be more *pertinent* to my purpoſe, than the apoſtle's prayer; That we *may know what is the hope of our calling in* CHRIST JESUS, *and what is the exceeding greatneſs of his power to themward who believe.* And nothing can be more *expreſſive* of the very ſoul of

Your affectionate,

ASPASIO.

LETTER XII.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

IT is very probable, whilſt I am reading yours, you are peruſing mine. But how unlike is my friend to the repreſentation he receives! How unlike the ſatisfied, unſuſpecting, chearful *Abraham!* Why this *dejected* air in your temper? why thoſe *penſive* ſtrokes in your letter?—Let me anticipate your reply, and make anſwer to myſelf.——This gloom, I truſt, is a ſign of approaching day. Juſt before the morning dawn, the nocturnal darkneſs is blackeſt. And juſt before the appearance of the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, the penitent's diſtreſs is frequently the deepeſt. I promiſe myſelf, the hour is at hand, which will *put off your ſackcloth, and gird you with gladneſs.*

Another favourable preſage is, that you take the direct and certain way to obtain ſubſtantial comfort. The righteouſneſs of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, after which you inquire, about which you are ſolicitous, is a never-failing ſpring of conſolation: becauſe it acquits from all ſin; ſecures from all condemnation; and renders the believer unblameable and unreprovable in the ſight of GOD. Therefore ſays the HOLY GHOST, *His name is as ointment poured forth* *: even that divinely-precious name,—by which he has been celebrated in the preceding epiſtles; by which he is diſtinguiſhed in the ſcriptures of truth; by which, I hope, he will be more and more revealed in my *Theron*'s mind,—THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. The diſcovery of him under this moſt amiable and glorious capacity, will indeed be like breaking open a vial of the richeſt unguents: which not only fill the room, and regale the ſenſe, with their delightful fragrance; but refreſh the ſpirits, and *rejoice the very heart.*——Might my writing, or my diſcourſe, be as the *alabaſter-box* to contain, to convey, and preſent theſe reviving odours; how highly ſhould I think myſelf honoured, and how ſignally my endeavours bleſſed!

You aſk, "How this righteouſneſs of the divine RE-"DEEMER becomes ours?"—It is a queſtion which I receive with the utmoſt pleaſure; and, with equal pleaſure, ſhall attempt an anſwer. Or rather, as the SPIRIT of our GOD prompted the firſt, may the ſame unerring GUIDE ſuggeſt the laſt!——This he has abundantly done by his prophets and apoſtles; ſo that I need only have recourſe to their writings, and collect ſome of the hints, which lie treaſured up in thoſe ſtorehouſes of wiſdom.

There we are often told of union with CHRIST, believers are ſaid to be *in* CHRIST †, and to be *one with* CHRIST ‡.—What is ſtill higher, and implies a greater degree of nearneſs, they are *members of his body, of his fleſh, and of his bones* ‖.——And, which denotes the moſt intimate connection imaginable, *They that are joined to the LORD JESUS, are one ſpirit* § with him!—As theſe expreſſions appear dark, and their ſenſe lies deep, it has pleaſed our all-condeſcending INSTRUCTOR to illuſtrate them, by a variety of ſignificant types, and lively ſimilitudes. This remark very opportunely reminds me of an engagement, which, ſome time ago, I undertook to execute, but have hitherto omitted;—to make it evident, that the bleſſed doctrine, for which we have been pleading, *is deducible from ſeveral ſcripture-images* *. A ſhort deſcant upon ſome of the principal will, I hope, at once diſcharge my former obligation, and ſatisfy your preſent inquiry.

This was ſhadowed forth by the coſtly, odoriferous, flowing unguent, poured upon *Aaron*'s head; *which ran down upon his beard, and deſcended to the ſkirts* † *of his cloathing.* So, the merits of our great HIGH PRIEST are derived down to all the faithful; even thoſe of the meaneſt ſtation in life, and the loweſt attainments in religion.

Was it not typified by that inſtructive viſion which the prophet *Zechariah* ſaw? *I have looked, and behold! a candleſtick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his ſeven lamps thereon, and ſeven pipes to the ſeven lamps, which were upon the top thereof: and two olive-trees by it, one upon the right ſide of the bowl, and the other upon the left ſide thereof; which, through two golden pipes, empty the golden oil out of themſelves* ‡. The *bowl* and the *lamps* were a proper emblem of believers: who are, by nature, dry veſſels, and deſtitute of all good: yet ſhould ſhine as lights in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation.—The *olive-trees*, arrayed in verdure, and abounding with ſap; always emptying themſelves, yet ever full; are a very juſt repreſentation of CHRIST, of his unchangeable love, and his inexhauſtible grace.——The *golden pipes*, through which the oil-branches tranſmit their oil, ſeem to be figurative of faith, in its various and repeated actings. By theſe channels of conveyance, the unſpeakable benefits of a REDEEMER are communicated to our ſouls, and repleniſh thoſe empty baſons.

Another type the apoſtle mentions: *The firſt Adam*, he ſays, *was a figure of him that was to come* ‖: So eminent a figure, and correſponding in ſo many inſtances, that he ſtyles our LORD JESUS *the laſt Adam* §. And why? Becauſe, like the firſt, he was a *covenant-head* to his people, and tranſacted in their ſtead. Inſomuch that what he did, and what he ſuffered, both are placed to their account. Is *Adam*'s ſin imputed to all his natural offſpring? So is CHRIST's righteouſneſs to all his ſpiritual ſeed.—The conſequences of both render the doctrine more intelligible, and the truth more undeniable. All men are *judged, condemned, dead* ¶; doomed inevitably to the death of the body, and juſtly liable to the death of the ſoul, on the ſcore of *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion. All believers are *acquitted, juſtified, ſaved* †; ſaved from the firſt death, and made heirs of the reſurrection; ſaved from the ſecond death, and entitled to life eternal, by virtue of CHRIST's obedience.

* Cant. i. 3. † Col. i. 2. ‡ Heb. ii. 11.
‖ Eph. v. 30. § 1 Cor. vi. 17.

* See above, p. 256.

† Pſal. cxxxiii. 2. What we render *ſkirts*, is, in the original, מדותיו *the mouth*, or, as the word is tranſlated (*Job* xxx. 18.) *the collar* of his garments. It is hardly ſuppoſable, that the conſecrating oil flowed down to the very bottom of the ſacerdotal veſtments. But it might probably reach the upper hem, or the opening round the neck; what the *Greeks* call περιστοχιλιον.—This ſenſe will ſufficiently preſerve the gradation; the *head*; the *beard*; the *cloaths*: which ſeem to denote CHRIST; his more advanced ſaints, and believers of a lower claſs.

‡ Zech. iv. 2, 3, 12. ‖ Rom. v. 14.
§ 1 Cor. xv. 45. ¶ Rom. v. 15, 16. † Rom. v. 19, 21.

This

This union with *CHRIST*, was not only prefigured by types, but is displayed by a variety of similitudes, taken from the most familiar occurrences of life: by which it appears to be our divine *MASTER*'s will, that we should live under the *habitual belief* of this momentous truth, and in the *constant enjoyment* of this distinguished privilege.——You cannot visit a friend, or view your children; you cannot enter your garden, discourse with your spouse, or contemplate your own body, without a representation and a remembrancer of this precious blessing.

CHRIST says to his disciples, *Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends* *. Friends are a second self †. St *Paul* speaking of *Onesimus*, uses this remarkable phrase, *Receive him, as myself*; and, which is still more emphatical, *Receive him, that is mine own bowels* ‡. Is not *CHRIST*'s friendship of the most tender and exalted kind? Doubtless it must be equal, doubtless it must be superior, infinitely superior to *Jonathan*'s.—*Jonathan* loved *David* as his own soul. But *CHRIST* loved sinners with a love stronger than death. They were dearer to him than his own inestimable life.—*Jonathan* exposed himself to imminent danger, in vindicating *David*'s conduct. *JESUS* surrendered himself to certain death, in making reconciliation for our offences.—*Jonathan* interceded once and again with his father in *David*'s behalf. *CHRIST* ever liveth, to plead his blood, and make intercession for transgressors.—*Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garment, even to his sword, and his bow, and his girdle* ‖. Our *REDEEMER*, without stripping himself, has clothed us (such is the prerogative of a divine person!) with the robe of his righteousness, and with the garment of his salvation. He has consigned over to us all the merit of his holy life and propitiatory death.

CHRIST stands related to his people, not as a friend only, but as a *parent*. He is called by a prophet, *THE EVERLASTING FATHER* §; and we are said by an apostle, to be *his children* ¶.—Children look upon themselves, as interested in the wealth of their parents. They expect, and not without reasonable ground, to reap benefit from it, while the parents live; and to become possessors of it, when they die. Accordingly the father says in the gospel, *Son, all that I have is thine* ⊥.—Since the high and holy *EMMANUEL* vouchsafes to be our *FATHER*, can we suppose him less generous than an earthly parent? or can we imagine that *his* children shall have less to hope, than the heirs of an earthly progenitor? May we not, ought we not to regard all this communicable goods, all the benefits resulting from his meritorious sufferings and perfect obedience, as our portion?—Especially, since he is the *testator* +- also; has bequeathed them to us by will, and, having submitted to death, they become legally ours.

I am the VINE, says our *LORD*, *ye are the branches* ++. They who believe, are ingrafted into CHRIST. Take notice of a cyon. What are the consequences of its *ingrafture?* It is embodied with the substance of the tree, and partakes of its fatness. The sap, imbibed by the root, circulates into it; gives it vegetable life; fills it with buds, decks it with blossoms, and loads it with fruit. ——If then we are one with CHRIST, as much as the branch is one with the stock, it must follow, even upon the principles of common experience, that his *wisdom* is ours, to enlighten us; his *righteousness* is ours, to justify us; his *Spirit* is ours, to sanctify us; his *redemption* is ours, to make us completely and eternally happy.

CHRIST is united to his people by a tie closer and dearer than the parental. They are not only his children, but his *spouse*. He is often called their bridegroom, and is not ashamed to avow the tender engagement: *I will betroth thee to me for ever. Yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness* *. The condescending *GOD* multiplies, diversifies, accumulates his words: and this, with admirable propriety, as well as surpassing goodness. The honour is so *high*, and the favour so *great*, we should hardly know how to believe it, and hardly venture to apply it. Lest therefore, by a single expression, it should not be sufficiently established, it stands ratified by repeated asseverations, and with all the energy of language: so that, be the grace ever so astonishing, we are assured, the fact is equally certain; he that is *our MAKER*, is also *our HUSBAND* †.

Let us consider what follows upon such an union. We may take for an example, the case of *Boaz* and *Ruth*. Soon as their nuptials were solemnized, she that was poor, became rich; from a gleaner in the field, she commenced *mistress* of the harvest; and from abiding by the maidens, had a seat at the master's table.——And if we are united to *CHRIST* by a marriage contract, the same effects will take place. We that were poor, are rich in him; we who had nothing, possess all things in *CHRIST*; we that dwell in dust, are made *to sit together* with our divine *HUSBAND* in heavenly places ‡.

If you chuse some modern exemplification, what can be more pertinent than the remarkable instance of your neighbour *Arietta?* She was lately left a widow, by the dissolute and extravagant *Bellario;* her circumstances miserably embarrassed, and the little estate deeply mortgaged; her friends looked shy, and her creditors became clamorous; scarce a day passed, but made some new discovery of debts contracted by the deceased: so that the affairs of the survivor appeared with a more melancholy aspect, and in a less retrievable condition.—— But, having won, first the compassion, then the affection, of the wealthy and illustrious *Philander;* how happily is the face of things altered! All her *debts* devolve upon him, and all his *dignity* is derived to her ‖. He stands responsible for whatever she *owes;* and she is a sharer in whatever he *possesses*. Though little less than ruined by her late husband, she is more than restored by her present; and has reason to rejoice in his affluence, and to glory in his honours.—Have not we also reason to rejoice in our heavenly *BRIDEGROOM?* since a far more glorious exchange subsists between him and his mystical spouse. He has bore the *curse*, that we may inherit the *blessing*. *Sin* was charged on him, that *righteousness* might be imputed to us. In a word, he has sustained all our miseries, that he might impart to us all his benefits.——Has the law any demand §? It must go to him for satisfaction. Have we any wants? We may look to him for a supply; to *HIM, Theron, in whom it has pleased the FATHER, that all fulness should dwell* ¶.

If any thing can express an union more intimate and inseparable than the conjugal, it is that of the members with the *head*. And this image is used by the *HOLY GHOST*, to shadow forth the connection between *CHRIST* and the faithful. He is the *head over all things*, with respect to rule and supremacy; but a head of union and influence, with respect

* John xv. 15.

† *Horace* calls *Virgil, animæ dimidium meæ.*

‡ *Philem.* 12. 17. ‖ 1 Sam. xviii. 4.

§ Is. vi. 9. ¶ Heb. ii. 13. ⊥ Luke xv. 31.

+- Heb. ix. 17. ++ John xv. 5.

* Hos. ii. 19. 20. † Is. liv. 5. ‡ Eph. iii. 6.

‖ *Ubi tu Caius, ibi ego Caia*, was the *Roman* maxim. Agreeably to this rule, which has obtained among all civilized nations, the scripture calls *the church* by the name of her divine *husband*. Compare *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. with *Jer.* xxxiii. 15. 16.

§ The demands of the law are—perfect obedience; *Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with* all *thy heart*.——To which, in case of disobedience, is superadded condign punishment; Cursed *is he that continueth not in all things*.

¶ Col. i. 19.

to the church *.——The head and the members conſtitute one natural body; *CHRIST* and his church compoſe one myſtical body. What kindneſs is done, what injury is offered to the members, the head regards them as done to himſelf. Accordingly, *CHRIST* ſays to the outrageous *Saul*, who made havock of the church, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou ME* †? He declares, concerning thoſe indigent *Chriſtians*, to whoſe neceſſities we adminiſter relief? *Inaſmuch as ye have done it unto them, ye have done it unto ME* ‡.——The animal ſpirits formed in the head, are formed for the benefit of the whole body, and deſigned for the uſe of all the members. So the righteouſneſs wrought by *JESUS CHRIST*, is wrought out for his whole myſtical body, and intended for the advantage of all his people, to be the cauſe of their juſtification, and the purchaſe of their ſalvation.

Being then ſo nearly related, ſo cloſely united to the bleſſed *JESUS*, it is no wonder that believers are now loved with the ſame fatherly love, and will hereafter be partakers of the ſame heavenly glory.——What might we not expect from the divine *REDEEMER*, if he vouchſafed to acknowledge but *one* of theſe endearing names? Since he has engaged himſelf to us by *all* the ties of affinity and affection; may we not promiſe ourſelves, and with the aſſurance of hope, every good thing; *even all the fulneſs of GOD* ‖ our Saviour?—Does not each of theſe tender relations, ſubſiſting between *CHRIST* and his ſaints, imply an entire property in one another, and a mutual participation of all that belongs to either? —*My beloved is mine, and I am his*,—I dare not ſay, is the *poſey* of the myſtical ring,—but it is the undoubted *effect* of this divine union.

How pleaſing, yet how amazing the thought! Shall we, who ſay to corruption, *Thou art my father;* and to the worm, *Thou art my mother and my ſiſter* §; ſhall *we* be permitted to ſay, concerning the *HEAD* of all principality and power, *We are the members of his body, of his fleſh, and of his bones* ¶?—What a mercy might we eſteem it, not to be confounded before a *MAJESTY* ſo exalted and ſublime! What a favour, to obtain the leaſt propitious regard from the *KING* immortal and inviſible! What an honour, to be admitted into his family, and numbered among the meaneſt of his ſervants!—But to be his *adopted* children; to be his *eſpouſed* bride; to be the *members* of his ſacred body;—to have *HIM* for our everlaſting *Father*, *HIM* for the *bridegroom* of our ſouls, *HIM* for our heavenly *head*; who is the *MAKER* of all worlds, and the *SOVEREIGN* of all creatures! What words can duly celebrate, what heart can ſufficiently admire, the condeſcenſion and the love of our adorable *JESUS?* or who can juſtly queſtion the fruits of ſuch a fellowſhip, and the conſequence of ſuch an union? Queſtion them! No, the fruits are infallibly ſure, as the privilege is inexpreſſibly great.

Let me once again introduce a great and venerable witneſs of both theſe truths. "*Laban* ſpake high, when "he ſaid, *Theſe children are mine, and all theſe things thou "ſeeſt are mine.* But how high and glorious is that "which may be ſaid of a juſtified perſon! All thou hear-"eſt of *CHRIST* is thine; his life is thine, his death is "thine, his obedience, merit, ſpirit, all thine †."——

* Eph. i. 22. † Acts ix. 4. ‡ Matth. xxv. 40.
‖ Eph. iii. 19. § Job xvii. 14. ¶ Eph. v. 30.
† See *Dr* LIGHTFOOT's *works*, vol. II. p. 1077.

Rich and important words! Than which nothing can give us a juſter or fuller explanation of the apoſtle's aſſertion, *We are partakers of CHRIST* *.

When ſome foreign ladies, of the firſt quality, paid a viſit to *Leonidas*'s queen; the talk turned upon their rich cloaths, their coſtly jewels, and ſplendid equipage. After they had ſeverally diſplayed each her own grandeur, they inquired after her Majeſty's finery; what *ſhe* had to diſtinguiſh her from the vulgar?—She replied, *My illuſtrious huſband* †. What elſe? *My illuſtrious huſband.*—And as often as they repeated the ſame queſtion, ſhe returned the ſame anſwer.—Could this queen ſpeak in ſuch admiring, rejoicing, ſelf-gratulating terms of her royal conſort? And ſhall not vile ſinners look upon their *REDEEMER*,—that all-glorious, yet all-condeſcending bridegroom; who is full of grace and truth, full of merit and righteouſneſs;—ſhall not they *much more* look upon *HIM* as their honour and their joy; the object of their dependance, and the cauſe of their boaſting?

I ſhould find it difficult to refrain from the farther proſecution of ſo engaging a topic, did I not propoſe to wait upon my *Theron* very ſpeedily. Then I ſhall have an opportunity of pouring into his boſom all the fulneſs of my heart, with regard to this delightful ſubject.—— In the mean time, let me exhort my dear friend to be of good comfort. *Heavineſs may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning* ‡. This ſorrow of which you complain, may be the ſeed of ſpiritual and eternal conſolation.

While I am writing, there appears full in my view, one of the fineſt *rainbows* I ever beheld. *It compaſſeth the heavens with a glorious circle;* ſo glorious, that it is no diſparagement of the almighty *CREATOR*, to ſay, *the hands of the MOST HIGH have bended it* ‖.—On what foundation, would I aſk, is that ſtately and beautiful arch raiſed? from what ſource do all its radiant and lovely colours ſpring? It is raiſed on a *gloomy* aſſemblage of vapours; and all its rich tinctures ſpring from a *louring* cloud.—Thus does the bleſſed *GOD*, on a conviction of guilt and a ſenſe of ruin, ſpread faith, paint holineſs, and diffuſe gladneſs. May all theſe, ere long, ariſe in my *Theron*'s breaſt! and each be—*bright*, as that reſplendent bow,—*laſting*, as the ſun that creates it!

In the mean time, it is the ardent wiſh of my ſoul, and ſhall be my frequent prayer to *GOD*, *That both our hearts may be comforted, being knit together in love, unto all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding* §, in this great myſtery of godlineſs.—What vigour of expreſſion, what exuberance of ideas, and, above all, what diſtinguiſhed privileges are here!—*aſſurance*,—*full* aſſurance, —*riches* of the full aſſurance,—*all* riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding,—in reference to our union with *CHRIST*, and its unutterably-precious effects!—Can the orator expreſs more? can the ſinner deſire more? can the ſaint, I had almoſt ſaid, can the archangel enjoy more?—May this be the portion of my dear *Theron*, and of

His ever faithful
ASPASIO.

* Heb. iii. 14.

† The amiable and heroic *Panthea* expreſſes herſelf in much the ſame manner, concerning her gallant huſband *Abradates*; Συ γαρ εμοιγε μεγιϛος κοσμος εση. XENOPH. Cyropæd. lib. VI.
‡ Pſal. xxx. 5. ‖ Eccluſ xliii. 12. § Col. ii. 1.

DIALOGUE XV.

ASPASIO had taken leave of his friend *Camillus*, and was come to reviſit *Theron*; whoſe thoughts ſeemed to be in a ſtate of much fluctuation, and no ſmall anxiety; hoping, that ſome proper converſation on the *grace* and *privileges* of the everlaſting goſpel, might compoſe and comfort his mind; might, while his heart was ſoftened by humbling convictions, fix the ſtamp of genuine Chriſtianity

anity; and deliver his whole ſoul into the mould * of evangelical religion.

When ſorrow wounds the breaſt, as ploughs the glebe,
And hearts obdurate feel her ſoft ning ſhow'r,
Her ſeed celeſtial then *glad Wiſdom ſows;*
Her golden harveſts triumph in the ſoil †.

He arrived pretty late in the evening; and, being ſomewhat weary with the journey, ſoon withdrew to his repoſe.——The next morning, as *Theron* walked abroad, to taſte the cool delights of the dawn; he was agreeably ſurpriſed, by meeting *Aſpaſio*.

Ther. So ſoon awake, my worthy friend! and after ſo much fatigue on the preceding day!—I had not the leaſt expectation of your company, till breakfaſt. Then indeed I promiſed myſelf a double regale;—the refreſhments exhibited on the table; and thoſe *wholeſome words of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST ‡, which, more precious than manna, drop—

Aſp. How, *Theron!*—Have you alſo learned thoſe ſoothing arts, which poliſh the ſpeech, to deprave our ſentiments? Could I have ſuſpected the inchanting wiles of *flattery*, from my ſincere, my tried, my boſom friend?

Ther. Your friend is ſtill ſincere, and his words are very remote from flattery.——How welcome to the wind-bound *mariner*, weary with expectation, and ſick with diſappointments, is the viſit of a propitious gale! How welcome to the *fields*, parched with drought, and gaſping for moiſture, are copious ſhowers of rain! How acceptable to the *Iſraelites*, travelling through the inhoſpitable deſert, and pining away for the want of the fruits of the earth, was the miraculous ſupply of heavenly bread!——Yet neither propitious gales to the wind-bound mariner, nor copious ſhowers to the thirſty ſoil, nor heavenly bread to the famiſhed *Iſraelites*, could be more welcome, than your late converſation, and later correſpondence, to my anxious ſoul.

Aſp. Why, I thought you looked upon *my* notions as chimerical. Is *Theron* alſo become credulous? Like one of us weak-headed believers!—has *he* quitted the ſtrong-holds of reaſon? is *he* vanquiſhed by the ſling-ſtone of faith? or can *he* ſubmit to this ſtrange method of ſalvation by embracing the righteouſneſs, and relying on the obedience of another?

Ther. I find, my reaſon was a feeble guide, or I myſelf not faithful to its genuine dictates. I was blinded with prejudice; I was intoxicated with pride; a vain conceit of my moral powers betrayed me, as I fear it has betrayed many, into a contempt of the evangelical righteouſneſs.——I held what I thought an honour to human nature. I now retract my opinion. I now perceive, that, as my *natural light* could not diſcover the way, neither can my *perſonal obedience* put me in poſſeſſion of life and ſalvation. My true glory, and real happineſs I would henceforth derive from the bleſſed JESUS.——No more banter, *Aſpaſio*:—have done:—I am ſerious, and very much in earneſt; ſo much in earneſt, that if all my acquaintance of the *Phariſaical* turn, or if all my brothers of the ſmile, ſhould rally me on the ſubject, I would frankly acknowledge my error, and as freely ſign my recantation.

Aſp. My dear *Theron*, I applaud your reſolution. You have no more cauſe to be aſhamed of ſuch a practice, than *Philip* had to be aſhamed of the imperfection in his limbs; when, being obſerved to go lame, with a wound received in battle, he had this conſolation ſuggeſted by one of his courtiers: "Never bluſh, my Royal "Sir, for a defect which puts you in mind of your *va-* "*lour*, every ſtep you take."——To ſacrifice our prejudices in the ſearch of truth, is no leſs honourable than to be marked with a ſcar in the defence of our country.

I beg pardon for my pleaſantry. Since you are ſo very ſerious, a gay air was quite unſeaſonable.——You cannot often complain, that I am guilty of this fault. Nor can you eaſily imagine the ſatisfaction I ſhall enjoy, if either my letters or my diſcourſe, have adminiſtered *any advantage* to my friend. I ſhall note it down among the diſtinguiſhed bleſſings of my life; and have an additional obligation to love the beneficent AUTHOR of all good.

But as I cannot be a furtherer of your happineſs without the greateſt delight, ſo I cannot be a witneſs of your ſolicitude without a painful regret. You muſt therefore permit me to aſk the cauſe of that unuſual *vehemence* which I obſerve in your ſpeech, and of that deep *concern* which I read in your countenance.

Ther. I have been conſidering very attentively, what is the *preſent* ſtate, and what is likely to be the *final* condition of my ſoul.

——My hopes and fears
Start up alarm'd; and o'er life's narrow verge
Look down—on what? A fathomleſs abyſs,
A vaſt eternity!

My *ſins*, at the ſame time, like an armed hoſt, are ſet in dreadful array, and ſurround me on every ſide.——*Juſtice*, like an injured and incenſed foe, unſheaths the ſword, and makes a loud demand for vengeance.——No righteouſneſs of *my own* preſents itſelf, to which I may fly for refuge.——The method of ſalvation, in which I formerly confided, is a bridge *broken down;* and leaves me, without any poſſibility of eſcape, abandoned to the approaching enemy.

To a perſon in ſuch deplorable circumſtances, how reviving, how delightful, is the very thought of being intereſted in the great REDEEMER's righteouſneſs! I don't wonder now at a ſaying of *Luther*'s, which I have ſometimes exploded, as ſtrangely extravagant: "That, "upon the diſcovery of this glorious righteouſneſs, the "gates of Paradiſe ſeemed to fly open before him, and "the dawn of heaven was all in view."

Talking in this manner, they came to an elevated *terrace:* which, about an hour before, had been ſhaved by the ſcythe, and emitted all the freſhneſs of new-mown herbage.——On one ſide, a fine *champaign country* ſtretched its wide dimenſions.——On the other, a *flower-garden* exhibited the laſt ornaments of the year.——Here you might ſtill ſee the tufted vermilion, and the full-blown ivory, glittering through ſpangles of liquid cryſtal.——There you might trace the foot-ſteps of the early cattle, by many a recent print on the dewy lawn.——On the walls and eſpaliers, autumn had ſpread her ſtores; and was beginning to beautify their rinds with many a *ruddy ſtreak*, or to breathe over their gloſſy ſkins her delicate and *inimitable bloom*.

Aſp. See, ſaid *Aſpaſio*, the wiſdom and benignity, which, in amiable and inſeparable conjunction, diſplay themſelves through the whole œconomy of the univerſe: GOD *has made every thing beautiful in his time* *; every thing ſerviceable in its place. A little while ago, the flowery meads delighted our eyes, and the melodious birds charmed our ears; now the taſteful fruits are preparing their dainties; and preſenting us with a collation, to regale our palate.——The whole earth, and all the ſeaſons, are rich with our CREATOR's goodneſs. Yea, the whole earth, and all that repleniſhes it, all that ſurrounds it, are full of his preſence. HE it is, who

Warms in the ſun, refreſhes in the breeze,
Glows in the ſtars, and bloſſoms in the trees;

* *Deliver into the mould*—This is the literal tranſlation, and exact ſenſe of St *Paul*'s phraſe, Εις ον παρεδοθητε τυπον διδαχης. Rom. vi. 17.—Which, as it contains a *beautiful alluſion*, conveys alſo a very *inſtructive admonition*; intimating, that our minds, all pliant and ductile, ſhould be conformed to the refined precepts of the goſpel, as liquid metals take the figure of ſome elegant mould, into which they are caſt.

† Night-Thoughts. ‡ 1 Tim. vi. 3.

* Eccl. iii. 11.

Lives

Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unſpent *.

An habitual belief of this truth, gives nature her *lovelieſt* aſpect, and lends her the moſt conſummate power to pleaſe. The breath of violets, and the bluſh of roſes; the muſic of the woods, and the meanders of the ſtream; the aſpiring hill, the extended plain, and all the decorations of the landſcape; *then* appear in their higheſt attractives; *then* touch the ſoul with the moſt refined ſatisfaction; when GOD is ſeen,—when GOD is heard,—and GOD enjoyed in all.——Is *Theron* loſt in thought, and deprived of ſpeech? Is HE alone ſilent, while all things ſpeak their MAKER's praiſe?—Does faith throw a ſhade over the works of creation? Does it not heighten their beauties, and enliven their graces?—The *religious* is the only *true* philoſopher; and the pleaſures of imagination never acquire their proper reliſh, till they are ripened by the exerciſe of devotion.——With this view then, ſince my friend forbears, let *me* attempt to ſpeak; not to increaſe his knowledge, but to cheriſh faith, and cultivate devotion in us both.

The ſpacious canopy † over our heads, is painted with blue; and the ample carpet under our feet, is tinged with green. Theſe colours, by their *ſoft* and *chearing* qualities, yield a perpetual refreſhment to the eye ‡. Whereas, had the face of nature gliſtered with white, or glowed with ſcarlet; ſuch ardent and dazzling hues would, inſtead of exhilarating, have fatigued the ſight. ——Beſides, as the ſeveral brighter colours are interſperſed, and form the *pictures* in this magnificent piece; the green and the blue conſtitute an admirable *ground*, which ſhews them all, in their higheſt luſtre, and to the utmoſt advantage ‖.

Had the *air* been conſiderably *groſſer*, it would have dimmed the rays of the ſun, and darkened the chearful day; our lungs had been clogged in their vital functions; men had been ſuffocated, without the ſtrangling nooſe; or drowned, without the overwhelming flood.—Was it ſeveral degrees more *ſubtile*, birds would not be able to wing their way through the firmament; nor could the clouds be ſuſtained in ſo attenuated an atmoſphere. It would elude the organs of reſpiration; we ſhould gaſp for breath, with as much difficulty, and with as little ſucceſs, as fiſhes out of their native element.

The *ground* alſo is wrought into the moſt proper temperature. Was it of a *firmer* conſiſtence, it would be impenetrable to the plough, and unmanageable by the ſpade.——Was it of a *laxer* compoſition, it would be incapable of ſupporting its own furniture. The light mould would be ſwept away by whirling winds; or the oozy glebe ſoaked into ſloughs by the deſcending rains. ——Becauſe every ſituation ſuits not every plant; but that which is a nurſe to one, often proves a ſtepmother to others; therefore the qualities of the earth are ſo abundantly diverſified, as properly to accommodate every ſpecies of vegetation. We have a variety of intermediate ſoils, from the *looſe* disjointed ſand, to the *ſtiff* cohеſive clay; from the rough projections of the *craggy* cliff, to the ſoftly-ſwelling bed of the *ſmooth* parterre.

The *ſea* carries equal evidences of a moſt wiſe and gracious ordination.——Was it *larger*, we ſhould want land for the purpoſes of paſturage, and the operations of huſbandry. We ſhould be deſtitute of ſufficient room for mines and foreſts; our ſubterranean warehouſes, and our aereal timber-yards.——Was it *ſmaller*, it would not be capable of recruiting the ſky with a proper quantity of vaporous exhalations, nor of ſupplying the earth with the neceſſary quota of fructifying ſhowers.

Do we not diſcern very apparent ſtrokes of ſkill, and the moſt pregnant proofs of goodneſs, in each individual object? in the various *tenants* of the globe, and the ſeveral *appurtenances* of this great dwelling?—It is needleſs to expatiate upon the more eminent and conſpicuous beauties; all that *ſhines* in the heavens, and all that *ſmiles* on the earth. Theſe ſpeak to every ear, theſe ſhew to every eye, the adorable munificence of their MAKER. ——It is needleſs to launch into the praiſes of the valleys, delicately clothed with herbage; or of the fields, richly repleniſhed with corn. Even the *ragged* rocks, which frown over the flood; the *caverned* quarries, which yawn amidſt the land; together with the mountains, thoſe *ſhapeleſs* and *enormous* protuberances, which ſeem to load the ground, and encumber the ſkies; even theſe contribute their ſhare, to increaſe the general pleaſure, and augment the general uſefulneſs. They variegate the proſpect; raiſe an agreeable horror in the beholder; and inſpire his breaſt with a religious awe. They add new charms to the wide level of our plains; and ſhelter, like a ſcreen, the warm lap of our vales.

We are delighted with the ſolemn gloom, and magnificent aſpect, of the foreſt. One who ſaw the cedars of *Lebanon*, was tranſported with admiration at their ample trunks, and towering heads, their diffuſive ſpread, and verdant grandeur. Compared with which, the ſtately elm is but a reed; and the branching oak a mere ſhrub.——Was our ſight qualified for the ſearch, we ſhould diſcover a *ſymmetry* and a *dignity*, altogether as perfect, and far more wonderful, in thoſe groves of *moſs* * which adhere to the rude ſtone. We ſhould contemplate, with greater ſurpriſe, if not with greater rapture, thoſe diminutive plantations, which ſtrike their haſty roots in the mouldy confection, or wave their curious umbrage over the periſhed pickle †.

Who is not charmed with the vine, and its generous warming juices? with the melon, and its delicious cooling pulp? Yet, were all our trees to produce fruits of ſuch exalted qualities, or of ſuch an agreeable reliſh, what would become of the *birds!* How ſmall a

* POPE's *Eth. epiſt.*

† What *Aſpaſio* calls the canopy, *Iſaiah* deſcribes by רקיע. Which we tranſlate *as a curtain;* but the exact ſignification is, *Sicut tenue, vel tenuiſſimum quid;* Like ſome finely-attenuated expanſe. Not like the curtains or the coverings of the tabernacle, which were goats hair and badgers ſkins, ſhaggy and coarſe; but like ſome *very fine* membrane, ſmooth and elegant, nicely poliſhed and inimitably delicate. Than which compariſon nothing can more perfectly correſpond with the aſpect of the ſky, *Iſ.* xl. 22.

‡ ——————————*Gay* green,
Thou ſmiling nature's univerſal robe!
United light and ſhade! where the ſight dwells,
With growing ſtrength, and ever-new delight.

THOMSON's *Spring.*

‖ If the reader has patience to go through the following eſſay, he will find it in the iſſue, not altogether foreign to the main ſubject.—If he pleaſes to conſider it, as a kind of *practical comment*, on that lovely celebration of providential goodneſs, *His tender mercies are over all his works;*—this may poſſibly alleviate the toil of peruſing, and reconcile him to the length of the deſcant.

* See, for a proof of this remark, the explanation of the *tenth plate*, in that very curious, very entertaining, and no leſs inſtructive piece, entitled, *Micrographia Reſtaurata* —Where our author compares the ſize of this little vegetable, with the dimenſions of thoſe vaſt trees, which grow in the vigorous climates of *Guinea* and *Brazil*. The trunks of which are, according to the report of travellers, twenty feet in diameter. Whereas, the body of this minute plant, meaſures no more than the ſixtieth part of an inch. So that, upon a calculation, the thickneſs of the former exceeds that of the latter, 2,985,984 millions of times.—So prodigiouſly various are the works of the CREATOR.

† That whitiſh kind of down, which ſhags the putrefying pickle, which incruſts the ſurface of ſome corrupted liquors, and conſtitutes what we call *mouldineſs*, is really a cluſter of little plants. Each has a root and a ſtalk: each ſpreads its branches, and produces ſeed in abundance.

Radiceſque ſuas habet, exilemque coronam,
Frondeſque, fructumque gerit, velut ardua quercus.

ſcant-

ſcantling of ſuch choice delicacies would voracious man reſign to their enjoyment?—That proviſion may be made for the meaneſt *vagrant* of the air, as well as for the moſt renowned ſovereign of a nation; there is, in all places, a large growth of ſhrubs, covered annually with a harveſt of coarſe and hardy berries: ſo *coarſe* in their taſte, that they are unworthy of the acceptance of man; ſo *hardy* in their make, that they endure the extremeſt ſeverities of the weather, and furniſh the feathered tribe with a ſtanding repaſt, amidſt all the deſolations of winter.

The fir, with her ſilver bark, and ſhapely cone; the beech *, with her quivering leaves and embowering ſhade; are ſtately decorations of our rural ſeats. But, if there were no entangling *thickets*, no prickly *thorns*, where would the farmer procure fences ſo cloſely wattled, or ſo ſtrongly armed †? How could he guard the ſcene of his labours, or ſecure his vegetable wealth, from the flocks and the herds; thoſe roving plunderers, which accede to no treaty, but that of *forcible* reſtraint; ſubmit to no laws, but thoſe of the *coercive* kind?

Moſt people are fond of the purſlane's fleſhy leaves, and the ramified fatneſs of the brocoli; the potatoe's mealy orbs, and the lentile's ſucculent pods. We ſpare no toil, we grudge no expence, to have them flouriſh in our gardens, and ſerved up at our tables.—But there are innumerable herbs, which paſs under the contemptible character of *weeds;* and yet are altogether as deſirable to many claſſes of creatures, as theſe culinary gifts to mankind. Who ſhall be at the pains to plant, to water, to cultivate, ſuch deſpicable productions? Man would rather *extirpate*, than *propagate*, theſe incumbrances of his acres. Therefore Providence vouchſafes to be their gardener. Providence has wrought off their ſeeds into ſuch a lightneſs of ſubſtance, that they are carried abroad with the undulations of the air: or, if too heavy to be wafted by the breeze, they are faſtened to wings of down, which facilitate their flight; or elſe, are incloſed in a ſpringy caſe, which, forcibly burſting, ſhoots and ſpreads them on every ſide.—By ſome ſuch means, the reproducing principle is diſſeminated, the univerſal granary is filled, and the univerſal board furniſhed. The buzzing inſect, and the creeping worm, have each his *bill of fare*. Each enjoys a never-failing treat, equivalent to our fineſt veniſon, or to the "fat of kidneys of "wheat ‡."

As the ſeeds of ſome plants are moſt artfully ſcattered abroad, when ripe; the ſeeds of others are moſt carefully *guarded*, till they come to maturity; and, by both contrivances, every ſpecies is not barely preſerved, but in a manner eternized.—Some are lodged in the centre of a large *pulp;* which is, at once, their defence and their nouriſhment. This we find exemplified in the taſteful apple, and the juicy pear.—Some, beſides the ſurrounding pulp, are incloſed in a thick *ſhell*, hard and impenetrable as ſtone. We cannot pluck and eat one of thoſe downy peaches, or incrimſoned nectarines, which ſo beautifully emboſs the wall, without finding a proof of this precaution.—Caſt your eye upon the walnuts, which ſtud the branches of that ſpreading tree. Before theſe are gathered, the increaſe of the cold, and the emptineſs of the gardens, will ſharpen the appetite of the birds. To ſecure the fine kernel, from the depredations of their buſy aſſailing bills, it is fortified with a ſtrong *incloſure* of wood, and with the addition of a diſguſtful bitter *rind*.

If *graſs* was as ſcarce as the *Guernſey-lily*, or as difficultly raiſed as the delicate tuberoſe, how certainly, and how ſpeedily, muſt many millions of quadrupeds periſh with famine! Since all the cattle owe their chief ſubſiſtence to this vegetable, by a ſingular beneficence in the divine œconomy, *it waiteth not*, like the corn-field and the garden-bed, *for* the annual labours of *man* *. When once ſown, though ever ſo frequently cropped, it revives with the returning ſeaſon, and flouriſhes in a kind of perennial verdure. It covers our meadows, diffuſes itſelf over the plains, ſprings up in every glade of the foreſt, and ſpreads a ſide-board in the moſt ſequeſtered nook.

Since the nutriment of vegetables themſelves lies hid under the ſoil, or floats up and down in the air; *beneath*, they plunge their roots †† into the ground, and diſperſe every way their fibrous ſuckers, to explore the latent, and attract the proper nouriſhment; *above*, they expand a multitude of leaves †, which, like ſo many open mouths, catch the rains as they fall; imbibe the dews as they diſtil; and tranſmit them, through their nice orifices, to the heart of the plant, or the lobes of the fruit.

I have touched upon the *inſenſible* creation; and pointed out the care of a condeſcending Providence, exerciſed over theſe loweſt formations of nature.—The *animal* world, *Theron*, falls to your ſhare. It is yours to deſcant upon thoſe higher orders of exiſtence; and ſhew us the goodneſs of GOD, extending its indulgent regards to them and their intereſts, as tenderly, as officiouſly, as a hen ſpreadeth her wings ‡ over her infant brood.

Ther. The ſubject is in good hands. Let *part the ſecond* be of the ſame ſtrain with *part the firſt*, and there will be no occaſion to wiſh for a new ſpeaker. As to myſelf, I have very little inclination to talk. But I have an ear open and attentive to your diſcourſe.

Aſp. You put me in mind of the philoſopher, who preſumed to read a lecture on the art of war, in the preſence of *Hannibal*. But his impertinence was *voluntary*, mine is *conſtrained*.——Since you enjoin me this office, let us paſs from the vegetable, to the animal world. Here we ſhall find no tribe, no individual neglected. The ſuperior claſſes want no demonſtration of their excellent accompliſhments. At the firſt glimpſe, they challenge our approbation, they command our applauſe. Even the *more ignoble* forms of

* The *fir*, the *beech*, and ſuch like trees, are called in *Hebrew*, ברוש ותאשור If. vii. 19. Which word is rendered, but I think very improperly, *buſhes*. It rather ſignifies the *grand* and moſt *admired* plants. It is intended as a contraſt to the coarſe and deſpicable thorns, mentioned in the preceding clauſe. And both taken together expreſs all ſorts of trees, from the towering cedar to the grovelling ſhrub.

† Something to this purpoſe is hinted in the prophecy of Iſaiah, by יראת שמיר ושיח *terriculamentum ſentium et veprium;* the terror of thorns and briers: meaning thoſe ſharp and ragged mounds, with which vineyards, corn-fields, and other cultivated ſpots, were uſually incloſed; which *deterred* the moſt adventurous cattle from forcing, or attempting to force, a paſſage.—The words are ſomewhat obſcure, and have been greatly miſunderſtood. But, thus interpreted, they afford an eaſy ſenſe, and perfectly coincide with the context: implying, "that places, formerly fenced about with "abundance of care, ſhould lie open, and expoſed to every wan-"dering foot: that tillage ſhould be diſcontinued; and the whole "country degenerate into a confuſed, diſorderly waſte, without "either the diſtributions of property, or the improvements of in-"duſtry." If. vii. 25. Vid. VITRING. *in loc.*

‡ *The fat of kidneys of wheat*, Deut. xxxii. 14. A ſentence rich with elegance! ſuch as would have ſhone in *Pindar*, or been admired by *Longinus*. Yet, I believe, its principal beauty conſiſts in an alluſion to a remarkable *Jewiſh* rite. In every ſacrifice, the fat of the kidneys was, as the moſt delicious part of the victim, ſet apart for GOD, and conſumed on his altar. Here even the common people were treated like the DEITY. They lay under no reſtraint, either from the divine prohibition, or the ſcarcity of the grain; but were copiouſly ſupplied, and freely regaled themſelves with the *choiceſt*, *fineſt* part of this firſt and beſt of vegetables.

* Mic. v. 7.

†† *Job* moſt beautifully alludes to theſe two ſources of vegetable fertility; *My root was ſpread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.* Job xxix. 19.

‡ This ſeems to be the image uſed by the *pſalmiſt*, Pſal. cxlv. 9. And a moſt amiable image, as well as a moſt picturesque repreſentation, it is.

animated exiſtence are moſt wiſely circumſtanced, and moſt liberally accommodated.

They all generate in that particular ſeaſon, which is ſure to ſupply them with a ſtock of proviſion, ſufficient both for themſelves, and their increaſing families.—— The ſheep yean, when there is a profuſion of *nutrimental herbage* on the ſoil, to fill their udders, and create milk for their lambs.—— The birds lay their eggs, and hatch their young, when *myriads* of new-born, tender inſects ſwarm on every ſide: ſo that the caterer, whether it be the male or female parent, needs only to alight on the ground, or make a little excurſion into the air; and they find a feaſt ready dreſſed, and all at free coſt, for the clamant mouths at home.

Their love to their offspring, while they continue in a helpleſs ſtate, is *invincibly* ſtrong. Whereas, the very moment they are able to ſhift for themſelves; when the parental affection would be attended with much ſolicitude, and productive of no advantage; it *vaniſhes*, as though it had never been.—— The hen which marches at the head of her little brood, would fly in the eyes of a maſtiff, or even encounter a lion in their defence. Yet, within a few weeks, ſhe abandons her chickens to the wide world, and not ſo much as knows them any more.

If the *GOD* of *Iſrael* inſpired *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* with *wiſdom, and underſtanding, and knowledge in all manner of workmanſhip* *; the *GOD* of nature has inſtructed the wild and warbling inhabitants of the bough.—The *ſkill*, with which they erect their houſes, and adjuſt their apartments, is inimitable. The *caution*, with which they ſecrete their abodes from the ſearching eye, or intruding foot, is admirable. No general, though fruitful in expedients, could plan a more artful concealment. No architect, with his rule and line, could build ſo commodious a lodgment.—Give the moſt celebrated artificer the ſame materials, which theſe weak and unexperienced creatures uſe; let a *Jones*, or a *De Moivre*, have only ſome rude ſtraws or ugly ſticks; a few bits of dirt, or ſcraps of hair; a ſorry lock of wool, or a coarſe ſprig of moſs; and what works, fair with delicacy, or fit for ſervice, could *they* produce?

We extol the commander, who knows how to take advantage of the ground; who can make the ſun and wind fight for him, as well as his troops; and, by every circumſtance, embarraſſes the forces of the enemy, but expedites the action, and advances the ſucceſs of his own. Does not this praiſe belong to our *feathery leaders?* who pitch their tent, or (if you pleaſe) fix their penſile camp, on the dangerous branches that wave aloft in the air, or dance over the eddies of the ſtream. By which judicious diſpoſition, the vernal gales rock their cradle, and the murmuring waters lull their young; while both concur to terrify the ſhepherd, and keep the ſchoolboy at a trembling diſtance.—— Some hide their little houſehold from view, amidſt the ſhelter of entangled furze. Others remove it from reach, in the centre of a thorny thicket. And, by one ſtratagem or another, they are generally as *ſecure* and *unmoleſted* in their feeble habitations, as the foxes, which entrench themſelves deep in the earth, or as the conies, which retire to the rock for their † citadel.

If the *ſwan* has large ſweeping wings, and a copious ſtock of feathers, to ſpread over her callow brood; the *wren* makes up by contrivance, what is deficient in her bulk.—— Small as ſhe is, ſhe intends ‡ to bring forth, and will be obliged to nurſe up, a very numerous iſſue. Therefore, with the correcteſt judgment ſhe deſigns, and with indefatigable aſſiduity finiſhes, a neſt proper for her purpoſe. It is a neat *rotund*, lengthened into an *oval*, bottomed and vaulted with a regular *concave*. To preſerve it from rain, it has ſeveral coatings of moſs; to defend it from cold, it has but one window, and only a ſingle door; to render it both elegant and comfortable, it has *carpets* and *hangings* of the ſofteſt, fineſt down. By the help of this curious manſion, our little lady becomes the mother of multitudes. The vivifying heat of her body is, during the time of incubation, exceedingly augmented. Her houſe is like an oven, and greatly aſſiſts in hatching her young. Which no ſooner burſt the ſhell, than they find themſelves ſcreened from the annoyance of the weather; and moſt agreeably repoſed, amidſt the ornaments of a palace, and the warmth of a bagnio.

Perhaps, we have been accuſtomed to look upon the inſects, as ſo many *rude* ſcraps of creation, and to rank them amongſt the *refuſe* of things. Whereas, if we examine them without prejudice, and with a little attention, they will appear ſome of the moſt poliſhed pieces of divine workmanſhip.—Many of them are decked with a profuſion of finery. Their *eyes* are an aſſemblage * of microſcopes; whoſe mechaniſm is inconceivably nice, and finiſhed in the higheſt perfection. Their *dreſs* has all the variety and luſtre of colours: it is ſet with an arrangement of the moſt brilliant gems, and bordered with fringes richer far than the moſt coſtly ſilks. Their *wings* are the fineſt expanſions imaginable, cambric is mere canvaſs, and lawn is coarſe as ſackcloth, compared with thoſe inimitable webs. The *caſes* which incloſe their wings, glitter with the moſt gloſſy varniſh; are ſcooped into ornamental flutings; are ſtudded with radiant ſpots; or pinked with elegant holes.—Not any among them, but are equipped with weapons, or endued with dexterity, which qualify them to ſeize their prey, or eſcape their foe; to diſpatch the buſineſs of their reſpective ſtation, and enjoy the pleaſures of their particular condition.

Now I am in a talking humour, give me leave to celebrate the endowments, and aſſert the honours of my puny clients; yet not ſo much to ſupport *their* credit, as to magnify their *all-gracious CREATOR*.—What if the elephant is diſtinguiſhed by a huge *proboſcis?* His meaneſt relations of the reptile line are furniſhed with curious *antennæ;* remarkable, if not for their enormous magnitude, yet for their ready flexibility, and acute ſenſation: by which they explore their way, even in the darkeſt road; they diſcover and avoid whatever might defile their neat apparel, or endanger their tender lives.

Every one admires that majeſtic creature the *horſe;* his graceful head, and ample cheſt; his arching neck, and flowing mane; his cleanly-turned limbs, and finely-adjuſted motions. With extraordinary agility, he

* Exod. xxxi. 3. † Prov. xxx. 26.

‡ *Aſpaſio* has ventured to ſay, *She intends;*—and one is almoſt tempted to think, from the preparation which the little creature makes, that ſhe had really ſat down, and counted the coſt, and concerted her ſcheme. As though ſhe had deliberated with herſelf:—"I ſhall lay, not a couple of eggs, but near a ſcore. From "theſe I am to produce a houſe full of young. But how ſhall I "have warmth (unleſs art ſupply what nature has denied) ſuffi-"cient to hatch the embrios, or cheriſh the infants?"—The truth I believe is, that in all her ſeeming foreſight, and circumſpect behaviour, ſhe acts ſhe knows not what. Only ſhe acts what eternal wiſdom knows to be neceſſary, and what all-condeſcending goodneſs prompts her to perform.

* The *common fly*, for inſtance: who is ſurrounded with a multitude of dangers, and has neither ſtrength to reſiſt her enemies, nor a place of retreat to ſecure herſelf. For which reaſon, ſhe had need to be very vigilant, and always upon her guard. Yet her head is ſo fixed, that it is incapable of turning, in order to obſerve what paſſes, either behind or around her.—— Providence therefore, ſurpriſingly wiſe in its contrivances, and equally bountiful in its gifts, has furniſhed her, not barely with a *retinue*, but with more than a *legion* of eyes. Inſomuch, that a ſingle fly is ſuppoſed to be miſtreſs of no leſs than eight thouſand: every one of which is lined with a diſtinct optic nerve.—— By means of this coſtly and amazing apparatus, the little creature ſees on every ſide, with the utmoſt eaſe and with inſtantaneous ſpeed; even without any motion of the eye, or any flection of the neck.

ſlings himſelf over the ditch; and, with a rapid career, pours himſelf * through the plain. With unwearied application, he carries his rider from one end of the country to another; and, with undaunted bravery, ruſhes into the fierceſt rage, and amidſt the thickeſt havock of the battle.—Yet the *graſshopper* ſprings with a bound altogether as briſk, if not more impetuous.—The *ant*, in proportion to its ſize, is equally nimble; equally ſtrong; and will climb precipices, which the moſt courageous courſer dares not attempt to ſcale.—If the *ſnail* is ſlow in her motions, ſhe is under no neceſſity of treading back the ground which ſhe has paſſed; becauſe her houſe is a part of her travelling-equipage; and whenever ſhe departs, ſhe is ſtill under her own roof; where-ever ſhe removes, is always at home.

The *eagle*, 'tis true, is privileged with pinions that outſtrip the wind. Elevated on which, ſhe looks down on all that ſoars; and ſees flying clouds, and ſtraining wings far below: her optic nerve ſo ſtrong, that it meets and ſuſtains the dazzling beams of noon; her wide-ſurveying glance ſo keen, that, from thoſe towering heights, it diſcerns the ſmalleſt fiſh, which ſculks at the bottom of the river.—Yet neither is that poor outcaſt, the grovelling and gloomy *mole*, diſregarded by divine providence. Becauſe ſhe is to dig a cell in the earth, and dwell, as it were, in a perpetual dungeon, her paws ſerve her for a pickaxe and ſpade. Her eye, or rather her viſual ſpeck, is ſunk deep into a ſocket, that it may ſuffer no injury from her rugged ſituation: it requires but a very ſcanty communication of light, that ſhe may have no reaſon to complain of her darkling abode. I called her ſubterranean habitation a dungeon; and ſome people, perhaps, may think it a grave. But I revoke the expreſſion. It yields her all the ſafety of a fortified *caſtle*, and all the delight of a decorated *grot*.

Even the *ſpider*, though abhorred by mankind, is evidently the care of all-ſuſtaining heaven. She is to live upon plunder; to ſupport herſelf, by trepanning the idle, inſignificant, ſauntering fly. Suitably to ſuch an occupation, ſhe poſſeſſes a bag of glutinous moiſture. From this ſhe ſpins a clammy *thread*, and weaves it into a tenacious *net*. Expert as any practiſed ſportſman, ſhe always ſpreads it in the moſt opportune places. Senſible that her appearance would create horror, and deter the prey from approaching the ſnare, when watching for ſport, ſhe retires from ſight; but conſtantly keeps within diſtance, ſo as to receive the very firſt intelligence of what paſſes in the toils; and be ready to launch, without a moment's delay, upon the ſtruggling captive. And what is very obſervable, when winter chills the world, and no more inſects ramble amidſt the air, foreſeeing that her labour would be vain, ſhe diſcontinues her work, and abandons her ſtand.

I muſt by no means forget the little monarchy, which inhabits the hive. The *bees* are to ſubſiſt, not as a lawleſs banditti, but as a regular community. 'Tis theirs to earn a decent livelihood by honeſt induſtry; not to glut themſelves with carnage, or enrich themſelves by rapine. For which reaſon, they are actuated by an invariable inclination to ſociety. They poſſeſs the trueſt notions of domeſtic œconomy, and have enacted the wiſeſt laws for political government.—Their indulgent CREATOR has made them a preſent of all neceſſary implements, both for conſtructing their *combs*, and for compoſing their *honey*. They have each a portable veſſel with which they bring home their collected ſweets; and they have all the moſt commodious ſtorehouſes, in which they depoſit their delicious wares.—Though made for peace, they know how to uſe the ſword. They can take up arms with the utmoſt reſolution and intrepidity, when arms are requiſite to guard their wealth, or repel their foes.—Without going through a courſe of botany, they can readily diſtinguiſh every plant, which is moſt likely to yield the materials proper for their buſineſs. Without ſerving an apprenticeſhip in the laboratory, they are complete practitioners in the art of ſeparation and refinement. They are aware, without borrowing their information from an almanac, that the vernal gleams, and ſummer ſuns, continue but for a ſeaſon. Mindful of this admonition *, they improve to the utmoſt every ſhining hour; and lay up a ſtock of balmy treaſures, ſufficient to ſupply the whole ſtate, till the bloſſoms open afreſh, and their flowery harveſt returns.

Let the *peacock* boaſt, if he pleaſes, his elegant topknot and lofty mien; his neck adored with varying dies, and his train beſpangled with a round of ſtars.—Yet let him know, that the deſpiſed *butterfly*, and even the loathed *caterpillar*, diſplay an attire no leſs ſumptuous; and wear ornaments, altogether as genteel, if not quite magnificent.—Does beauty ſit in ſtate on that lordly bird? She ſhines in miniature on the vulgar inſect. Is the maſter of this lower creation ennobled with the *powers of reaſon?* The meaneſt claſſes of ſenſitive exiſtence are endued with the *faculty of inſtinct:* which gives them a ſagacity, that is neither derived from obſervation, nor waits for the finiſhings of experience: which, without a tutor, teaches them all neceſſary ſkill; and enables them, without a pattern, to perform every needful operation: and, what is far more ſurpriſing, never miſleads them, either into erroneous principles, or pernicious practices; never fails them, in the niceſt or moſt arduous of their undertakings.

Can you have patience to follow me, if I ſtep into a different element, and juſt viſit the *watery world?*—Not one among the innumerable myriads, which ſwim the boundleſs ocean, but is watched over by that exalted eye, whoſe ſmiles irradiate the heaven of heavens. Not one, but is ſupported by that almighty hand, which crowns angels and archangels with glory.——The condeſcending GOD has not only created, but *beautified* them. He has given the moſt exact proportion to their ſhape, the gayeſt colours to their ſkin, and a poliſhed ſmoothneſs to their ſcales. The eyes of ſome are ſurrounded with a ſcarlet circle; the back of others is diverſified with crimſon ſtains. View them, when they glance along the ſtream, or while they are freſh from their native brine; and the burniſhed ſilver is not more bright, the radiant rainbow is ſcarce more glowing, than their vivid, gliſtering, gloſſy hues.

Yet, notwithſtanding the finery of their apparel, we are under painful apprehenſions for their welfare.—How can the poor creatures live, amidſt the ſuffocating waters?—As they have neither hands nor feet, how can they help themſelves, or how eſcape their enemies?—We are ſoon freed from our fears by obſerving, that they all poſſeſs the beneficial, as well as ornamental furniture of *fins*. Theſe when expanded, like maſts above, and ballaſt below, poiſe their floating bodies, and keep them ſteadily upright.—We cannot forbear congratulating them on the *flexible* play, and *vigorous* activity of their tails; with which they ſhoot themſelves through the paths of the ſea, more ſwiftly than ſails and oars can waft the royal yacht.—But we are loſt in wonder, at the exquiſite contrivance, and delicate formation of their *gills:* by which they are accommodated, even in that denſe medium, with the power of breathing, and the benefits of reſpiration.

* *Pours himſelf*—This is *Jeremiah*'s beautiful and expreſſive phraſe, כסום שטף chap. viii. 6. Which *Virgil* has been ambitious to imitate;

——————*Ruuntque effuſi carcere,*

* *Venturæque hyemis memores, æſtate laborem*
Experiuntur, et in medium quæſita reponunt. VIRG.

A piece of mechaniſm this, indulged to the meaneſt of the fry; yet ſurpaſſing, infinitely ſurpaſſing, in the fineneſs of its ſtructure, and the felicity of its operation, whatever is curious in the works of art, or commodious in the palaces of princes.

Ther. Some perſons, *Aſpaſio*, have the art of giving *dignity* to trivial, and *ſpirit* to jejune topics. I cannot but liſten, with a pleaſed attention, to your diſcourſe, though it deſcends to the loweſt ſcenes, and meaneſt productions of nature.——To make ſuch philoſophical remarks, was uſually *my* province; to add the religious improvement, *yours*. But my thoughts, at preſent, are wholly taken up with the conſideration of my SAVIOUR's righteouſneſs. I can hardly turn my views, or divert my ſpeech, to any other ſubject. All thoſe amiable appearances of the external creation, which I was wont to contemplate with rapture, afford but a languid entertainment to my mind.——Till my intereſt in this divine REDEEMER is aſcertained, the ſpring may bloom; the ſummer ſhine; and autumn ſwell with fruits: but it will be winter, chearleſs, gloomy, deſolate *winter* in my ſoul.

Aſp. You ſay, *Theron*, you attended to my curſory hints. Then you own ſuperior diſcernment could not but perceive, how every part of the exterior world is adjuſted, in the moſt excellent and gracious manner.—Not the *coarſeſt* piece of inactive matter, but bears the impreſs of its MAKER's faſhioning ſkill.——Not a *ſingle* creature, however inſignificant, but exhibits evident demonſtrations of his providential care.——His hand is liberal, profuſely liberal, to all that breathes, and all that has a being.

Let me only aſk;—and to introduce this queſtion with the greater propriety, to give it a more forcible energy on our minds, was the principal deſign of the preceding remarks;—let me aſk, *Does GOD take care for oxen*!* Is he a generous benefactor to the meaneſt animals, to the loweſt reptiles? Are his munificent regards extended farther ſtill, and vouchſafed even to the moſt worthleſs vegetables? And ſhall they be with-held from *you*, my dear friend, and from *me?*—Not one among all the numberleſs productions, which tread the ground, or ſtand rooted to the ſoil, wants any convenience, that is proper for its reſpective ſtate. And will his heavenly FATHER deny *Theron*, what is ſo neceſſary to his preſent comfort, and his final happineſs? Impoſſible †!

Ther. I wiſh for, but I can hardly hope to partake of, that piritual bleſſing; which always included my whole happineſs, and now ingroſſes my whole concern.

Aſp. Not hope to partake of!—What foundation, what ſhadow of pretence, has this deſponding temper, either in reaſon, or in ſcripture? Is it not evident from the whole book of revelation; is it not apparent, through the whole compaſs of nature, that the almighty LORD, "who governeth the world with the palm of his "hand ‡," is remote, infinitely remote from a niggardly diſpoſition? He not only provideth for the wants, but even *ſatisfieth the deſire of every living thing* †.

Conſider thoſe ſtately *poppies*, which are now the principal ornament of the garden. They have no tongue to requeſt the leaſt favour. Yet the ever-gracious MAKER clothes them from his own wardrobe, and decks them with exquiſite beauty.——Obſerve the *young ravens*, which ſit careleſsly croaking on yonder boughs. Do they cry ‡ for food? It is in hoarſe inarticulate accents. Yet the all-ſupporting GOD overlooks their ignorance; hears meaning in their noiſe; and ſupplies their every need from his own ſpontaneous bounty.—If he accommodates the former, tho' incapable of aſking; if he attends to the latter, though inſenſible of their benefactor; can he *diſregard* our preſſing wants? will he *reject* our earneſt petitions? eſpecially, when we ſeek ſuch pure and exalted gifts, as it is both his delight and his honour to beſtow?

O! my friend, look abroad into univerſal nature, and look away every diſquieting thought.

Ther. Did you inquire what pretence I have for this deſponding temper? Alas! I have more than a pretence. I have a reaſon; a reaſon too obvious; my great *unworthineſs!*

Aſp. Pray, where was the worthineſs of the ſtiff-necked *Iſraelites?* Yet the LORD *bare them, and carried them, all the days of old* ‖.—Where was the worthineſs of *Saul* the blaſphemer? Yet the bleſſed JESUS made him a choſen veſſel, and ſet him as a ſignet on his right hand.——You deſerve nothing at the hand of GOD our SAVIOUR. Neither did *Joſeph*'s brethren deſerve any kindneſs from the viceroy of *Egypt*. Yet he delivered *them* from famine, who ſold *him* to ſlavery. He ſettled them in the choiceſt territories, who caſt him into the horrible pit. He ſhewed himſelf a friend and a father to thoſe unnatural relations, who were his actual betrayers, and his intentional murderers.——And can you perſuade yourſelf, will you harbour a ſuſpicion, that CHRIST is leſs compaſſionate than *Joſeph?* Shall a frail mortal outvie EMMANUEL in beneficence?

Ther. Is not *ſome* righteouſneſs of our own indiſpenſably required, in order to our participation of the righteouſneſs of CHRIST?

Aſp. Yes, ſuch a righteouſneſs as the *Samaritan* woman §, and *Zaccheus* the publican poſſeſſed; or ſuch as the *Philippian* jailor, and the profligate *Corinthians* might boaſt ¶.——*Zaccheus* was a man of infamous character, and chief among the extortioners. The jailor was a barbarous perſecutor, and in purpoſe a ſelf-murderer. Yet our LORD ſays of the former, *This day*, without injoining any courſe of previous preparation, *is ſalvation come to thine houſe* ‡. St *Paul* directs the latter, without inſiſting upon any antecedent righteouſneſs, to *believe on the* LORD JESUS CHRIST; and aſſures the poor alarmed ſinner, that, in ſo doing, he ſhould *be ſaved* +.

So that nothing is required, in order to our participation of CHRIST and his benefits, but a conviction of *our* need, a ſenſe of *their* worth, and a willingneſs to receive them in the appointed way; receive them, as the freeſt of gifts, or as matter of mere grace. *Come, and take freely* ++, is our MASTER's language; without ſtaying to acquire any graceful qualities, is his meaning.

Ther. Surely, to come without any holineſs, without any *decent* preparative, muſt be a groſs *indignity* to the divine JESUS. Whoever preſents a petition to any earthly ſovereign, will think it abſolutely neceſſary, not to appear in a ſlovenly deſhabille, much

* 1 Cor. ix. 9.

† I know not how to forbear tranſcribing a paragraph, from one of our periodical papers; which contains a propoſal for *adapting* natural philoſophy to the capacity of *children*: wiſhing, at the ſame time, that the ingenious author would enlarge his ſketch into a treatiſe; and execute the plan, which he has ſo judiciouſly projected, and of which he has given us ſo delicate a ſpecimen.

After ſome remarks on the ſagacity of birds, their induſtry, and other ſurpriſing properties, he adds; "—Is it for birds, O LORD, "that thou haſt joined together ſo many miracles, which they have "no knowledge of? Is it for men who give no attention to them? "Is it for the curious, who are ſatisfied with admiring, without "raiſing their thoughts to thee? Or is it not rather viſible, that "thy deſign has been to call us to thyſelf, by ſuch a ſpectacle; to "make us ſenſible of thy providence and infinite wiſdom; and to "fill us with *confidence* in thy bounty, who watcheſt, with ſo much "care and tenderneſs, over birds, though two of them are ſold but "for a farthing?"

* Eccles xviii. 3. † Pſal. cxlv. 16. ‡ Pſal. cxlvii. 9.

‖ Iſ. lxii 9. § John iv. 18. ¶ 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

‡ Luke xix. 9. + Acts xvi. 31. ++ Rev. xxii. 17.

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less in filthy raiment. Does not our *LORD* himself, in the parable of the wedding-garment, inculcate this very point, and caution us against a presumptuous approach?

Asp. In the parable you mention, *CHRIST* is both the bridegroom, the feast, and the wedding-garment *. And *who* are united to an union with this Bridegroom? to be guests at this feast? to be arrayed with this wedding-garment?—The messengers are sent, not to the mansion-houses of the rich, or the palaces of the mighty; but to the *highways and hedges*: where misery mourns; and poverty pines; and baseness hides her head.——*To whom* is their message addressed? To the *poor*, the *maimed*, the *halt*, the *blind* †: persons who have no amiable or recommending endowments, but every *loathsome* and *disgustful* property. Yet these (mark the passage, my dear friend; mark well the encouraging circumstance) *these* are not only not forbidden, but entreated,—importuned,—and by all the arts of persuasion, by every weighty or winning motive, *compelled to come in*.—And after all this, surely, it cannot be an act of presumption to accept, but must be a breach of duty to refuse the invitation.

Ther. You take no notice of the man, who was found without a wedding-garment: which is by far the most *alarming* incident, and that which gives me no small uneasiness.

Asp. And does my *Theron* take proper notice of the divine declaration? *I have prepared my dinner*, says the KING eternal. *All things are ready* ‡. "Whatever is "necessary for the justification, the holiness, the com"plete salvation of sinners, is provided in the merit and "the grace of my *SON*. Let them come therefore, as "to a nuptial banquet; and freely enjoy my muni"ficence; and feast their souls with the royal pro"vision."

The man without a wedding-garment, denotes the specious *superficial* professor; who is *called by CHRIST*'s name, but has never *put on CHRIST JESUS* by faith.—Shall I tell you more plainly whom this character represents? You yourself, my dear *Theron*, was, some months ago, in the state of this unhappy creature, when you trusted in yourself, and thought highly of your own, thought meanly of your SAVIOUR's righteousness.

I congratulate my friend, on his happy deliverance from so dangerous a condition. You and I are now like the returning prodigal. Let us remember, that he came with no recommendation, either of dress, of person, or of character. None but his nakedness, his misery, and an acknowledgment of vileness, which had every aggravating, not one extenuating circumstance. Yet he was received,—received with inexpressible indulgence; and clothed with that first, that *best*, that divinest *robe* ‖, the righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*.

Let us accustom ourselves to consider this incomparable robe, under its evangelical character. It is not a matter of bargain, nor the subject of sale, but a deed of gift. *The gift of righteousness*, says the apostle. And gifts, we all know, are not to be *purchased*, but *received*.

Ther. Is nothing then, nothing to be done on our part?—no heavenly-mindedness to be exercised? no victory over our lusts gained? no fruits of sanctification produced?

Asp. These legal apprehensions! how closely they cleave to my *Theron*'s mind! But, I hope, the word of GOD, which pierceth to the dividing asunder the soul and spirit, will give the severing blow.——And what says that sacred word? It describes the gospel, as a *will* or *testament* *; and all its glorious blessings, as *legacies* bequeathed by the dying *JESUS*.——When your old acquaintance *Charicles* left you a handsome legacy; what did you *do* to establish your title, and make it your own?

Ther. My title was pre-established by my friend's donation. I had nothing to do, but to claim, to accept; and to possess.

Asp. Do the very same in the present case. They who believe, are heirs, undoubted *heirs of the righteousness which is by faith* †.——Sure you cannot suppose, that CHRIST's kindness is less sincere, or that CHRIST's donations are less valid, than those of an earthly testator.

Ther. This illustration hardly reaches the point. I speak not of doing any thing, by way of *merit*, but by way of *qualification*.

Asp. If there be any qualification, I think it is our extreme indigence. This indeed it will be proper to have; and this, I presume, you are not without. Other qualification, neither reason prescribes, nor scripture requires.

Reason prescribes no other.—The gifts of the great eternal *SOVEREIGN* are intended, not to recognize our imaginary worth, but to aggrandize our views of his mercy and grace. To answer *such* a design, the unworthy and the sinners are duly qualified; nay, are the *only* qualified persons.

Scripture requires no other.——The ever-merciful SAVIOUR says not, They are unqualified for my merits; they have no valuable or noble acquirements. But this is his tender complaint; *They will not come to me*, just as they are; with all their sins about them; with all their guilt upon them; *that they may have life* ‡.——Pray, take notice of this text; and you will see things placed in a new light, ranged in a new order. Sanctification, heavenly-mindedness, and a victory over our lusts, are not so much the qualities which he *requires*, as the blessings which he will *confer*.

Ther. "The unworthy and sinners, the *only qualified!*" of this expression I cannot but take particular notice.—Then *Judas* should stand in the first rank of qualified persons; and the devout centurion, *whose prayers and alms had come up as a memorial before GOD*, was thereby unqualified for the favour of heaven.

Asp. If you observed my expression, I spoke in the hypothetical manner; made a supposition, rather than advanced an assertion. *If* there be any qualification, this is the only one. But, strictly speaking, there is no such thing. The impulsive or inclining cause of all GOD's favour shewn, of all GOD's goodness exercised, is—from the creature? No; but from *himself*, himself *alone*. *He has mercy*, not because this or that person is amiable, is meet, or qualified, but *because he will have mercy*.—— And as for our need of mercy and reconciliation, arising from our sinfulness, this can no more constitute a *real* qualification for the blessings, than an act of rebellion can qualify for the first honours of the state.

But this we must allow, that such need, such misery,

* *Matth.* xxii. 11. *Hæc vestis est justitia CHRISTI.* BENGEL. in loc.

† Luke xiv. 21. ‡ Matth. xxii. 4.

‖ *Luke* xv. 22. Την στολην την πρωτην.

* *Heb.* ix. 16, 17. This notion not only runs through the scriptures, but stands conspicuous even in their title-page.—What are they called? THE OLD and THE NEW TESTAMENT.—What is a testament? An authentic deed, in which estates are transmitted, and legacies bequeathed. In other testaments, some *earthly* possession; in this, the *heavenly* patrimony, even all the riches of grace, and the everlasting inheritance of glory.—Did we consider the scriptures in this light, it would be a most engaging invitation, to search them with assiduity and pleasure. What child is willing to continue ignorant of a deceased parent's last will and testament? Who does not covet to know, what honours, hereditaments, and wealth devolve to his enjoyment, by such an interesting and venerable conveyance.

† Heb. xi. 7. ‡ John v. 40.

ry, ſuch ſinfulneſs, illuſtrate the *freeneſs*, and manifeſt the *riches* of grace. And this we ſhould never forget, that *GOD*'s firſt and leading purpoſe, in all his favourable diſpenſations to fallen man, is, to demonſtrate the ſovereignty, and advance the glory of his grace.—The *LORD*, promiſing a very extraordinary deliverance to *Iſrael*, ſays, *Not for your ſakes, be it known unto you, do I this** ſignal act of kindneſs.—What then is the inducement? We find it in the following declaration; *I, even I am HE, that blotteth out your tranſgreſſions for my own ſake* †, and *according to the good pleaſure of my will.*—What is the end of all? It is FOR THE PRAISE OF THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE ‡. A proper motto this, for all the diſplays of divine goodneſs to ſinful men. It has been inſcribed by the hand of truth and inſpiration. Time and eternity, inſtead of eraſing the lines, will only ſtamp them deeper, and open them wider.

Ther. This is ſuch a gift!—To be intereſted in all the merits of *CHRIST!* To have his immaculate righteouſneſs imputed to my ſoul!—So that from henceforth there ſhall be no fear of condemnation, but a comfortable enjoyment of freeſt love, and a delightful expectation of completeſt glory!

Aſp. If this rich donation ſurpaſs your very thoughts, and fill you with grateful aſtoniſhment; it is ſo much the better adapted to diſplay, what the ſcripture very emphatically ſtyles, the *abundant*, the *ſuper-abundant*, the *exceeding abundant* ‖ grace of our *GOD*.——*GOD* hath pleaſure in the proſperity of his ſervants. He is a boundleſs ocean of love; ever flowing, yet abſolutely inexhauſtible. See! what an innumerable variety of benefits are tranſmitted from yonder ſun, to gladden all the regions of nature! Yet the ſun is but a *ſpark*; its higheſt ſplendor, no more than a *ſhade*; its uninterrupted and moſt profuſe communications of light, a poor diminutive *ſcantling*; compared with the riches of divine *benignity*.

The ſervant in the parable, who owed ten thouſand talents, craved only ſome merciful forbearance. Whereas his generous lord remitted the whole ſum, and gave him an acquittance in full; *I forgave thee all that debt* §.—You wonder, and very deſervedly, at ſuch vaſt generoſity. But what had been your admiration to ſee the noble maſter admitting this obnoxious ſlave to a ſhare in his dignity? what if he had made ſo worthleſs a wretch, the chief of his family, and the heir of his eſtate? This perhaps, you would ſay, exceeds the bounds of credibility. Yet *GOD* almighty's ſtupendous beneficence exceeds all this. He not only ſpares guilty creatures, but makes them his *children*; makes them *inheritors* of his kingdom; and as an introduction to all, or rather as the crown of all, makes them *partakers* ¶ of his *SON*.

Ther. The gift is ineſtimable; of more value than all worlds. It will render me bleſſed and happy, now and for ever. And may ſo unworthy a creature look for a bleſſing, thus ſuperlatively excellent?

Aſp. Unworthy?—my dear friend, dwell no longer upon that obſolete topic. The greateſt *unworthineſs* is no objection in *CHRIST*'s account, when the ſoul is convinced of ſin, and the heart deſirous of a SAVIOUR. And as for *worthineſs*, this is as much diſavowed by the goſpel, as *equivocal* generation † is exploded by the diſcoveries of our improved philoſopher.——Nay farther, this notion is diametrically *contrary* to the goſpel, and totally *ſubverſive* of the covenant of grace.

Ther. In what reſpect?

Aſp. Becauſe it would make our own duty and obedience the terms. Whereas the terms were *CHRIST*'s ſuffering, and *CHRIST*'s obedience. *Theſe* are the hinge on which that great tranſaction turns, and on which the hope of the world hangs.

Ther. Be more particular, *Aſpaſio*.

Aſp. The firſt covenant was made with *Adam*, for himſelf and us. Breaking it, he loſt his original righteouſneſs, and became ſubject to death; was, at once, a *bankrupt* and a *rebel*.——Now you cannot ſuppoſe, that the almighty *MAJESTY* would enter into a freſh covenant with an *inſolvent* and *attainted* creature. It pleaſed therefore, the *SECOND PERSON* of the adorable *TRINITY*, to undertake our cauſe, to become our ſurety, and put himſelf in our ſtead. *With him* the ſecond covenant was made. He was charged with the performance of the conditions; thereby to obtain pardon and righteouſneſs, grace and glory, for all his people. *I have made a covenant with my CHOSEN* * *ONE*, is the language of the *MOST HIGH*. And the terms were (you will permit me to repeat the momentous truth) not your worthineſs or mine, but the incarnation, the obedience, the death of *GOD*'s ever-bleſſed *SON*.

Ther. Has man then no office aſſigned, no part to act, in the covenant of grace?

Aſp. He has: but it is a part which my friend ſeems very loath to diſcharge. His part is to *accept* the bleſſings, fully purchaſed by the *SAVIOUR*, and freely preſented to the ſinner. His part is, not to diſhonour the *REDEEMER*'s gracious interpoſition, and infinitely-ſufficient performance, by hankering after any merit of his own. His part (why will you conſtrain me to reiterate in this manner?) is, not to bring money in his hand, with the ten brethren; but, with an empty hand, and like an impoveriſhed *Lazarus*, *to take hold of GOD's covenant* †.

Ther. If this be the nature of the new covenant, I muſt confeſs, I have hitherto been ignorant of the goſpel.

Aſp. And from hence ariſes your preſent diſtreſs; from hence your averſeneſs to receive comfort. You are a philoſopher, *Theron*; and have been accuſtomed to examine nicely the proportion of objects, rather than to weigh them in the balance of the ſanctuary. Here you find all proportion ſwallowed up and loſt. This quite overthrows all your concluſions, drawn from the fitneſs of things. Here *man* is nothing, leſs than nothing, while *grace* is all in all.——And ſhould we not, however unworthy in ourſelves, magnify the grace of our GOD?

Ther. Moſt certainly.

Aſp. How can this be done, but by expecting great

* Ezek. xxxvi. 32.

† *If.* xliii. 25. למעני *For my own ſake.* Which teaches us, that GOD, and nothing in the creature, is the original, entire, ſole cauſe of all grace and every gracious vouchſafement. It is not only *by* him, and *through* him, but *to* him; for the honour of his benign perfections, that we are pardoned, accepted, ſaved.

‡ Eph. i. 6.

‖ Υπερβαλλουσα χαρις. 2 Cor. ix. 14.—Υπερεπερισσευσεν η χαρις. Rom. v. 20.—Υπερεπλεονασεν η χαρις. 2 Tim. i. 14.

§ Matth. xviii. 32. ¶ Heb. iii. 14.

† The *ancients* imagined, that many vegetables and inſects were produced by, I know not what, plaſtic power in the ſun, and other elements. This is called *equivocal* generation. Whereas the *modern* philoſophers maintain, that every individual of this kind derives its being from ſome parent-vegetable or parent-animal. This is ſtyled *univocal* generation.

* *Pſal.* lxxxix. 3. It is generally allowed, that this pſalm, in its *ſublimeſt* ſenſe, is referable to CHRIST; and, in its *full* extent, is referable *only* unto CHRIST. If ſo, I think, it would be more ſignificant and emphatical, to render בחירי *my CHOSEN ONE*.—This will furniſh out a very clear and cogent argument to prove, that the covenant of grace was made with our *LORD JESUS*. Juſt ſuch an argument as the apoſtle uſes, to convince the *Galatians*, that the promiſes of the covenant were made to the ſame divine *PERSON*, *Gal.* iii. 16.——From both which premiſes this important concluſion follows, That juſtification and every ſpiritual bleſſing are the *purchaſe* of CHRIST's obedience; are lodged in him as the great *proprietary*; are *communicated* to ſinners only thro' the exerciſe of *faith*, or in a way of believing. See *Zech.* ix. 11.

† If. lvi. 4.

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and ſuperlatively-gracious bleſſings from his hand?——*Alexander*, you know, had a famous, but indigent philoſopher, in his court. Our adept in ſcience was once particularly ſtraitened in his circumſtances. To whom ſhould he apply, but to his patron, the conqueror of the world? His requeſt was no ſooner made than granted. *Alexander* gives him a commiſſion, to receive of his treaſurer whatever he wanted. He immediately demands, in his ſovereign's name, a hundred talents *.—— The treaſurer, ſurpriſed at ſo large a demand, refuſes to comply; but waits upon the king, and repreſents the affair; adding withal, how unreaſonable he thought the petition, and how exorbitant the ſum.—*Alexander* hears him with patience: but, as ſoon as he had ended his remonſtrance, replies; "Let the money be inſtantly paid. "I am delighted with this philoſopher's way of think- "ing. He has done me a ſingular honour; and ſhew- "ed, by the largeneſs of his requeſt, what a high idea "he has conceived, both of my ſuperior wealth, and my "royal munificence."

Thus, my dear *Theron*, let us honour, what the inſpired penman ſtyles, *the marvellous loving-kindneſs of* JEHOVAH. From the King, *whoſe name is the* LORD *of hoſts*, let us expect,—not barely what correſponds with our low models of generoſity, much leſs what we ſuppoſe proportioned to our fancied deſerts,—but what is ſuitable to the unknown magnificence of his name, and the unbounded benevolence of his heart. Then we ſhall chearfully and aſſuredly truſt, that CHRIST JESUS will be *made of GOD to us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption*: that HE, who hath *given* himſelf for us †, will *give* us of his SPIRIT ‡, and will *give* unto us eternal life ‖.

Ther. Yes, upon condition, that we fight the good fight, and finiſh our courſe of duty. *Henceforth*, ſays the apoſtle, after this is done, *there is laid up for me*, and for other victorious ſoldiers, for other faithful labourers, *a crown of righteouſneſs*.

Aſp. To ſuch perſons the crown will aſſuredly be vouchſafed. But is it vouchſafed on account of their ſucceſsful warfare, or perſerving obedience? If ſo, *Iſrael may vaunt themſelves, and ſay, Mine own hand*, not the REDEEMER's interpoſition, *hath ſaved me* §.

Not to repeat what has already been alledged, in oppoſition to this opinion;—not to produce what might farther be urged, from a variety of ſcriptural teſtimonies;—I ſhall only deſire you to obſerve, what the apoſtle himſelf adds in this very place. *There is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs*: but is this the pay, proportionate and due to his own ſervices? Is it what he claims and demands, on the foot of duty performed?—The very title of the reward implies the contrary. It is *a crown of righteouſneſs*, becauſe purchaſed by the meritorious and conſummate righteouſneſs of CHRIST. The action of the Judge declares the contrary: *which the LORD, the righteous Judge, ſhall* give *me at that day*. It is, you ſee, an act of favour; the iſſue of unmerited bounty; what neither ſaint, nor martyr, nor apoſtle enjoys, but only by way of gracious donation ¶.

I would fain have my *Theron* form more honourable apprehenſions concerning the mercy and the bounty of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. He will beſtow what you ſuppoſe he exacts. He is really a benefactor, where you would repreſent him as a taſkmaſter. *The LORD will give grace, as well as glory.* He knows, you have neither ſtrength nor merit, therefore he will ſupply your want of both, from his own unfathomable fulneſs.

Ther. Ah! my *Aſpaſio!* you don't know my ſtate. I have not only no merit, but great guilt *; was, by nature, a child of wrath; have been, by practice, a ſlave of ſin; and, what is worſe, am ſtill corrupt; have ſtill a carnal heart.——And has not ſuch a wretch forfeited all title to the divine favour? Nay, does he not deſerve the vengeance of eternal fire?

Aſp. That we all deſerve this miſery, is beyond diſpute. I am truly glad, that we are ſenſible of our demerit. Here our recovery begins. Now we are to believe, that the LORD JESUS has ſatisfied divine juſtice; has paid a glorious price, on purpoſe to obtain for ſuch ill-deſerving, ſuch hell-deſerving creatures, all pardon, all holineſs, and everlaſting happineſs. According to the import of that charming ſcripture, *When we are enemies* (and what is there in an enemy, to beſpeak favour, or deſerve benefits?) *we were reconciled to GOD by the death of his SON* †.

You have *great guilt*. But is this a reaſon why you ſhould be excluded from the bleſſings of the covenant? Contemplate the ſtate of that forlorn and wretched outcaſt, deſcribed in the ſixteenth of *Ezekiel*. An infant *in its blood*: this repreſents a ſinner, who has nothing to excite love, but all that may provoke abhorrence. Yet what ſays the HOLY ONE of *Iſrael? When I ſaw thee*, not waſhed, and purified, and made meet for my acceptance, but *polluted in thy blood* ‡; loathſome with defilement, and laden with iniquity; then, even then *I ſaid unto thee, Live: I ſpread my ſkirt over thee; and thou becameſt mine*. This is the manner of his proceeding, not barely to one nation, but to all his people; not in one period of time only, but through all generations.

You are *ſtill corrupt;* one that is ſenſible of his corruption, and acknowledges his ſinfulneſs! Then you are the *very perſon*, for whom the SAVIOUR's righteouſneſs is intended; to whom it is promiſed.——You are a governor of the county-hoſpital, *Theron*. You have been induſtrious in promoting, and are active in ſupporting, that excellent inſtitution; where Medicine with her healing ſtores, and Religion with her heavenly hopes, act as joint handmaids to Charity. What are the circumſtances which render any perſons the proper objects for an admiſſion into your infirmary?

Ther. Their poverty, and their diſtemper. Without *poverty*, they would not need; and free from *diſtemper*, they would not prize, the benefit of our modern *Bethesda*.

Aſp. Apply this to the caſe under conſideration. The whole world is in a ſtate of ſpiritual diſorder. CHRIST is ſtyled, by the inſpired writer, *the* LORD

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* About ten thouſand pounds.

† Eph. v. 2. ‡ John iv. 13.

‖ John x. 28. § Judg. vii. 8.

¶ 2 *Tim.* iv. 8. The word αποδωσει, as it ſtands in the preſent connection, is, I think, very properly explained by a late pious profeſſor of divinity at *Glaſgow*: *Profitetur fiduciam ſuam de gratuita mercede, quam DEUS gratis promiſit omnibus fidelibus, et ut juſtus judex, juſte ſimul et ex gratia rependet, non ex merito ullo noſtro, ſed priora dona ſua gratuita poſterioribus gratuito cumulando.* DICKSONI *Expoſ. Analyt.*

* I believe, no one *experienced* in the ſpiritual life will ſuſpect, that *Theron* ſpeaks *out of character*.—Conſcience, when once alarmed, is a ſtubborn and unceremonious thing. It pays no deference to wealth; it never ſtands in awe of grandeur; neither can it be ſoothed by the refinements of education, or the attainments of learning. And we generally find, that a moſt unaccountable propenſity to *ſelf-worthineſs*, ſtrongly poſſeſſes the new-awakened convert. He is perpetually raiſing objections, founded on the want of perſonal merit; notwithſtanding all our remonſtrances, to quiet his fears, and remove his jealouſies. It is truly a hard taſk, for a mind, naturally leavened with legal pride, to come naked and miſerable to CHRIST;—to come, diveſted of every recommendation but that of extreme wretchedneſs; and receive, from the hand of unmerited benignity, the free riches of evangelical grace.

† Rom. v. 10.

‡ The words are peculiarly emphatical; not only doubled, but redoubled; to denote, at once, the *ſtrangeneſs* of the fact, yet the *certainty* of the favour. *When I paſſed by thee, and ſaw thee polluted in thine own blood, I ſaid unto thee when thou waſt in thy blood, Live: yea, I ſaid unto thee when thou waſt in thy blood, Live.* Ezek. xvi. 6.

our healer *. The gift of his righteouſneſs, the balm of his blood, and the influences of his SPIRIT, are the ſovereign reſtorative. And ſure it cannot be a fanciful perſuaſion of our health, but a feeling conviction of our diſeaſe, which renders us proper objects of his recovering grace,——*He came not to call the righteous*, the righteous in their own eyes, *but ſinners* †, ſelf-condemned and ruined ſinners, *to* give them *repentance*, and pardon, and newneſs of life.

Ther. But if any fooliſh and refractory patients have abuſed our beneficence, it is a ſtanding unalterable rule of the houſe, never to admit them a ſecond time, however preſſing their exigencies, or however powerful their recommender. I have, not once only, but through the whole courſe of my life, abuſed the marvellous loving-kindneſs of the LORD.

Aſp. And is not the LORD ſuperior to all his creatures, in acts of *pardon*, as well as of *power?* Yes, as thoſe heavens are higher than this proſtrate earth, ſo much more enlarged and extenſive is the divine clemency,—than the wideſt ſphere of human kindneſs, ſhall I ſay? rather than the boldeſt flights of human imagination. Your ſtatutes are inexorable, in caſe of one notorious irregularity committed. *But the free gift* of a REDEEMER's righteouſneſs is vouchſafed, notwithſtanding *many offences*, *unto juſtification* ‡.——It is the glory of our almighty RULER, and redounds to the honour of his crucified SON, to paſs over ‖ not a ſingle tranſgreſſion only, but a multitude of provocations; to be altogether as unequalled in mercy, as HE is abſolutely ſupreme in majeſty.

As it is the *groſſeſt pride*, to entertain high notions of our own accompliſhments, or to expect eternal life on the ſcore of our own obedience; ſo it will be the *greateſt affront* to the grandeur of CHRIST's merits, and the freeneſs of his grace, if we ſuppoſe our crimes too heinous to be forgiven, or our perſons too vile to be accepted.

Theron pauſed.—Theſe conſiderations ſeemed to operate; this anodyne to take effect.——Deſirous to improve the favourable juncture, and impart the needed conſolation, *Aſpaſio* added:

How often did the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* diſregard the warnings, and reject the counſels of our bleſſed LORD! How juſtly might HE have ſworn in his wrath, "They ſhall never hear the joyful ſound of my "goſpel more. The bleſſings which they have ſo wan-"tonly deſpiſed, and ſo wickedly abuſed, ſhall be irrevo-"cably withdrawn."——Inſtead of paſſing ſuch a ſentence, this is the charge, which, after his reſurrection, he gives to his apoſtles: *Let repentance and remiſſion of ſins be preached in my name to all nations*, BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM §.——"At *Jeruſalem*, LORD! Have not the "men of that ungrateful and barbarous city been deaf to "thy tendereſt importunities? Did they not perſecute "thee unto condemnation and death? Are not their "weapons ſtill reeking, as it were, with thy blood; and "their tongues ſtill ſhooting out arrows, even bitter "words? by which they would murder thy character, "as they have already crucified thy perſon."——Yet theſe wretches (and could any be more inhuman? could any be more unworthy?) are not only not abhorred, but unto them is the meſſage of grace, and the word of ſalvation ſent. Nay, to ſhew the unparallelled freeneſs of our REDEEMER's grace, theſe are *firſt* upon the heavenly liſt. The glad tidings of pardon and life, which are to be publiſhed through the world, *muſt begin* (amazing mercy!) MUST BEGIN at *Jeruſalem*.

Ther. Thus much I may venture to profeſs in my own behalf: That I long for this bleſſing;—I pray for this bleſſing;—but I cannot ſee my title to this comprehenſive and ineſtimable bleſſing, *clear*.

Aſp. I behold it perfectly clear.——Some days ago, a worthy clergyman, who lately came to ſettle in the neighbourhood, did himſelf the honour of making one at your table. After dinner you ſhewed him your library; we took a walk in your garden; and made the agreeable tour of the fiſh-ponds. Then,—with that amiable frankneſs of mein and accent, which is ſo peculiar to my friend, and exceedingly endears all his favours,—you told him, "That he was as welcome to any book "in your ſtudy, as if the whole collection was his own: "that if on a viſit from ſome acquaintance of ſuperior "rank, he ſhould wiſh to be accommodated with a more "delicate entertainment than uſual, the productions of "your waters, and of your hot-beds, were entirely at his "ſervice: and that his acceptance of your offers, with-"out the leaſt ſhineſs or reſerve, would be the moſt plea-"ſing compliment he could pay you on the occaſion."

What ſays the great PROPRIETOR of all good? *If any man*, however unworthy his perſon, or obnoxious his character, *thirſt*; thirſt for the bleſſings of my evangelical kingdom; *let him come unto* ME, the fountain of theſe living waters, *and drink* his fill *.——You yourſelf acknowledge, that you long for the ſacred privileges of the goſpel. Your heart is awakened into habitual and lively deſires after the ſalvation of CHRIST. What is this but, in the ſpiritual ſenſe, to thirſt? To you therefore the promiſe is made; to you the riches of this benign diſpenſation belong.

That clergyman has not the leaſt ſuſpicion of being diſappointed, in caſe he ſhould ſend for a brace of carp, from your canal, or a fine melon from your garden.——Why is he ſo confident? Becauſe he has done you any ſignal ſervice? No; but becauſe you have paſſed your word, and made the generous offer.—And why ſhould you harbour the leaſt doubt concerning the divine veracity? Why ſhould you call in queſtion your right to theſe heavenly treaſures? ſince it is founded on a grant altogether as *free*, altogether as *clear*, as your own indulgent conceſſion; and infinitely more *firm* than any human engagement; founded on the fidelity of that ſublime BEING, who "remembers his covenant and pro-"miſe to a thouſand generations."

Ther. It is impoſſible to confute, yet difficult to believe, what you urge.

Aſp. What I urge, is not the voice of a few dubious paſſages, nicely culled from the book of GOD, or forcibly wreſted by the interpretation of man. The whole tenor of inſpiration runs, with the greateſt perſpicuity, and the greateſt uniformity, in this delightful ſtrain.——Let me, out of a multitude, produce another expreſs from the court of heaven. *Ho! every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, even he that hath no money. Come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price* †.——*Wine* and *milk* undoubtedly ſignify the pardon of our ſins, and the juſtification of our perſons; the communications of ſanctifying grace, and the hope of eternal glory. Theſe are nouriſhing and refreſhing to the ſoul, as milk the richeſt of foods, and as wine the beſt of cordials, are to the body.——Theſe, you ſee, are to be obtained, *without money*, and *without price*; without any merit of our own; without any plea deduced from ourſelves; by poor, undone, periſhing bankrupts.——They are to be enjoyed by *every one*, who unfeignedly eſteems them, and humbly ſeeks them. No exception is made; no excluſive clauſe added. It is not ſaid, Any one that is *worthy*, but every one that *thirſteth*.—To leave no room for any miſgiving apprehenſions, the kind invitation is repeated, *Buy and eat; buy wine and milk.* The invaluable yet free tender is

* Exod. xv. 26. † Matth. ix. 13.
‡ Acts v. 31. ‡ Rom. v. 16.
‖ Prov. xix. 11. § Luke xxiv. 47.

* John vii. 37. † Iſ. lv. 1.

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confirmed again and again; *He that hath no money; without money; without price.* And both are preſſed upon us with a very remarkable, with the moſt affectionate vehemence; *Come ye; come ye; yea come.*

Had our heavenly *BENEFACTOR* permitted us to draw up this inſtrument of conveyance, and word it according to our own wiſh; what language could we have contrived, to render either the grant more free, or our claim more ſecure?

Ther. Theſe are chearing truths. They amount to little leſs than a demonſtration. And I am ready to declare, in the language of *Agrippa*, *Almoſt* thou perſuadeſt me to commence a believer.

Aſp. And why, my dear friend, why not *altogether?* Can you diſtruſt the ſincerity of the divine overtures? If the overtures are real, your title is unqueſtionable.—Nay, there is more than an overture. You have an *actual* gift from the almighty *MAJESTY*. *To us*, ſays the prophet,—including all that wait for the redemption of *CHRIST*, and the conſolation of *Iſrael*,—*a child is born* *. *To us*,—he repeats the precious truth; to declare his exuberant joy †, and denote the abſolute certainty ‡ of the thing,—*a ſon is given*; even GOD's own SON, the ever-bleſſed *JESUS*, to be our PROPITIATION, our SURETY, our complete REDEEMER.

Juſt caſt a look upon yonder neat lodge. Though placed in the centre of a ſpacious field, it ſeems to be contiguous with the extremity of the viſta. The eye, travelling over ſuch a length of ground, has almoſt loſt the windows, and the decent ornaments of the front. But I ſhall not ſoon loſe the idea of that amiable munificence; which, as I was rambling one pleaſant morning, and accidentally called at the houſe, I learned from its preſent owner.—He was, I find, one of your ſervants; had ſpent ſeveral years in your family; when he ſettled in the world, you beſtowed upon him that commodious box, and a pretty adjacent farm; to poſſeſs, without moleſtation or control, during his life.—Does he not reckon the little eſtate, by virtue of your donation, to be his own? as much his own, for the time preſcribed, as if he had paid an equivalent in money?—Since the *LORD JEHOVAH has given* us his SON, and all his unutterable merits; why ſhould we not, with an aſſurance of faith, receive the incomparable gift? Why ſhould we not confide in it, as firmer than the firmeſt deed; and far more inviolable than any royal patent?—Eſpecially ſince it has been *ſealed* to us in every ſacramental ordinance, and *witneſſed* by every good motion of the *HOLY SPIRIT* in our hearts.

Ther. My ſervant never affronted my authority. If he had vilified my character, or inſulted my perſon, ſhould I then have been inclined to make the ſame advantageous ſettlement?

Aſp. Herein appears the infinite ſuperiority of the divine bounty. GOD is rich in mercy, not only to the obedient and grateful, but to the unthankful and unworthy. *To the LORD our GOD*, ſays the prophet, *belong mercies and forgiveneſſes*; in meaſure ſuperabundant, and in continuance unwearied; and this, *notwithſtanding we have* offended him, by our manifold failures in duty; nay, have *rebelled* ‖ *againſt him*, by flagrant violations of his law.

In ſweet concert with this prophetical leſſon, ſings the tranſported *pſalmiſt*: *Thou LORD*, in thy ſacred humanity, *haſt aſcended up on high*; aſcended, from the low caverns of the tomb, to the higheſt throne in the higheſt heavens.——*Thou haſt led captivity captive*: haſt aboliſhed death, that univerſal tyrant; and ſubdued thoſe powers of darkneſs, which had enſlaved the whole world.——Like a glorious *and* triumphant conqueror, thou haſt alſo *received gifts*; not merely for thy own fruition, but to confer on others, by way of honorary and enriching largeneſs.——What are thoſe gifts, *Theron?*

Ther. The gifts of the goſpel, I ſuppoſe; pardon of ſin, the influences of the HOLY SPIRIT, and thoſe other privileges of *Chriſtianity*, which conſtitute the preſent happineſs of mankind, and prepare them for future bliſs.

Aſp. You rightly judge.—And for whom were thoſe royal, thoſe heavenly donatives received? If you have an inclination to beſtow a ſword ſet with diamonds, a finely-wrought piece of plate, or an exquiſitely-finiſhed picture; what names preſent themſelves to your thoughts? What perſons are the objects of your choice? The *approved* friend, or *diſtinguiſhed* favourite, I make no queſtion.——But for *whom* (let me aſk again, ſince it is a point of the laſt importance) were thoſe heavenly donatives received?

Ther. Let me recollect:—*Thou receiveds gifts*,—not for fallen angels, but *for men*;—and not for thy friends, but for thy *enemies*;—yea, *for the rebellious* alſo *.——Merciful heaven! What a word is this! and does it come from the GOD of truth?—Gifts! divine gifts! gifts of unſpeakable value, and eternal duration! and theſe to be conferred on enemies, on the rebellious! wretches, who are deſtitute of all gracious qualifications; who deſerve not the leaſt favour; but have reaſon to expect the frowns of indignation, and the ſword of vengeance!

Aſp. Thus it is written, in thoſe ſacred conſtitutions, which are far more ſtedfaſt and unalterable, than the law of the *Medes* and *Perſians*.——Thus it is ſpoken, by the mouth of that almighty BEING, with whom there is no variableneſs, nor the leaſt ſhadow of turning.——Let us not, my dear friend, by unreaſonable unbelief, fruſtrate all theſe promiſes, and reject *our own* mercies. Let us not, by an evil heart of unbelief, make GOD a liar; and make ourſelves, of all creatures, the moſt miſerable.

But ſee!—The clouds, which hung their agreeable ſables, to damp the ardour, and abate the glare of day, are departing. The ſun has been colouring their fleecy ſkirts, and ſpreading over the floating ſcreen a variety of interchangeable hues. Now he begins to edge them with gold, and ſhine them into ſilver. A ſure indication, that (like the *glittering*, but *tranſitory* toys, which they repreſent) they will ſoon be ſwept from the horizon, and ſeen no more.——The bright orb, while we are ſpeaking, burſts the veil; and,

* Iſ. ix. 6.

† *Virgil* has copied the prophet's *fine manner*. He repreſents joy, uttering her ſentiments, in the ſame ſpirited ſtrain, with the ſame reiterated earneſtneſs:

——*Humilemque videmus*
Italiam. Italiam *primus conclamat Achates.*
Italiam *læto ſocii clamore ſalutant.*

‡ See Gen. xli. 32.

‖ *Dan.* ix. 9. The original is מרדו than which no expreſſion, in the *Hebrew* language, bears a more obnoxious ſignification. It denotes the moſt *audacious* and the moſt *flagitious* impiety. It denotes that *rebellion, which is as the ſin of witchcraft; and that ſtubborneſs, which is as the iniquity of idolatry.* Yet, all virulent and execrable as it is, it does not ſuppreſs the yearnings of divine pity, nor ſuperſede the exerciſe of divine forgiveneſs.—With a word derived from the ſame root, *Saul*, when exaſperated almoſt to madneſs, upbraids *Jonathan*. And we know, perſons ſo extremely incenſed, never ſpeak in the ſofteſt terms; never touch the ſubject with a feather, but make their tongue like a ſharp ſword.

May I venture to add, that our tranſlators ſeem to miſtake the proper application of the aforementioned paſſage? They repreſent *Saul*'s invective, flying as *wide* of the mark, as it is *overcharged* with malice.—*Son of the perverſe rebellious woman!* This might be aſſerted, without the leaſt impeachment of *Jonathan*'s perſonal loyalty.—Beſides, is it not exceſſively indecent, as well as abſolutely unreaſonable, to reflect upon the mother, for the miſdemeanors of the ſon?—Surely, the clauſe ſhould be rendered, in perfect conſiſtence with the genius of the original; *Thou ſon of perverſe rebellion*; or, more agreeably to the *Engliſh* idiom, *Thou perverſe rebellious wretch!* 1 Sam. xx. 20.

* Pſal. lxviii. 18.

from a voluminous pomp of parting clouds, pours a flood of ſplendor over all the face of nature.——We ſhall quickly perceive this open ſituation too hot to conſiſt with pleaſure; and muſt be obliged to ſeek for ſhelter, in the ſhady apartments of the houſe.

Will you admit me, *Theron*, into thoſe ſhady apartments?

Ther. Admit you, *Aſpaſio!*—I am ſurpriſed at your queſtion. I thought you had known me better; and I am ſorry, it ſhould be needful to aſſure you, that my houſe is as much your own, as it is mine. The more freely you command it, the more highly you will oblige me.

Aſp. May I believe you, *Theron?* Do you ſpeak from your heart? or muſt I conclude, that you plauſibly profeſs, what you have no intention to perform?—Would you be pleaſed, if I ſhould obſtinately perſiſt in theſe diſhonourable ſuſpicions, notwithſtanding all your friendly proteſtations?

Ther. My dear *Aſpaſio*, I ſee your deſign. I ſee, and am aſhamed; aſhamed to think, that I ſhould fancy myſelf more punctual in my profeſſions, than GOD is true to his word.——*LORD, I believe, help thou mine unbelief!*

DIALOGUE XVI.

OUR friends had agreed upon a viſit to *Philenor*. They rode through a fine open, fruitful country; which was covered with crops of ripened corn, and occupied by ſeveral parties of ruſtics gathering in the copious *harveſt*.

The *rye*, white and hoary as it were with age, waved its bearded billows, and gave a dry huſky ruſtle before the breeze.——The *wheat*, laden with plenty, and beautifully brown, hung the heavy head; and invited, by its bending poſture, the reaper's hand. Plats of *barley*, and acres of *oats*, ſtood whitening in the ſun. Upright, and perfectly even, as though the gardener's ſhears had clipped them at the top, they gratified the ſpectator's eye, and gladdened the farmer's heart.——*Beans*, partly clad in native green, partly transformed and tawny with the parching ray, were preparing the laſt employ for the crooked weapon.——Some of the grain lay flat, in regular rows, on the new-made ſtubble. Some was erected, in graceful ſhocks, along the briſtly ridges. Some, conveyed homewards on the loaded waggon, nodded over the groaning axle.

The villages ſeemed to be empty, and all their inhabitants poured into the plains. Here were perſons of each ſex, and of every age.—The luſty *youths*, ſtooping to their work, plied the ſickle; or ſwept, with their ſithes, the falling ranks.—The ſprightly *females* followed, binding the handfuls into ſheaves, or piling the ſwarths into haſty cocks.—Diſperſed up and down were the *children* of the needy, gleaning the ſcattered ears, and picking their ſcanty harveſt.—Nor were the *old* people abſent; but crawling into the ſun, or ſitting on a ſhady eminence, they beheld the toils,—the pleaſing toils they once ſuſtained.

This is the moſt joyful period of the country-man's life; the long expected crown of all his labours. For this he broke the ſtubborn glebe, and manured the impoveriſhed ſoil. For this he bore the ſultry beams of ſummer, and ſhrunk not from the pinching blaſts of winter. For this he toiled away the year, in a round of ceaſeleſs but willing activity; knowing, that * *the huſbandman muſt labour before he partakes of the fruits.*—And will not the bleſſed hope of everlaſting life; will not the bright expectation of conſummate bliſs, animate us with an equally-chearful reſolution, both to reſiſt the temptations, and diſcharge the duties of our preſent ſtate?

Short ſeemed the way, and quick paſſed the time, as they travelled through ſuch ſcenes of rural abundance, and rural delight.—Before they were aware, the horſes ſtopt at *Philenor*'s ſeat: where they found, to their no ſmall diſappointment, that the maſter was gone abroad. ——They alighted however, and took a walk in the *gardens*.

The gardens, at proper intervals, and in well-choſen ſituations, were interſperſed with pieces of *ſtatuary*. At the turn of a corner, you are—not ſhocked with a naked gladiator, or a beaſtly *Priapus*,—but agreeably ſurpriſed with the image of *Tully*. He is juſt riſen from his ſeat, and upon the point of addreſſing himſelf to ſome important oration. A reverential awe appears in his countenance; ſuch as ſilently acknowledges, that he is going to plead before the rulers of the world. Sedate, at the ſame time, and collected in himſelf, he ſeems conſcious of ſuperior eloquence, and emboldened by the juſtice of his cauſe. His thoughtful aſpect, and gracefully-expanded arm, ſpeak to the eye, before the tongue has uttered a ſyllable.

You enter an alley, lined on either ſide with a verdant fan; and having no variety of objects to diverſify the intermediate ſpace, your view is conducted to a magnificent building at the end. As you walk along, contemplating the maſterly performance in architecture, an unexpected opening diverts your attention; and preſents you with ſome ſtriking imitation of virtuous or heroic life.——Not the *Macedonian* madman; nor *Sweden*'s royal knight-errant; nor *Cæſar*, infamouſly renowned for his ſlaughtered millions; but the truly-gallant *Czar*, A drawn ſword in his hand, and a commanding majeſtic ſternneſs on his brow. The weapon is held in the moſt menacing poſture; and many a ſpectator has been obſerved to ſtart back, with apprehenſions of fear. It is that glorioufly-ſevere attitude, in which the grateful citizens of *Narva* beheld him, and in which all poſterity will admire him, when he turned upon his own victorious, but ungovernable troops, and threatened to drench the dagger in their hearts, if they did not immediately deſiſt from rapine * and ſlaughter; immediately allow quarter to their vanquiſhed foes.

Under a circular dome, ſupported by pillars of the *Doric* order, and in a ſpot where ſeveral walks centre, ſtands—not the *Venus a mediçis*; corrupting, while it captivates the world,—but a *Spartan* mother. Her habit decent and graceful; ſomewhat like the *Juno Matrona* of the *Romans*, as ſhe is finely depictured in Mr *Spence*'s *Polymetis*. Her air ſtately and reſolved; expreſſive of dignity, yet mingled with ſoftneſs. She holds a ſhield; is in the act of delivering it to her ſon;

* 2 *Tim.* ii. 6. *Beza* thinks, that in ſettling the conſtruction of this verſe, the adverb πρῶτον ſhould be connected with the participle κοπιῶντα. If ſo, the tranſlation exhibited above, may bid fair for acceptance; and one of the moſt celebrated hiſtorians, may have the honour of commenting on the greateſt of the apoſtles; *Ne illi falſi ſunt, qui diverſiſſimas res expectant, ignaviæ voluptatem, et præmia virtutis.* SALLUST. *i. e.* They are, beyond all diſpute, moſt egregiouſly miſtaken, who hope to unite thoſe incompatible things, the pleaſures of indolence, and the rewards of induſtry.

* "As ſoon as the ſoldiers were maſters of the town, (*Narva*), "they fell to plunder, and gave themſelves up to the moſt enor- "mous barbarities. The *Czar* ran from place to place, to put a "ſtop to the diſorder and maſſacre. He was even obliged to kill "with his own hand ſeveral *Muſcovites*, who did not hearken to his "orders." VOLTAIRE's *hiſt. Charl.* XII.

a youth ſetting out for the army, and going to hazard his life, in the defence of his country. She is ſuppoſed to add that ſpirited and magnanimous exhortation, which is engraven on the protuberance of the buckler,——*Bring it back, my ſon, as thy trophy; or be brought back upon it, as thy bier.*

I am particularly pleaſed, ſaid *Theron*, with the contrivance of this laſt ornament. It is regulated by one of the moſt refined rules of art; not to laviſh away all the beauty at a ſingle view, but to make a ſkilful reſerve for ſome future occaſion.——The dome and the columns afford pleaſure, when beheld at a conſiderable diſtance. The fine animated figure in the midſt diſplays its graces, on a nearer approach. By which means, the attention is kept awake, and the entertainment continues new.

But what I principally admire, is the *ſpirit* or *ſtyle* of the decorations in general. They put me in mind of a very juſt remark, which Mr *Pope* has ſomewhere made. It is, if I remember right, to this effect.——"A man not "only ſhews his taſte, but his virtue, in the choice of his "ornaments. A proper piece of hiſtory, repreſented in "painting on a rich man's walls, *(or exhibited in imagery "amidſt his gardens)* is very often a better leſſon, than any "he could teach by his converſation. In this ſenſe, the "ſtones may be ſaid to ſpeak, when men cannot, or will "not."——All but the comparative or ſatirical part of the obſervation, I would apply to the proſpect before us, and its worthy owner.

Aſp. Philenor's gardens are, I think, more chaſte and delicate in their ornaments, than a certain *collegiate church*. In the latter place, we might reaſonably expect the ſtricteſt adherence to purity, if we ſhould not meet with the ſymbols of piety and incitements to religion.——What then would be the reflections of a judicious obſerver, if, in ſuch a ſolemn and venerable edifice, he ſhould ſee a huge brawny fellow ſtuck up againſt the wall, with his poſteriors half bare, his whole body more than half naked, and in an attitude none of the moſt decent *.——Excuſe me, *Theron*. I confeſs myſelf aſhamed even to rehearſe the deſcription. How then can the ſpectacle itſelf become the houſe of divine worſhip?

Ther. But perhaps this ſame brawny fellow may repreſent a *Heathen* demigod; one of the *idols* worſhipped by antiquity; the tutelary deity of valour.

Aſp. And will this juſtify the practice? Does not this add profaneneſs to immodeſty? Are we *Chriſtians* to thank *Hercules* for the valour of our warriors, and make our acknowledgments to *Pallas* for the conduct of our generals? Shall we *Chriſtians* behold with admiration, or recognize as our benefactors, what the apoſtle has ſtigmatized under the character of *devils* †?

If HE, who overthrow the tables of the money-changers, had taken a walk in theſe famous cloyſters, I am apt to ſuſpect, he would have paid no very agreeable compliment to this fine piece of ſtatuary. *Take theſe things hence*, would probably have been his command; and *make not the precincts of your temple a chamber of* Pagan *imagery*, his rebuke *.——Neither is it at all unlikely, that the image itſelf, notwithſtanding its inimitable workmanſhip, might have ſhared the fate of its kinſman *Dagon*;

——*When the captive ark*
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopp'd off
In his own temple, on the groundſell edge
When he fell flat, and ſham'd his worſhippers †.

Ther. But how ſhould the artiſt repreſent the great achievements and the ſhining qualities of his hero, if you will not allow him to make uſe of theſe *ſignificant* emblems?

Aſp. I queſtion, whether they are ſo very ſignificant. The mirror ſeems to characterize a fop, rather than a ſoldier. It leads us to think of a ſoft *Narciſſus*, admiring himſelf; rather than a ſagacious general, planning the operations of the campaign.——Beſides, is ſacred literature ſo deſtitute of proper emblems, that we muſt borrow the decorations of our churches and the trophies of our conquerors, from the dreams of ſuperſtition or the deluſions of idolatry? How juſt and expreſſive are thoſe emblematical repreſentations, exhibited in *Ezekiel*'s viſion! where activity and ſpeed are ſignified, by *hands* in conjunction with *wings*; and the deep, the complicated, yet ever-harmonious ſchemes of Providence, by *a wheel in the middle of a wheel*. With what propriety and force are the nobleſt endowments pictured, in the revelations of St *John*, and their grand machinery! Superior wiſdom and benevolence of heart, are deſcribed by the face of *a man*; ſtrength of mind and intrepidity of ſpirit, by the viſage of *a lion*; calmneſs of temper and indefatigable application, by the features of *an ox*; a penetrating diſcernment, and an expeditious habit of acting, by the form of *a flying eagle* ‡.

Theſe hieroglyphics are graceful, are pertinent and ſuch as every ſpectator will underſtand. Whereas the devices of our new monumental encomium are, I preſume, to the unlearned hardly intelligible; to the ſerious, little better than profane; and to every beholder, indelicate if not immodeſt.——*Philenor*, I imagine, would bluſh to admit them into his walks or avenues. And I am ſorry to find them received into the moſt ancient ‖, moſt renowned, and moſt frequented church in the kingdom.

Talking in this manner, they come to a curious grove, formed on that uncommon plan, propoſed by Mr *Addiſon*, in one of his *Spectators*.—It conſiſted wholly of *evergreens*. *Firs*, clad in verdant ſilver, pointed their reſinous leaves, and ſhot aloft their towering cones. *Laurels*, arrayed in gloſſy green, ſpread their ample foliage, and threw abroad their rambling boughs.—*Bay trees* were expanded into a fan, that no weather could tarniſh; or rounded into a column, that knew not how to moulder. While the *lauruſtinus* ran out into a beautiful irregularity of ſhape; and compacted her reddening gems, in order to unfold her whitening bloom.—In one place lay a dale, gently ſinking, and coated with the *chamomile*'s natural frieze; which never changes its colour, never loſes its gloſs.

* Referring to the monument, lately erected for MAJOR-GENERAL FLEMING, in *Weſtminſter-Abbey*. Where, under the General's buſt, are placed *Hercules* and *Pallas*. *Hercules* with his club and lion's ſkin, in the manner related above. *Pallas*, with a mirror and a ſerpent at her ſide.——The reader may ſee a picture and an explanation of this monument, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for *Auguſt* 1754.

At this church has been the burial-place of the moſt illuſtrious perſonages, for many centuries; as it is the place, where *all* our kings receive their crowns, and *many* of them depoſit their aſhes; it is ſingularly eminent for its antiquities and monuments; there is a large reſort both of natives and foreigners, to view its grand and ſolemn curioſities. Whatever, therefore, is erected in a place ſo circumſtanced and ſo diſtinguiſhed, ſhould, I apprehend, not only diſplay an air of *elegance* in the execution, but include a *beauty of hoc* in the deſign: becauſe nothing can lay claim to the το καλον, which is not poſſeſſed of the το πρεπον. Nor can any performances, as ſituated, be pronounced truly graceful, but ſuch only as correſpond with the character, and ſubſerve the deſign of the ſacred place. It was thought, by a very able critic and a very candid writer, that *more impropriety* of taſte, in ornamenting one of the monuments, called for his cenſure. Surely then a violation of decency, and an approach to *Paganiſm*, call more loudly for public animadverſion, and proper reformation. See *Spect.* vol. I. No. 26.

† 1 Cor. x. 20.

* John ii. 16.

† MILTON. b. I. 458. ‡ Rev. iv. 7.

‖ Some antiquarians trace back the origin of this church, even to the reign of *Lucius*; which is more than the ſpace of 1506 years. Others ſuppoſe, that *Sebert*, King of the *Eaſt-Saxons*, about the year of our LORD 605, built the firſt religious ſtructure on this ſpot. All agree, that it was re-edified and enlarged by *Edward* the *Confeſſor*; and that the preſent ſtately and magnificent fabric was founded by *Henry* III.

Near

Near it, and ſcooped, you would imagine, from the ſame hollow, aroſe a mount, ſoftly ſwelling, and ſhagged with *furze*; gay with perennial verdure, and generally decked with golden bloſſoms.——Here you are led through a ſerpentine walk, and hedges of *box*; and find, perhaps, a ſolitary pyramid or a capacious urn, each compoſed of unfading *yew*. There you look through a ſtrait alley, fenced on either ſide, and arched over head, with mantling *philirea*; and ſee, at the extremity, an obeliſk ſheathed in *ivy*, and ornamented with its ſable cluſters, as with wreaths of living ſculpture.——Scattered up and down, were ſeveral ſorts of *holly*; ſome ſtriped with white; ſome ſpotted with yellow; ſome preparing to brighten and beautify the ſcene, with berries of glowing ſcarlet.

The heads of the trees, ariſing one above another, in a gradual ſlope, from the diminutive mazerean to the lofty cypreſs; the ſeveral ſhadings of their green attire, greatly diverſified, and judiciouſly intermixed; afford, eſpecially in the winter-ſeaſon, a moſt *enlivened* and *lovely* proſpect.——As the ſunſhine is, by the frequenters of this grove, uſually more coveted than the ſhade; it is ſo diſpoſed, as to admit, in one part or another, every gleam of fine weather, which exhilarates the winter.

Aſp. There muſt be ſomething unſpeakably pleaſing in a plantation, which appears lively and fruitful when all its neighbours of the woodland race are barren, bleak, or dead. But how much more chearing and delightful muſt it be, when *decrepit* age, or bodily infirmities, have impaired the vigour, and laid waſte the gratifications of our youthful prime, to find a ſolid *undecaying* pleaſure in the favour of GOD, and the hope of glory!—Now indeed the feathered tribes reſort to the more flowing umbrage of the poplar and the aſh. But, amidſt *December*'s cold, you ſhall obſerve them forſaking the *leafleſs* woods, and flocking to this friendly receptacle; hopping acroſs the ſunny walks, or ſheltering themſelves, in the wet and ſtormy day, under theſe *truſty* boughs. So, the many thoughtleſs creatures, who turn their back upon religion, amidſt the ſoft and ſmoothing careſſes of proſperity, will want, extremely want, its *ſovereign ſupports*, under the ſharp and diſtreſſing aſſaults of adverſity, ſickneſs, and death.——This collection, it is true, may not equal the groves of annual verdure, in floridity of dreſs; but it far exceeds them, in the duration of its ornaments.——'Ere long, yonder ſhewy branches will be ſtript of their holiday cloaths: whereas *theſe* will retain their honours, when *thoſe* are all rags, or nakedneſs. Thus will it be with every refuge for our poor imperfect, ſinful ſouls; excepting only the righteouſneſs of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Every thing elſe will *fade as a leaf* *. This, my *Theron*, and this alone is an *evergreen*; always free for our acceptance, and always effectual to ſave.

Ther. An evergreen it is. But, like the ruddy and inviting fruits, which hang on the uppermoſt boughs of thoſe lofty trees in the orchard, it ſeems to be quite out of my reach.

Aſp. Are you ſenſible, that you *need* the immaculate and perfect righteouſneſs of our SAVIOUR?

Ther. Was *Jonah* ſenſible, how much he needed the cooling ſhelter of his gourd, when the ſun ſmote fiercely upon his temples, and all the fervours of the fiery eaſt were glowing around him?—So is your *Theron* ſenſible, that, without a far better righteouſneſs than his own, he muſt inevitably be condemned by the ſentence of the law, and cannot poſſibly ſtand before the high and holy GOD.

Aſp. Remember then, what our LORD ſays to ſuch perſons; *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt* †. How *gracious* is the invitation? Come unto ME, the Father of compaſſions, and the Giver of every good gift.——How extenſive as well as gracious! All that are *weary* *, toiling in a fruitleſs purſuit of happineſs, and ſpending your labour for that which ſatisfieth not. All that are *heavy laden* †, oppreſſed with the ſervitude of ſin, or bowed down under a load of miſery.—Theſe, *all* theſe are called; and *you*, my friend, in the number.—They have not a ticket, a bond, or ſome inferior pledge, to aſcertain their ſucceſs; but they have a promiſe from faithfulneſs and truth itſelf. *I will give you reſt*, ſays the Strength of Iſrael; whoſe will is fate, and his word the baſis of the univerſe.——And if CHRIST will give you reſt, he will waſh you in that blood which atones, and inveſt you with that righteouſneſs which juſtifies; ſince nothing ſhort of theſe mercies can afford any ſatisfaction to the guilty conſcience, or *true* ſatisfaction to the reſtleſs ſoul.—Permit me to aſk farther, Do you earneſtly *deſire* this righteouſneſs?

Ther. Will yonder *hirelings*, when fatigued with the heat and burden of a long, laborious, ſultry day, deſire the ſhades of the evening, and the repoſe of the night?—I can truly, on this occaſion adopt the words of the prophet; *The deſire of my ſoul is to thy name*, bleſſed JESUS, *and to the remembrance* of thy righteouſneſs. The very mention of this ſpotleſs righteouſneſs is muſic to my ears. Every freſh, though diſtant diſcovery of it, gleams pleaſure upon my mind. And that would be a welcome day, a day greatly to be diſtinguiſhed, which ſhould bring it *near* to my view, and *home* to my ſoul.

Aſp. Say not then, my dear friend, that CHRIST, and the bleſſings of his purchaſe, are beyond your reach. They are now, even now at your door. You need not argue anxiouſly and deſpondingly, *Who ſhall aſcend into heaven, to bring down CHRIST from above?* or, *who ſhall deſcend into the deep, to bring up CHRIST from beneath* ‡? There is no ſuch impoſſibility, no ſuch difficulty in the thing. CHRIST and his righteouſneſs, CHRIST and his ſalvation, are brought nigh in the word of promiſe. And *if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the* LORD JESUS, as dying on the croſs for thy redemption; *if thou ſhalt believe in thy heart, that GOD hath raiſed him from the dead* for thy juſtification, *thou ſhalt be ſaved* ‖. In ſo doing, thou ſhalt receive remiſſion of ſin, and power to withſtand its temptations.

Have you never, in your travels, been overtaken by the dark and tempeſtuous night? When chilled with the cold, and almoſt drowned in the rain, you arrived at the houſe of ſome valuable friend, was you not *willing* to gain admittance?

Ther Willing! I was deſirous, I was almoſt impatient; I thought every moment an hour, till the hoſpitable door opened; till I exchanged the diſmal gloom and the driving ſtorm, for the chearful light and the amiable company within.

Aſp. The adored EMMANUEL profeſſes himſelf equally willing to come unto you. *Behold!* ſays the SAVIOUR of the world, *I ſtand at the door, and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the* DOOR, *I ſhall come in unto him, and will ſup with him, and he with ME* §.—Like one expoſed to all inclemencies of the air, whoſe *head is filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night* ¶, he is not only willing, but *deſirous* to enter.——*He ſtands at the door*, with great long-ſuffering and perſeverance; till all obſtacles are removed, or rather till that one grand obſtacle is taken out of the way, unbelief.—*He knocks* by the preaching of his word, and the promiſe of his goſpel; like one who ſolicits admiſſion, and will take no denial.—Hear then his ſoliciting voice, and *he will ſup with you*; will make his abode with you, will manifeſt his glories in you, and communicate his grace to you. Believe his promiſing word, and *you ſhall ſup with him*.

* If. lxiv. 6. † Matth. xi. 28.

* Κοπιωντας. † Πεφορτισμενοι

‡ Rom. x. 6, 7. ‖ Rom. x. 9.

§ Rev. iii. 20. ¶ Cant. v. 2.

this will be refreshing to your distressed soul, as the most sumptuous banquet to the famished stomach and craving appetite.

Ther. I cannot open my heart.

Asp. CHRIST has the key of *David*. *He openeth, and none can shut; he shutteth and none can open* *.——HE is able to make all grace, not only to exist in you, but *abound* towards you †.——And, what is still more encouraging, he is professedly the *author* and *finisher* of our faith ‡. Since he has claimed this character to himself, since he has undertaken to execute this office, why should we harbour the least distrust? Will *HE* not fulfill his own office, and act agreeably to his own character?—Be not, my dear *Theron*, be not faithless, but believing.

Ther. This I believe,—That I am a lost sinner; under the curse of the law, and liable to the wrath of *GOD*; that there is no relief for my distress, but in *CHRIST* and his transcendent merits. *HE*, and *HE alone*, is able to save me from my guilt, and all its dismal train of miseries. He is a *SAVIOUR* fully proportioned to my wants; exactly suited to my several necessities.——I believe, and am persuaded, that, if I was interested in the divine JESUS, my soul should live.

Asp. Be persuaded likewise, that there is no *clogging* qualification, no worth to be possessed, no duty to be performed, in order to your full participation of *CHRIST* and his riches. Only believe, and they are all your own. *CHRIST dwelleth in our hearts*,—how? by legal works, and laborious prerequisites? No; but *by faith* ‖. *He that believeth on the SON, hath*—a chimerical? far from it; a real and a substantial happiness; even *everlasting life* §.

Ther. Ah! my *Aspasio!* I cannot believe. I feel my impotency. My mind is, as you formerly hinted, like the withered arm.

Asp. It is no small advantage, *Theron*, to be convinced of our inability in this respect. This is, if not the beginning of faith, the sign of its approach; and shews it to be, if not in the soul, yet at the very door.—Fear not, my friend. He who bids you stretch out, will strengthen the withered arm. He first makes us sensible of our weakness, and then *fulfills all the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with power* ¶.

Can you doubt of his willingness? Then go to mount *Calvery*. *There* listen to *the sounding of his bowels, and of his mercies towards you* ‡. Has not every drop of blood a tongue? Cannot you read a language in each streaming wound, and hear a voice in every dying pang?—Do they not all speak his infinite love even to wretched sinners? Do they not all address you with that tender remonstrance, *O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt* +? Nay, do they not all declare, with an energy superior to the force of words, that he will deny you no manner of thing that is good?

Who gave his blood, what gift will he with-hold!

Ther. I am ashamed to recollect, what mistaken notions I once entertained concerning the *easiness* of believing; as though it were to be performed, like the act of rising from our seat, or stepping into a coach, by our own strength, and at our own time. What a stranger was I then to the blindness of my understanding, and the hardness of my heart; to my bondage under unbelief, and averseness to the way of salvation *by grace through faith!*

Asp. Since you are sensible of your impotence, beware of the *contrary* extreme. Because you cannot, by your own strength, exercise faith, let not this occasion a tame resignation of yourself to infidelity. You must endeavour, diligently endeavour, to believe; and wait, and pray, for the divine *SPIRIT*. Though it is his office to testify of *CHRIST, and bring near the REDEEMER's righteousness* *; yet his influences are not to supersede, but to encourage our own efforts.—*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*; here is our duty. *For it is GOD that worketh in you both to will and to do* †; here is our encouragement. And O! what a glorious encouragement, to have the arm of Omnipotence stretched out for our support and our succour!

Ther. How, or in what manner, does the divine *SPIRIT* work faith in the heart of a sinner? You wonder, perhaps, that I ask such a question. But my apprehensions are strangely dull, and my views very dim, with regard to spiritual things. If in this respect I have any sight, it is like his, who *saw men as trees walking*; saw these several objects, but so obscurely, so confusedly, that he could not distinguish one from the other, only by the circumstance of motion.

Asp. The most enlightened minds see only in part; and all have reason to make the blind beggar's supplication their own request; *LORD, that I may receive my sight!*—The operation of the *HOLY SPIRIT* in producing faith, is thus described by a master in *Israel*: "The "divine *SPIRIT* brings *CHRIST* and his righteousness "nigh unto us in the promise of the gospel; clearing at "the same time our right and warrant to intermeddle "with all, without fear of vitious intromission; en- "couraging and enabling to a measure of confident ap- "plication, and taking home all to ourselves, freely, "without money, and without price."

You was once, *Theron*, a zealous advocate for good works. Now you seem to have abandoned your clients. Remember, my dear friend, what our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* says, ‡ *This is the work of GOD*, of all works most acceptable and most honourable to the divine MAJESTY, *that you believe on him whom he hath sent.*

Ther. The true belief, according to your notion, *Aspasio*, is so refined and exalted a virtue, that I very much question, whether I shall ever be able to attain it.

Asp. If you are unable to attain it, is the LORD unable to give it? *Our sufficiency* for this and every good work, is not in ourselves, but in GOD.——And to him difficulties are easy. Before him mountains are a plain.——You will please to remember, that sinners are said to *believe*, not through their own ability, but through the power of *grace*. And you will permit me to ask, how you became acquainted with my notion of faith?

Ther. I am not so inattentive a reader of your letters, as to forget your definition of this momentous article. *Faith*, you say, is "a real persuasion ‖, that the blessed "JESUS has shed his blood *for me*, and fulfilled all right- "eousness in *my stead*: that, through this great atone- "ment and glorious obedience, he has purchased even "for *my* sinful soul, reconciliation with GOD, sanctify- "ing grace, and all spiritual blessings §."

* Rev. iii. 7. † 2 Cor. ix. 8. ‡ Heb. xii. 2.
‖ Eph. iii. 17. § John iii. 36.
¶ 2 Thess. i. 11. † Is. lxiii. 15. + Matth. xiv. 31.

* Is. xlvi. 1. † Phil. ii. 12. 13. ‡ John vi. 29.

‖ *Budæus* and *Stephens* derive the original word from πιπυσαι, he is persuaded: and, I think, very properly; for whatever we believe, of that we have a real persuasion.—The latter most accurate and masterly critic gives this interpretation of πιστις. *Persuasio certa, quam in nobis efficit Spiritus Sanctus, de salute in Christo promissa, quam sibi quisque credendo applicat.* To corroborate which exposition, he adds; *Hac etiam in significatione nomen fidei a theologis Latinis receptum fuit*,

§ See *Letter* X. Here is, it must be acknowledged, a total omission of all *preparatory* or rather *impulsive* dispositions; such as conviction of sin, and hungering after salvation.——Here is likewise a total silence concerning all causes, *instrumental* or *efficient*, such as the power of the divine WORD, and the agency of the divine SPIRIT.——No mention is made of the *fruits* or *concomitants*; such as love to CHRIST, love of the

Asp. I am obliged to you, *Theron*, for the honour you do my letter; and I hope, you will pay an equal regard to the determination of our church. You once apprehended, that my attachment to the church of *England* was unfettled and wavering. Judge now, who has moſt thoroughly imbibed her doctrines, and is moſt invariably tenacious of her true intereſts. In the firſt part of the homily concerning the ſacrament, we have this definition of faith; "It is a belief, not only that the death of *CHRIST* "is available for the remiſſion of ſins, and reconciliation "with GOD, but alſo that he made a full and ſufficient "ſacrifice *for thee*, a perfect cleanſing *for thy ſins* *."

My notion of faith, you ſee, is evidently the voice of the eſtabliſhment; and I think it gives us a *clear intelligible* ſenſe, ſuited to the moſt common acceptation of the word; ſuch as would naturally ariſe in the mind of a ſtranger, who, without any bias on his judgment, ſhould inquire into the purport of our religion, or conſider the language of our Bible.

Ther. How ſuited to the moſt *common acceptation* of the word?

Aſp. When you ſent a meſſage to your tenant,—who, in his laſt ſickneſs, expreſſed ſo much uneaſineſs on account of his numerous family, and embarraſſed circumſtances,—aſſuring him, that you had cancelled the bond, and forgiven his debt; when you told the poor woman, —whoſe huſband fell from the loaded waggon, and broke both his legs,—that you would order a ſurgeon to attend him, and would continue his weekly pay: *how* did they regard, *how* receive your promiſed kindneſs? *So* let us credit the gracious declarations of our GOD; *ſo* accept his faithful promiſe; and then we ſhall anſwer the import of the word,——then we ſhall truly *believe*.

Ther. Where is there, in ſcripture, any thing parallel or ſimilar to theſe inſtances?

Aſp. Have you never read the words of *Micah; Who is a GOD like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by tranſgreſſion* †? Here is the gracious declaration.—— *He will turn again; he will have compaſſion upon us; he will ſubdue our iniquities* ‡. Here is the faithful promiſe.—— And why, my friend, why ſhould we pay leſs credit to the ever-living JEHOVAH, than to a man "whoſe breath is in his noſtrils?" Is there treachery with the *HOLY ONE* of *Iſrael*? Does the *LORD* make, and then violate his promiſe? "Aſk now of the days that are "paſt, aſk from the one ſide of heaven unto the other, "whether ſuch a thing hath ever been?"

Ther. GOD has never violated his promiſe, when it was expreſsly made, and particularly applied. But, in this circumſtance, there is a wide difference between the caſe of our friend, and the caſe of his poor people. I *named* the object of my compaſſion in one of the inſtances, and made a *perſonal* application in the other. Neither of which is done in the ſcriptures.

Aſp. Though we are not particularly named, yet we are very exactly deſcribed, by our *family*, our *inclination*, our *practice*.——What ſays eternal Wiſdom, when ſhe makes a tender of her ineſtimable bleſſings? *To you, O men*, not to fallen angels, *I call; and my voice is*, not to this man or that man excluſively, but *to the ſons of men* indefinitely ‖.—What ſays the holy apoſtle, when he publiſhes the counſels of heaven? *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that CHRIST JESUS came into the world to ſave*—the upright? the unblameable? Was this the caſe, our hopes would be covered with a cloud; or rather, totally and finally eclipſed. But ſee! they are clear as the light, and conſpicuous as the noonday. For he came (chearing, charming word!) he came to ſave *ſinners* *.

Conſonant to all which, is the declaration of another ſacred envoy. *He*, the PRINCE of peace, the MONARCH of the univerſe, *ſuffered*—for whom? They, in whoſe behalf this matchleſs ranſom was paid, muſt have an undeniable right to look upon redemption as their own. And bleſſed, for ever bleſſed be *GOD*, it is moſt peremptorily ſaid, he ſuffered *for the unjuſt* †.

That no part of our character might be omitted, and no ſort of our miſery paſs unrelieved, it is farther declared, *When we were without ſtrength, CHRIST died for the ungodly* ‡. When we were ungodly, and conſidered only as ungodly creatures; neither poſſeſſed of any thing amiable, nor having the leaſt ability to acquire it; nay, when we were chargeable with horrid guilt, and incapable of expiating a ſingle offence? then, even then *CHRIST* died, and for ſuch abominable wretches he died.——Are we not of the *human* family? Are we not *unjuſt* ‖ towards our fellow-creatures, and *ungodly* towards our great *CREATOR?* Are we not, in all relations, and in every reſpect, *ſinners?* If we are, (and, upon theſe queſtions, incredulity itſelf will ſcarcely demur) let us not frowardly reject, rather let us thankfully receive thoſe ſpiritual treaſures, which, by virtue of the aforecited conveyance, belong to *ſuch* people; which, by ſeveral other clauſes in the will and teſtament of our crucified LORD, evidently devolve to *ſuch* perſons.

Ther. Is it poſſible, *Aſpaſio!* Can we be warranted and encouraged to receive theſe treaſures, in a capacity and under a denomination, which I ſhould think more likely to exclude us, diſinherit us, and overthrow all our pretenſions?

Aſp. This may ſeem ſtrange, but it is true. All the bleſſings of the goſpel proceed upon a ſuppoſition of ſinfulneſs. *CHRIST* is made *wiſdom* unto his people; but what occaſion for the acceſſion of wiſdom, unleſs it be in the caſe of ignorance and folly? *CHRIST* is made *righteouſneſs*; but who can ſtand in need of a juſtifying righteouſneſs, if they are not in themſelves unprofitable and guilty? *CHRIST* is made *ſanctification*: and does not this imply a ſtate of corruption to be remedied, a body of ſin to be deſtroyed? *CHRIST* is made *redemption*; and from what are perſons redeemed, but from chains and bondage, from miſery and ruin, from all manner of evil?

It is alſo a moſt precious and invaluable truth; ſuch as I would hold faſt, and never, never let go. When I ſearch for my own endowments, I find nothing that I dare venture to plead; being in my beſt moments, and amidſt my choiceſt duties, a ſinner. As this is, at all times, my undoubted character, I have at all times an undoubted warrant to ſay, The uncreated *WISDOM calleth me*; the bleſſed *JESUS* came *to ſave me*; the great *MESSIAH* ſuffered death *for me*.

Let me illuſtrate the point.——*Romulus*, you know, the founder of the *Roman* empire, was a poor prince; had but a handful of ſubjects, and very ſcanty territories. What expedient could he deviſe, to enlarge the boundaries of the one, and augment the number of the other? He iſſued a proclamation, addreſſed to outlaws and criminals; all that were involved in debt, or obnoxious to puniſhment; promiſing, that as many as would ſettle under his dominion, ſhould

brethren, or purity of heart.—Nothing is exhibited to view, but the form and eſſence of faith; or that particular act, which *characterizes* and *conſtitutes* real faith; which diſtinguiſhes it from the hypocritical pretenſion, and the hiſtorical notion.—This ſimple view is given, that the mind may fix upon the grand point, and not be embarraſſed with a multiplicity of ideas.

* Anſwerable to this, was the doctrine of the *primitive church*; Η πιστις ιδιοποιεῖται τον Θεον. CHRYSOST.

† Mic. vii. 18. ‡ Mic. vii. 19. ‖ Prov. viii. 4.

* 1 Tim. i. 15. † 1 Pet. iii. 18. ‡ Rom. v. 6.

‖ *He* is unjuſt towards his neighbour, who neglects to love his neighbour as *himſelf*. And if this is the ſtandard, who has not fallen ſhort?

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be secured from prosecution, and vested with considerable privileges.——We will suppose a person in those distressed circumstances. Upon hearing the welcome invitation, he hangs down his head, and, with a dejected air, cries, "I am a *debtor*, I am a *criminal*, and therefore unworthy of the royal protection."——What answer should be made to such a dispirited complainer? Make the same to yourself, whenever you are inclined to review the present objections.——Remembering, that the infinite and eternal SOVEREIGN, to display the magnificence of his majesty, and manifest the riches of his goodness, has commissioned his ambassadors to publish in every nation under heaven,—"That all unhappy sinners, who are *oppressed* by the devil and liable to damnation, may come to CHRIST, and rely on CHRIST; may, in this manner, obtain pardon, righteousness, and all the privileges of children."

Ther. At this rate, the *vilest miscreants* have as clear, nay have the very same warrant to believe in CHRIST, and receive his salvation, as the highest saints.

Asp. The very same. In this respect there is no difference. All have sinned, and must sue for spiritual blessings, not as deserving, but as *guilty* creatures; must receive them, not as the recompence of their own worth, but as the issues of infinite mercy.—The vilest miscreants are blinded by the devil, and enslaved to their lusts. Therefore they see no beauty in a SAVIOUR, that they should desire him. Whereas, when the divine SPIRIT opens their eyes, and inclines their hearts, they discover and make use of just the same right to CHRIST and his merit, as the highest saints: A right founded, not on their awakened desires, not on any thing in themselves, but purely, solely, entirely on the free grant of a SAVIOUR.

Should you ask the highest saints, On what their hopes are grounded? This, or something to this effect, would be their reply:—"On the free exhibition of CHRIST and his salvation, recorded in the word of truth.—— There we find it written, *To you*, though Gentiles and idolaters, *is preached the remission of sins* *.——*The promise is to you*, even to you, *whose wicked hands have crucified and slain the LORD of life; and* not to you only, but *to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our GOD*, by the message of his everlasting gospel, *shall call* †.— We remember, *Theron*, though you seem to have forgotten, the wretched outcast, *polluted* in its blood, yet accepted by the HOLY ONE of *Israel*. We remember the heavenly gifts, received by the triumphant REDEEMER, for enemies, and for the *rebellious*. Nor can we easily forget the promise of forgiveness which was made, and the blessing of forgiveness which was vouchsafed, even to the *murderers* of the LORD of glory ‡."

Ther. This is a pleasing supposition. But it would be more satisfactory, if you should produce any of the saints speaking in this manner.

Asp. Isaiah, you will allow, was a saint of no inferior rank. Yet he breathes the spirit I am describing, and acts the part I am vindicating. Turn to that epitome of the gospel, his *fifty-third* chapter. There you may observe him claiming a share in the greatest of all privileges, salvation through the blood of CHRIST. How does he advance and maintain his claim? Not in the capacity of a *sanctified*, but under the character of a *sinful* person. These are his words; *The LORD hath laid on him*, on his Son CHRIST JESUS, *the iniquity of us all* *. Of me, and of my brethren in piety, does he mean? No; but of me, and of my fellow-transgressors. This is evidently implied in the clause I have quoted. In the preceding part of the verse, the prophet explains himself, and leaves no room for hesitation. *All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own ways*; yet *our* transgressions, *our* iniquities, the GOD of all mercy has transferred from us, and charged upon our REDEEMER.——As the vilest miscreants are indispensably obliged to confess the former, they have a free and full right to profess, to assert, and to believe the latter.

At this you may probably wonder; at this we ought all to wonder; this is that amazingly-rich grace, which will be the wonder of saints and angels through a boundless eternity.——Yet, though we wonder, let us not murmur. Let not the elder brother repine, because the young prodigal enters at the same door, and is admitted to the same table with himself.

To this testimony of the saints, shall I add the decision of their King? GOD *so loved the world*, even the fallen, the wicked, the apostate world, *that*, in the fulness of time, *he gave his only begotten* SON †, to bring in a perfect righteousness, and obtain eternal redemption. And he still gives him with all his saving benefits, in the promise of the gospel.

Ther. Does this general gift warrant a sinner to make a particular application of all to himself?

Asp. It warrants, it demands, and in other instances obtains, a particular application. When *Jonah*, in pursuance of the divine command, *cried and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown*; here was no particular mention of man, woman, or child. Neither the king, nor the nobles, nor the commons were specified. Much less was each and every inhabitant threatened by name. Nevertheless, this general denunciation alarmed them all; was influential on them all. Insomuch that *the people of Nineveh believed GOD, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least* ‡.——*They believed*; hence we learn the true nature of believing; "GOD speaks to *me*; and what he speaks, "he will perform;" is its genuine profession. Hence we likewise discover, *who* they are which ought in this manner to apply the general word; *All, from the least even unto the greatest, believed.*

Ther. The case is not parallel, *Aspasia*. This was a denunciation of vengeance, not a promise of grace.

Asp. And can you suppose, that GOD is more liberal of vengeance, than he is communicative of grace? Vengeance is his strange work, but in mercy and loving-kindness he delighteth.——Are we bound to believe and apply his dreadful threatenings? not allowed to believe and apply his precious promises? Surely, the LORD's ways are not so unequal.—When the law says, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things* ‖; should not every hearer take this to himself, and submit to the sentence of just condemnation? When the gospel says, HE *came to save that which is lost* §; should not every hearer take this also to himself, and embrace the tender of free salvation?

However, if you dislike my instance, I will give you another; which is not of the vindictive, but of the beneficent kind.——When the *manna* made its first appearance in the wilderness; when the *Israelites* knew, neither what it was nor for whom intended; both these particulars were explained by *Moses: This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat* ¶. No mention is made of any individual person. Yet the whole con-

* Acts xiii. 38.

† *Acts* ii. 39. *Call*—in the same manner, as he called those to whom *Peter* spake: which evidently means, not the inward efficacious call, wrought by the SPIRIT; but the outward call, delivered in the word. Otherwise, we must suppose every individual person in this promiscuous assembly, to be savingly changed; which will hardly be credited by those, who remember, that the congregation consisted of mockers, murderers, and sinners.

‡ Referring to *Dialogue* XV.

* Is. liii. 6.

† John iii. 16.

‡ Jonah iii. 5.

‖ Gal. iii. 10.

§ Matth. xviii. 11.

¶ Exod. xvi. 15.

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gregation looked upon this as an undoubted permiſſion, both for themſelves and their children, to gather, to fetch home, and to uſe the miraculous food.——And here, *Theron*, here lies the principal difference between the vile miſcreant, and the exalted ſaint; not that the one was originally better, than the other; not that the one has a clearer grant of CHRIST than the other; but the latter has gathered the heavenly manna, and uſes it to his unſpeakable advantage. Whereas it lies round about the tents of the former; and whoever will, may take, may eat, and his ſoul ſhall live.

Ther. GOD gave the *manna* to all the *Iſraelites*, both good and bad. But does he give CHRIST with this unlimited freeneſs?

Aſp. Our LORD himſelf, alluding to this very miracle, vouchſafes you an anſwer: *My* FATHER *giveth you the true bread from heaven* *. My FATHER giveth you his incarnate SON, and his divinely-excellent righteouſneſs. Theſe are bread indeed; bread, which came down from the regions of heaven; and bread which nouriſheth the ſoul for the joys of heaven.—This my FATHER *giveth you*; though not in actual poſſeſſion, yet in right to poſſeſs. This he giveth you, in the free indefinite grant of his word: without which grant, any attempt to poſſeſs, even in the moſt upright of men, would be illegal and preſumptuous: by virtue of which grant, even the poor ſinner has an unqueſtionable warrant to receive and poſſeſs the riches of CHRIST.

Ther. Unqueſtionable! is not this expreſſion too peremptory? That ſuch a grant ſhould be made to *believers*, I can eaſily conceive. But is it made to ſinners,—to any ſinners,—to the moſt abandoned ſinners?

Aſp. Yes, *Theron*, to ſinners. And when ſinners receive the grant, then they commence believers.——Was it made to believers only, no man living would inherit the bleſſing: becauſe all men are, by the depravity and impotence of their nature, originally concluded under ſin and unbelief.

What ſaid our LORD? My Father giveth *you*; that is, the people who ſtood around, and heard his gracious voice: many of whom were in a carnal ſtate habitually, and even then were in a murmuring wicked frame †.—What ſays his prophet: To *us* a Son is given; not to us, who were antecedently children of the light; but who *walked in darkneſs, and dwelt in the ſhadow of death* ‡.——What ſaith GOD the LORD? he that created the heavens, and ſtretched them out? *I will give thee*, meaning his beloved SON, *for a covenant*; it is not ſaid, of believers, but *of the people*; it is not ſaid, of new creatures, but *of the Gentiles*; who were the vileſt of all creatures, or, as you have properly ſpoke, the moſt abandoned ſinners.——That we may underſtand more clearly the ſignification of theſe terms, and ſee the true extent of this gift, it is added, I will give thee *to open the blind eyes, and to bring out the priſoners from the priſon* ‖. Miſerable and guilty wretches, blinded by the devil, and enſlaved to their luſts; theſe are the patentees in the heavenly grant. To theſe the great SURETY is given, together with all the benefits of his covenant.

Here then the grant and the gift are mentioned; the perſons for whom they are deſigned, are ſpecified, and expreſsly named. They are ſinners; *blinded* and *enſlaved* ſinners; or, if there be any other more obnoxious ſort, they are all comprehended in this one word, *Gentiles*.—Only allow theſe texts to be true; only allow the divine ſpeaker to be ſincere and faithful; then we may boldly affirm, that *any*, that *every* poor ſinner is authoriſed to ſay, "GOD gives me his SON, to be my covenant-ſurety. "I take him at his word. The SURETY and all his "merits are mine."——Divinely-rich bounty! O, let us not refuſe what, on this conſideration, the unerring SPIRIT calls *our own mercy* *. Let us adore the beneficence of our GOD; let us believe his promiſing word; and, in this ſweet, this eaſy manner, obtain both preſent and final ſalvation.

Ther. Let me recollect:—CHRIST is given for the world, the apoſtate world, to believe on:—CHRIST has died, not for the righteous, but for the ungodly:—CHRIST came in the fleſh to ſave ſinners, even the chief of ſinners.——Well, *Aſpaſio*, if theſe things are true, (and how can they be otherwiſe? ſince they are the expreſs doctrine of ſcripture) it is pity, but they were more generally known. For my part, I muſt confeſs, they are not only new, but ſtrange to me. Though I have read them in the Bible, yet when I come to conſider them, and compare them with what paſſes in my breaſt, I find they are quite contrary to my uſual ways of thinking.

Aſp. You remind me of a valuable perſon, whom I once numbered among my acquaintance, and whoſe way of thinking was ſomewhat ſimilar to your own.—Will you give me leave to relate his caſe?

Ther. Moſt gladly. It will be ſome kind of conſolation to hear, that others have laboured under the ſame difficulties with myſelf, and been ſubject to the ſame diſtreſſes. If I am informed of their *deliverance* from thoſe diſtreſſes, it will be like ſhewing me an opened door, for effecting my own eſcape. If I am likewiſe acquainted with the *manner* of their deliverance, this will furniſh me with a clue to guide my ſteps.

Aſp. This perſon was rouſed from a habit of indolence and ſupineneſs, into a ſerious concern for his eternal welfare. Convinced of his depraved nature and aggravated guilt, he had recourſe to the ſcriptures, and to frequent prayer. He attended the ordinances of Chriſtianity, and ſought earneſtly for an *aſſured intereſt* in CHRIST; but found no ſtedfaſt faith, and taſted very little comfort. At length, he applied to an eminent divine, and laid open the ſtate of his heart. Short, but weighty, was the anſwer he received. "I perceive, Sir, the cauſe of all your "diſtreſs. You do not, you will not, come to CHRIST "*as a ſinner*. This miſtake ſtands between your ſoul and "the joy of religion. This detains you in the gall of bit"terneſs; and take heed, O! take heed, leſt it confign "you over to the bond of iniquity!" This admonition never departed from the gentleman's mind; and it became a happy means of removing the obſtructions to his peace.

Remember this little hiſtory, *Theron*; and may it prove as efficacious for your good, as it is pertinent to your circumſtances! Remember, that the free grant of CHRIST, made in the word of truth, and addreſſed to ſinners of mankind, is the only baſis and ground-work of faith. An apoſtle, after all the labours of his exemplary life, can have no better. And a *Magdalene* or a *Manaſſeh*, as a motive and encouragement for their turning to the LORD, have the very ſame.

But we digreſs from the principal ſubject. Since you diſapprove *my* account of faith, I muſt deſire you to favour me with a deſcription, more correct and unexceptionable. For, as you juſtly obſerved, this is a *very momentous* article.——Is not CHRIST the ſource of all ſpiritual good, and faith the main channel of conveyance? Surely then it ſhould be made and kept as clear as poſſible.——Is not CHRIST the foundation of all true godlineſs, and faith the maſter-arch in this ſacred ſtructure? Surely then it ſhould be raiſed and turned with the utmoſt care.

Ther. Palæmon's account is this—*Faith*, he ſays, is a firm perſuaſion, that JESUS CHRIST has ſhed his blood, and fulfilled all righteouſneſs; has ſuſtained

* John vi. 32.

† John vi. 26, 41.

‡ Iſ. ix. 2, 6.

‖ Iſ. xlii. 6, 7.

* Jonah. ii. 8.

the punishment due to sin; and obtained full reconciliation with *GOD*: that all this grace, and each of these benefits, are free; perfectly free; for you, for me, for others. In consequence of this persuasion, the sinner flies to *CHRIST*, comes to *CHRIST*, and trusts in *CHRIST* for his own salvation.

Asp. I have the highest regard for *Palæmon*'s judgment; and I cannot but think, my opinion is confirmed even by his.——The act of *flying* to *CHRIST*, is an appropriating act. It implies an intention to get out of danger; it implies a discovery of *CHRIST* as the appointed safety; and consists in making use of him as such. How can this be done, but by a persuasion that he is *mine*? that his sufferings were in *my* stead, and that his death is *my* safeguard?—What is meant by *coming* to *CHRIST*, we may learn from *Jeremiah*. *Behold! we come unto thee, for thou art the LORD our GOD* *. Coming, you see, includes a real persuasion, that the *LORD is our* GOD. While we are wholly destitute of this persuasion, we stand at a distance, and our souls are afar off. We are never brought nigh; we never come in the prophet's sense; till we are taught to say, each one for himself, *Thou art the LORD my GOD*.——The act of *trusting* in *CHRIST* is much of the same nature. It presupposes, that CHRIST is the trustee of the covenant of grace; it proceeds upon a conviction of his faithfulness in executing the office; and it is a solemn surrender or giving up the whole affair of our salvation into his hand; giving it up, not in uncertainty of success, (this would be mistrusting, rather than trusting), but with a certainty, in some measure suitable to the fidelity and ability of HIM, with whom we have to do.

If you still are doubtful, whether any such persuasion is implied in *trusting*, let us chuse a referee. Let us carry our controversy to the king of *Israel*. Inquire of *David*, why he trusts in the LORD, and what he means by trusting? To both these inquiries he answers distinctly and fully. "*The LORD is my high tower, my* "*shield, and he in whom I trust* †. He *is*—he is *my* shield; "—of this I am persuaded, and *therefore* I trust in him: "or this I believe, and, in *so doing*, I trust on him."

Ther. There is an air of *assurance* in your representation of faith; which sounds harsh in my ear, and appears presumptuous in my eye. It is as if people pretended to know their seat in heaven, before the judgment-day.

Asp. The *Papists*, I own, take great offence at this expression, and utterly explode this doctrine. But they are no infallible guides for us to follow; neither are they very inviting patterns for us to imitate. You and I, *Theron*, cannot be offended at the expression or the doctrine, if we recollect what we have been taught in the first stage of life, and what is professed in the last scene of mortality. We are taught, even from our infancy, that the sacrament of the *LORD*'s supper, is not only a sign of spiritual grace, but a pledge to *assure* us thereof. At the interment of the dead, we profess our *sure* and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life. That this is always applied, with due propriety, in our burial-service, I will not venture to assert; that it sufficiently countenances my sentiments, none will undertake to deny. And if this countenances, the apostle authorises them, when he addresses us with this very remarkable exhortation; *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of JESUS, let us draw near with a true heart in* full assurance *of faith;* with a firm persuasion of acceptance; with a certain expectation of success.

However, if you dislike the word assurance, we will change it for the more softened, and more modestly-sounding term, *appropriation*.

* Jer. iii. 22. † Psal. cxliv. 2.

Ther. You change it for a more softened, not for a more intelligible term. I must desire to know, what you mean by the word *appropriation*.

Asp. To appropriate, in the theological sense, is to take home the grace of *GOD*, which lies in the common indefinite grant of the gospel. Is *CHRIST* the treasure hid in the field? To appropriate this treasure, is to receive and use it as our own portion. Is *CHRIST* the balm of *Gilead*, full of saving health? To appropriate this balm, is to take and apply it for the recovery of our own souls. And without such an appropriation, how can we either be enriched by the former, or healed by the latter?

Let me farther explain my meaning, and exemplify the position, by considering CHRIST in his several offices.——CHRIST, as a Priest, is made to guilty creatures righteousness. When we appropriate the grace of our great HIGH PRIEST, this is the language of our hearts, *In the LORD have I righteousness* *.——CHRIST, as a Prophet, is made to ignorant creatures wisdom. When we appropriate the benefits of our unerring PROPHET, this is the persuasion of our souls, *Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light unto me* †.——*CHRIST*, as a King, is made unto depraved creatures sanctification. When we appropriate the munificence of our almighty KING, this is our comfortable trust, *The LORD will deliver me from every evil work* ‡.

This is what I mean by appropriation.—That something of this kind is included in the essence of faith, is the sentiment I would maintain.——Which sentiment might be confirmed, if such confirmation were demanded, by a multitude of the most illustrious witnesses; witnesses so illustrious, that they were a blessing to the world, and an honour to human nature; so numerous, that, without giving an abstract of their testimonies, it might seem tedious only to recite their names ||.

Ther. I will dispense with your recital of their names, only let me have a specimen of their testimonies.

Asp. First, then, let me present you with Dr *Owen*; than whom *England* has produced few writers, either more judicious or more devout. "Faith," he tells us in his *catechism*, "is a gracious resting upon "the free promises of GOD in *JESUS CHRIST* "for mercy, with a *firm persuasion* of heart, that "GOD *is* a reconciled Father to *us* in the SON of "his love."——Next let me introduce the learned and

* Is. xlv. 24. † Mic. vii. 8.

‡ 2 Tim. iv. 18.

|| If the reader should inquire after their names, he will find *some* of them enumerated in the following catalogue. *Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Beza, Bullinger, Bucer, Knox, Craig, Melvil, Bruce, Davidson, Forbes*, &c.—*Ursinus, Zanchius, Junius, Piscator, Rollock, Daneus, Wendelinus, Chamierus, Sharpius, Bodius, Pareus, Altingius, Triglandii (Gisbertus & Jacobus), Arnoldus, Maresius*; the four professors at *Leyden, Wallæus, Rivetus, Pollyander, Thysius; Wollebius, Heideggerus, Essenius, Turretinus*, &c. —Many eminent *British* divines. Bishop *Babington, Davenant, Hall*; Mr *Perkins, Pemble, Willet, Gouge, Rogers, Burgess, Owen, Marshall*, &c.

If we were apparently and demonstrably in an error, yet, to err with such company, and in the footsteps of such guides, must very much tend to mitigate the severity of censure. But, I believe, few serious persons will venture to charge error and delusion upon such a venerable body of Protestant divines; so eminent for their learning, and so exemplary for their holiness; whose labours were so remarkably owned by GOD, and whose sentiments, on this particular subject, have been adopted by so many reformed churches.—The declarations of the *English* and *Palatine* churches are produced in the dialogue. I have in my hand an extract from the confessions and standard doctrines of the church—of *Scotland*, —of *Ireland*—of *France*—of *Helvetia*. With all which *Aspasio* has the happiness to agree. Only some of them are much stronger in displaying and maintaining the special *fiducia*, or the appropriating persuasion of faith. To quote them, would dignify and strengthen the cause. But, to avoid prolixity, I forego this advantage.

juſtly-celebrated *Altingius*, profeſſor of divinity at *Heidelberg*. "Faith," he ſays, "is a knowledge of the "grace of God in *CHRIST*, together with a fiduciary "reliance on it, or an *application* of it to a man's *own* "*ſelf*."—To theſe let me add the unanimous ſuffrage of the churches of the *Palatinate*. It is aſked, in the twenty-firſt queſtion of their public catechiſm, "What "is the true faith?" To which this anſwer is returned. "It is not only an aſſent to all the truths which "GOD has revealed in his word; but it is an *aſſured* "truſt, wrought by the HOLY SPIRIT in my "heart, that remiſſion of ſins, complete righteouſneſs, "and eternal life are given; freely given, not to others "only, but to *myſelf*; and all this, from the mere mercy "of GOD, through the alone merits of *CHRIST*."

Theſe teſtimonies are but as the tythe to the whole crop. Yet theſe are more than enough to exempt me from the charge of ſingularity. You will not wonder therefore, if I ſtill abide by the good old *Proteſtant* doctrine, which is eſpouſed by ſo many of the ableſt judges; which was the darling tenet of almoſt all our reformers; which has been ſo ſignally inſtrumental in demoliſhing the ſuperſtitions of Popery; and is ſo evidently conducive to the holineſs and the happineſs of Chriſtians.—Eſpecially, as I apprehended, the determinations of ſcripture, and the experience of ſcriptural ſaints, are all on my ſide.

Ther. You have now brought the cauſe to the proper bar. When a queſtion ſo important is debated, and an intereſt ſo momentous is concerned, I cannot acquieſce in any authority leſs than divine. I cannot, and indeed, I think, we ought not. Nothing ſhould ſatisfy us on ſuch an occaſion, but the word, which is unerring and deciſive; the word by which we are to ſtand or fall eternally. Whence does it appear, that the determinations of this divine word are on your ſide?

Aſp. From the nobleſt deſcription of faith, which language itſelf can form. The writer to the *Hebrews*, having mentioned the life of faith, the perſeverance of faith, and the end or reward of faith, proceeds to a definition of this leading grace. *Now faith is the ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen.**—*The evidence*, exhibiting not a faint ſurmiſe, but a clear demonſtration, both of inviſible bleſſings, and of our right to enjoy them.—*The ſubſtance*, realizing what is promiſed; and giving us, as it were, a poſſeſſion of good things that are remote, a preſent poſſeſſion of good things that are future.

Ther. What are thoſe bleſſings, and theſe good things?

Aſp. I will inform my *Theron;* and in ſuch a manner, from ſuch paſſages, as ſhall farther aſcertain my repreſentation of faith.—What ſays the apoſtle of the Gentiles? *I preached unto you the goſpel.*†—And what is the ſubſtance of this evangelical diſpenſation? *CHRIST died for our ſins.*‡—That ſo exalted a perſon as the SON of GOD, and LORD of glory, ſhould *die*, is wonderful!—That he ſhould die for *ſins*, the moſt abominable objects, and for ſinners, the moſt deteſtable creatures, is abundantly more wonderful!—That he ſhould die, not for ſins in general, but for *our* ſins in particular, this is inexpreſſibly wonderful, and at the ſame time inexpreſſibly comfortable.—Here we have the goſpel and its capital bleſſing, expreſſed in this propoſition, *CHRIST died for ſins.* Here we have faith and its principal acting, expreſſed in this propoſition, *CHRIST died for our ſins.* Till the former is preached, the doctrine is not goſpel; till the latter is believed, it ſhould ſeem from St *Paul's* account, the conviction is not faith.

Let me produce another inſtance, extracted, like the preceding, from the rolls of heaven. *This is the record, that GOD hath given to us eternal life;* § not propoſed it, on I know not what conditions, but *hath given;* freely and fully, without any reſerve, and with a liberality ſuited to his inconceivable goodneſs, hath given the richeſt of all prizes; and not to ſome only, or to others, but to *us*, even to *us*.

Ther. Us, that is, the apoſtles and exalted ſaints.

Aſp. Was eternal life given them becauſe they were apoſtles? No, No, verily; but becauſe *CHRIST* died for them.—Did *CHRIST* die for them, becauſe they were exalted ſaints? In no wiſe; but becauſe they were miſerable ſinners.—Eternal life was purchaſed for them, when they were ſinners. It was conſigned over to them, when they were ſinners. And neither the purchaſe, nor the gift, were founded on their *being* ſaints, but aimed at *making* them ſo.

That *CHRIST died for our ſins*;—that *GOD hath given to us eternal life:* theſe are the bleſſings of which faith is the evidence; theſe the good things, of which faith is the ſubſtance. This is the honey in the evangelical hive; and I am at a loſs to conceive, how we can taſte the honey, without ſome appropriation of the good things to ourſelves.—This, if I miſtake not, is comprehended in all thoſe figurative deſcriptions of faith, which occur in holy writ.

Ther. Favour me with ſome of thoſe deſcriptions, I begin to ſee a peculiar beauty, and an unequalled richneſs, in the figures of ſcripture. Nothing yields me a more refined pleaſure, than to inveſtigate and diſcover the exact ſenſe of thoſe inſtructive images. It is ſomewhat like kindling the conſecrated incenſe; which, when riſing in a flame, diffuſed light; when ſpreading in clouds of fragrance, diſtributed refreſhment.

Aſp. Faith is ſtyled, *a looking unto JESUS.* But if we do not look unto *JESUS*, as the propitiation for our ſins, what comfort or what benefit can we derive from the ſight?——*A receiving of CHRIST.* But can I have any pretence to receive him, or take poſſeſſion of his merits, unleſs I am convinced, that they are intended for me? This is what neither the dictates of conſcience will allow, nor the laws of reaſon authoriſe. —*A reſting upon CHRIST.*† But how can we reſt on a ſurety, if he has not interpoſed on our behalf? or how confide in a payment, which we believe to be made for others, not for ourſelves?—Surely, *Theron*, when I reſt upon an object, I uſe it as *my* ſupport. When I receive a gift, I take it as *my own* property. And when the *Iſraelites* looked unto the brazen ſerpent, they certainly regarded it as a remedy, each particular perſon for *himſelf*.

Ther. To caſt ourſelves upon CHRIST, as an all-ſufficient SAVIOUR; and rely on him, for our whole ſalvation; is not this real faith? This is what I heard, ſome time ago, from a celebrated pulpit.

Aſp. If you rely on the all-ſufficiency of his *will*, as well as of his power; if you take the comfort and appropriate the benefit reſulting from both; you practiſe the very thing I recommend. This is what was taught from the pulpit of infallibility; and by thoſe firſt of preachers, who ſpake as the HOLY GHOST gave them utterance. Let the convinced ſinner, and the afflicted ſoul, *truſt in the name of the* LORD, *and ſtay upon his* GOD. Let him not only reverence CHRIST, as the incarnate GOD, and therefore mighty to ſave; but look upon CHRIST as *his* GOD, and therefore willing to ſave. Thus let him

* Heb. xi. 1. † 1 Cor. xv. 1. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 3. § 1 John v. 9.

† I find two words in the original, which expreſs the privilege and the duty of *reſting on CHRIST.* דום which implies ſuch a ſtate of acquieſcence, as *ſilences* the clamours of conſcience, and compoſes the perturbation of the ſpirit. מנוחה which ſignifies the refreſhment and *repoſe* of a weary pilgrim, when he arrives at the end of his journey, and is ſettled for life in a ſecure, commodious, plentiful habitation. *Pſal.* xxxvii. 7. *Iſ.* xxviii. 12.

lean

lean upon the ROCK * of ages, without indulging a doubt, concerning his right to make uſe of it, or the poſſibility of its failing him.

To *caſt ourſelves* upon *CHRIST*; *to caſt our burden*, or *to caſt all our care* † *upon the LORD*; are metaphors, which may receive ſome elucidation from an incident recorded in the *Acts*. When the mariners and paſſengers, which ſailed with St *Paul*, ſaw their veſſel ſhattered; ſaw the waves prevailing; ſaw no hope of ſafety from continuing in the ſhip; they caſt themſelves ‡ upon the floating planks. They caſt themſelves upon the planks without any ſcruple, not queſtioning their right to make uſe of them; and they clave to thoſe ſupporters with a chearful confidence, not doubting but, according to the apoſtle's promiſe, they ſhould eſcape ſafe to land.---Be this what people mean, when they ſpeak of *venturing* or *caſting* themſelves upon *CHRIST*, and I approve the expreſſion, I ſubſcribe the doctrine. It ſpeaks what I wiſh for my friend, for myſelf, and for my fellow-ſinners.

Let us ſhift our ſituation, and view the point in another light. Conſider the bleſſed and glorious object of our faith.---CHRIST is repreſented by the ſimilitude of bread, heavenly bread for the hungry ſoul. Faith is characterized by *eating* the food. And can this be done without a perſonal application?---CHRIST is held forth under the image of living waters, ever running, and always free for the thirſty appetite. But let them run ever ſo copiouſly, let them be preſented ever ſo freely, all this will neither quench the thirſt, nor refreſh the ſpirits, unleſs they are *drank*. To do this is the buſineſs of faith.---CHRIST is deſcribed as a garment, to accommodate deſtitute, and beautify deformed creatures. Faith is expreſſed by *putting on* this commodious garment, and wearing this beautiful robe. And can any idea, or any expreſſion, more ſtrongly denote an actual appropriation?

Ther. It is evident, that many holy people, in former ages, were not poſſeſſed of aſſurance.---What is the language of *David*? It is all deſpondency. *I am caſt out of the ſight of thine eyes.*---To the ſame melancholy tune is the harp of *Aſaph* ſtrung: *Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promiſe fail for evermore?*---The ſame jealous and diſtruſtful air breathes in the complaint of the church. *The LORD hath forſaken me, and my LORD hath forgotten me.*---Why then ſhould my *Aſpaſio* ſet up a rule ſtricter and higher than thoſe eminent ſaints attained?

Aſp. You ſhould rather aſk, Why have the beſt judges, and the moſt exemplary Chriſtians, in their ſeveral writings, ſet up this rule? Why have the apoſtles of our LORD, and the SPIRIT of our GOD, ſpeaking in the Bible, ſet up this rule?---To which I might reply, Becauſe it is, of all precepts, the moſt beneficial. Therefore they have not ſo much ſet it up under the notion of a ſtrict rule, as they have ſet it forth under the character of a choice bleſſing.

Your complaint, when put into its proper language, ſeems to run thus; "Why muſt we be obliged to truſt "in *CHRIST alone*? Why muſt we be obliged to *aſſure* "ourſelves of ſalvation by HIM?"---Whereas, inſtead of a complaint, it ſhould be matter of exultation, and we ſhould rather expreſs ourſelves in this manner: "Bleſs the LORD, O my ſoul, that a ſinner, ſuch a "vile ſinner, ſhould be allowed to take *CHRIST* and "all his ſalvation as my own; and thus to aſſure myſelf "of pardon, holineſs, and glory."

This bleſſing was certainly enjoyed by the holy men of old; but, like every other ſpecies of felicity in this world, it was enjoyed after an imperfect manner.---They had an aſſured perſuaſion of GOD's preſent favour, and of their own final happineſs. Nevertheleſs, this aſſured perſuaſion was liable to the aſſaults, both of outward temptations, and of inward corruptions: which might, for a while, impair its vigour, though not deſtroy its being. As under a tranſient ſwoon, the ſpirits fail, the colour departs, but the vital principle ſubſiſts.

You may farther obſerve, concerning thoſe pious perſons, that, when they ceaſe to exerciſe this confidence of faith, they lament the failure; *I ſaid, This is my infirmity* *.---They chide themſelves for it; *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul?*---They encourage themſelves againſt it; *Hope in GOD* †, it is thy unqueſtionable privilege.---How could they do this? on what grounds, or from what motive? if they had not a *ſecret* perſuaſion, that their ranſom was paid, and their GOD reconciled; conſequently, that all their doubts were an injury to his fidelity and to his goodneſs.

Nay, the church even under her darkeſt apprehenſions, ſtill ſpeaks the ſentiment, ſtill retains the grace, for which I am pleading. *My LORD*, uttered with her lips, argues an *applicatory* faith in her heart.---So copious and pregnant are the evidences of this precious doctrine! It is confirmed by that very paſſage, which was produced for its confutation.

Ther. If this be the ſentiment of the church in general, is it alſo the temper of her particular members? Was each of them animated by this firm and lively faith?

Aſp. Let theſe particular perſons appear, and anſwer for themſelves.---Hear the declaration of the pſalmiſt; *Bleſs the LORD, O my ſoul; and all that is within me, bleſs his holy name* ‡. What is the cauſe of this holy tranſport, and devout praiſe? Is it, becauſe GOD poſſiby *may*, becauſe HE probably *will*? No; but becauſe HE actually *does* forgive: *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities.*---Take notice of *Job*'s belief, and *Job*'s ſupport, amidſt his unexampled ſufferings. *I know that my REDEEMER liveth*; not only that there is a Redeemer, but that he is, together with all his ſaving benefits, *mine*: which, being a truth ſo ſweet and delightful, is expreſſed a ſecond time; *whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf* ‖, to my own advantage, and for my own comfort: ſee him exerting his almighty power and infinite mercy, to reſcue my body from the grave, and to deliver my ſoul from hell.---What was *Habakkuk*'s ſecurity, amidſt the threatening, the tremendous, the triumphant malice of his own, and his country's enemies? *The LORD GOD is my ſtrength.* He ſays not I *wiſh*, I *pray*, for the divine favour, and the divine ſuccour; but I am perſuaded, they both are mine; my ineſtimable portion, and my inviolable ſafeguard. *He will make my feet like hind's feet*, that I ſhall perfectly eſcape from all danger; *and he will make me walk upon mine high places*, beyond the reach of every evil §.

Ther. Is this the language of believers under the New-teſtament diſpenſation?

Aſp. Under every diſpenſation, *Theron*.---They who lived before the law, *were perſuaded* ¶ of the promiſes; had not the leaſt diſtruſt, with regard to the certainty of their performance; nay, they *embraced them* ⊥ as their own, they hugged them, as it were, to their very ſouls.---They who lived under the law could ſay, *As far as the eaſt is from the weſt, ſo far hath he removed our tranſgreſſions from us* +.---And can you imagine, in the days of the goſpel, when our advantages are greater and our light is clearer, that our faith ſhould be weaker, or our hope fainter? St *Peter* makes a profeſſion, which excludes all doubting; *I am a witneſs of the ſufferings of CHRIST, and alſo a partaker of the glory that ſhall be revealed* ++. St *Paul* anſwers in the ſame heroic ſtrain. *I know whom I have believed; and I am perſuaded, that neither life, nor death, nor any creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate me from the love of*

* יהוה Iſ. l. 10. † Επιῤῥιψαντες, 1 Pet. v. 7. ‡ Απορῤῥιψασθε, Acts xxvii. 43.

* Pſal. lxxvii. 10. † Pſal. xlii. 5. ‡ Pſal. ciii. 1. 3. ‖ Job xix. 25. 27. § Hab. iii. 19. ¶ Πεισθεντες, Heb. xi. 13. ⊥ Ασπασαμενοι + Pſal. ciii. 12. ++ 1 Pet. v. 1.

GOD,

GOD, *which is in* CHRIST JESUS *my* LORD *.——With both which, the confeſſion of faith recorded by St *Luke*, is exactly correſpondent; *We believe, that, through the grace of the* LORD JESUS CHRIST, *we ſhall be ſaved even as they* †.

Ther. Was not this a privilege peculiar to the apoſtle?

Aſp. By no means. All believers are brethren, and have *like precious faith.*——Hear how St *Peter* exhorts all his people; *Gird up the loins of your mind, and hope to the end*; or, as the word ſhould rather be tranſlated, hope perfectly, hope aſſuredly, *for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of* JESUS CHRIST ‡. Maintain, not a dim, but a bright hope; not a wavering, but a ſteady expectation of eternal life; that free, but grand gift, of which the LORD JESUS, at his ſecond coming, ſhall put you in full poſſeſſion.——The apoſtle, writing to his *Hebrew* converts, encourages them all to *hold faſt the confidence, and the rejoicing of hope, firm unto the end* ‖.—From whence it is deducible, that a truſt amounting to confidence, and the joy which naturally reſults from ſuch a truſt, were the common portion of Chriſtians; poſſeſſed, not barely by ſome few exalted ſaints, but by the followers of JESUS in general.——I might bring many more inſtances. But why ſhould I multiply proofs? Since the beloved diſciple declares, *Theſe things have I written unto you, that believe on the name of the SON of GOD, that ye may* know *that ye have eternal life.*

Ther. True, *Aſpaſio.* This coincides with my apprehenſions. The ſcriptures are written,—firſt, that we may *believe*, and be entitled to eternal life;—next, that we may have the *knowledge* of our belief, and a conſciouſneſs of our title. The apoſtle ſuppoſes his correſpondents to poſſeſs the former, yet not to have attained the latter.

Aſp. Is it certain, that he makes ſuch a ſuppoſition? He writes, I imagine, not with a view of leading them to either, but of *confirming* them in both.——He intimates, that the privilege and the comfort ſhould go together. If we believe, that CHRIST is our Surety; we ſhould be perſuaded, that he has paid our debt, and ſatisfied juſtice to the very uttermoſt farthing.——If we believe, that CHRIST is our bridegroom; we ſhould reſt aſſured, that his righteouſneſs, his inheritance, and his kingdom are ours. And why ſhould we take pains to ſeparate, what GOD's word and the very nature of things have united? Will this turn to our advantage? muſt it not iſſue in our loſs?—Beſides, according to your own interpretation, whoever falls ſhort of this chearing knowledge, falls ſhort of *one* great end for which the ſcriptures were written. He receives not his full reward. He only *gleans*, where he might *reap*; is toſſed on the ocean of uncertainty: whereas *they that have believed*, have gained the port, have dropped their anchor, and *enter into reſt* §.

Ther. Believed! What? that our ſins are laid upon CHRIST? that he was obedient in our ſtead? that all ſpiritual bleſſings are thereby procured for *our*—even for *our* enjoyment?

Aſp. The bleſſings you mention, are evidently the purport of the goſpel. And I know of no other juſtifying faith, but that which relates to the goſpel, and believes its report ¶. Nor can I think, that any other belief will adminiſter the tranquillity, or produce the reſt, ſpecified by the apoſtle.——But here, I find, lies the core and root of our controverſy. This is the preciſe point to be ſettled; What it is to *believe?* what is included in this very important word?—This queſtion might renew our diſpute, and cauſe the paſt arguments to recur.——Whereas, I would gladly get rid of diſputation. We have already been too long detained in theſe diſagreeable paths. However, ſince you have given the occaſion, I may juſt touch upon another text or two. For I would willingly drive this nail to the head; and not leave my friend unconvinced, on a ſubject of the utmoſt conſequence.

The LORD declares by his prophet, *I, even I am he, that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions.*——To believe, is to ſubſcribe this declaration; to ſubſcribe with our hand, and profeſs from our heart, "LORD, it is done, as thou haſt ſaid."—Faith is, if I may ſo ſpeak, the echo of the divine voice. It eagerly catches, and punctually reverberates the joyful ſound. Does GOD ſay, *Thou art my people?* Faith replies, *Thou art my* GOD *: not barely deſiring, but confidently averring, an intereſt in his favour. This explanation of faith is given us by a wiſdom which cannot be deceived, by a fidelity which cannot deceive.—Once more. Our LORD bears this teſtimony concerning *Thomas*; *Thomas, thou haſt believed.*——Now then, I think we have got an infallible touchſtone. Let us examine, what that is which JESUS CHRIST calls *believing*. Whatever it be, it is the determination of truth itſelf; and ſhould paſs for a verdict, from which there lies no appeal. And this, this is the confeſſion of *Thomas*, *My* LORD, *and my* GOD †.——This, this expreſſes what our divine MASTER calls *believing*.——When, therefore, we confeſs with our lips, and are perſuaded in our hearts, that JESUS *is our* LORD, who bought us with his blood; that JESUS *is our* GOD, who will exert all his adorable perfections for our good; then we truly believe. We believe, in our SAVIOUR's ſenſe of the word, we have that faith, which *he* allows to be genuine.

Ther. Is this the *conſtant* language of faith? According to this account, there is no difference between the infant and the adult; between the new-born babe, and the full-grown man in CHRIST. Your ſpiritual children, *Aſpaſio*, muſt be men from their birth; nay, born in all the vigour of manhood. Whereas, the apoſtle makes an evident difference between the *babes*, the *young men*, and the *fathers*; between faith, the aſſurance of faith, and the full aſſurance of faith. If we are told of a patriarch, who was *ſtrong in faith*; we read of ſome *Roman* converts, who were *weak in the faith*; and we hear our LORD ſpeaking to diſciples, who were *fearful and of little faith.*

Aſp. Between faith, and the *full* aſſurance of faith, the apoſtle makes a difference. The one is the moſt exalted pitch, where the other is but an inferior elevation. Yet both are rounds of the ſame ladder.——I don't remember, that the ſacred writer any where diſtinguiſhes between faith and aſſurance. Πιστις and Πεποιθησις, *faith* and *confidence*, are joined in the epiſtle to the *Epheſians*. It is the opinion of the beſt critics, that the ſenſe of the latter is included in the former. The critic's opinion is confirmed by the apoſtle's declaration, *We have acceſs with confidence through faith* ‡.——Could yonder ſun diffuſe warmth through the air, if it had no warmth in itſelf?—No more could faith produce confidence in the believer, if, in its own nature, it did not contain the ſame.

The caſe of *little faith*, I think, may be explained from our LORD's own expoſtulation; *O thou of little faith, wherefore didſt thou doubt?*——Here was a faith, not only in CHRIST's power, but alſo in his will. Nay, here was an appropriating faith, by which the apoſtle applied both to himſelf.——"I verily believe, "that my divine MASTER is *able* to preſerve me, "even though I venture to tread upon this tempe-"ſtuous ſea. I am perſuaded likewiſe, that he *will*

"uphold

* Rom. viii. 29. † Acts xv. 11.

‡ 1. *Pet.* i. 13. Εις τελος or μεχρι τελους, ſignify *to the end*. But τελειως, as far as I can recollect, is never uſed in this ſenſe, either by ſacred or profane writers. It may be rendered *perfectè, integrè*, in this connection, *cum firma fiducia*, with a firm affiance.

‖ Heb. iii. 6.

§ Heb. iv. 3. ¶ Iſ. liii. 1.

* Hoſ. ii. 23. † † John xx. 28, 29.

‡ Eph. iii. 12.

uphold me, and not ſuffer his ſervant to periſh in the hazardous enterpriſe." Nothing leſs than this could have produced that hazardous enterpriſe, or have emboldened him to walk upon the rolling billows.

Do you not diſcern, in this inſtance, ſome degree of perſonal application, ſome real aſſurance of faith! 'Tis true, this faith was violently aſſaulted by doubts, and greatly enfeebled by fears *. Yet ſtill it was of the applicatory kind. *He can, he will*, were expreſſive of its nature; though the boiſterous winds, and the terrifying appearance of things, almoſt drowned its voice, or ſtifled the words in their utterance.

Ther. If you allow no difference between faith and confidence, I am very ſure, St *John* puts a difference between *babes, young men, and fathers.*

Aſp. He does, *Theron.* And ſo would I. Neither can I think of any thing more proper to explain my meaning, or eſtabliſh my tenet, than your own compariſon.—In ſome fruitful family, you may ſee one child in leading-ſtrings; another able to walk by itſelf; a third come home, improved and cultivated, from the ſchool of literature. Obſerve their ſpeech. One liſps out a few broken ſentences; another talks intelligibly, but very incorrectly; the laſt has learned to expreſs himſelf with tolerable propriety. Yet each ſpeaks the *ſame* language, notwithſtanding the various degrees of fluency in their utterance, or purity in their diction.—So faith always ſpeaks one and the ſame uniform language. Whether ſhe liſps or ſtammers; whether ſhe whiſpers in faint accents, or raiſes her voice in a more manly tone: this is ſtill the unvaried import of her ſpeech; *GOD, even our own GOD, will give us his bleſſing.*—Can you forget, how St *John* addreſſes even his little children? *I write unto you, little children, becauſe your ſins* ARE FORGIVEN †.

Ther. Will not this account diſcourage ſome, and offend others, who are not arrived at ſuch an exalted pitch?

Aſp. I would not offend the meaneſt, nor diſcourage the weakeſt of my *REDEEMER*'s ſervants.——As for *offence*, that cannot be given, and ought not to be taken, when all we advance is ſtrictly conformable to the unerring oracles. Whereas, to qualify and attenuate the ſcriptural deſcriptions of faith, in complaiſance to our own experience;—to make the unhappy fluctuations and unworthy ſuſpicions, which poſſeſs the breaſts of ſome particular Chriſtians,—to make them the rule of explaining, or the meaſure of enforcing ſo capital a duty; this, ſure, would be an offence to *GOD*, an injury to his word, and detrimental to the welfare of ſouls.

With regard to *diſcouragement*, I cannot conceive, how this ſhould enſue, from informing the poor ſinner, that he has a right to apply *CHRIST*, and all *CHRIST*'s merits to himſelf; or from exhorting the poor ſinner to do this, without any heſitation, and with a reſolute dependance. In this caſe, to *doubt* is to be diſcouraged; as much as you want certainty, ſo much you want conſolation. The proper way to comfort theſe diſtreſſed people, is, not to allow but to diſſipate their doubts; to blow away thoſe dead aſhes, that the ſmothered embers may ſhine and glow.

Were we to inquire after the cauſe of that diſquietude and deſpondency which are ſo common among *modern* profeſſors, I am inclined to ſuſpect, we ſhould find it lying hid in their wrong apprehenſions both of *CHRIST*, and of faith.—They look upon *CHRIST*, as a rigorous and forbidding monarch, who inſiſts upon ſome hard terms and high qualifications. Whereas, his heart and his arms are ever open: his heart as open, as infinite love can ſet it; his arms as open, as infinite merit can make them.—They look upon faith, as containing a poſſibility only, or at moſt a probability of ſalvation through his name. It is with them a kind of *peradventure;* a ſituation of mind, fluctuating and pendulous. "Perhaps I may ſucceed, and be eternally "bleſſed. Perhaps I may be rejected, and eternally "ruined." Such a ſtate of ſuſpenſe, in an affair of everlaſting conſequence, cannot but create uneaſineſs and anxiety.

This uneaſineſs and anxiety ſeem to have been little known in the earlier and better days of the church. And why? Becauſe Chriſtians were then expoſed to the rage of perſecution? Becauſe they were placed nearer the time of *CHRIST*'s ſojourning on earth? I rather think, becauſe they were taught this particular and comfortable application of *CHRIST* and his righteouſneſs. They exerciſed a confident affiance on *JESUS* as *their own REDEEMER;* and were ſhewn a more direct way to obtain this aſſurance, than merely to ſearch after their own renewed qualities.

Ther. Surely, *Aſpaſio*, in this particular you differ, not from me only, but from the generality of the *orthodox.*

Aſp. I am ſorry to find myſelf under a neceſſity of differing from any worthy perſons, much more of diſagreeing with the generality. This I can ſafely aver, that it is not from an affectation of novelty, or any fondneſs for diſputing, but from a diſintereſted regard to the truth of the goſpel. I ſhould be glad to have the concurrence of all the ſerious, and all the pious. But I dare not purchaſe their approbation, I dare not attempt a coalition of ſentiments, by diminiſhing the boundleſs riches of grace, or reſtricting the abſolute freeneſs of ſalvation by *CHRIST.*

You are pleaſed to remind me of the *orthodox.* Pray, my dear friend, what is the ſtandard of orthodoxy?—Is it the word of revelation? This ſpeaks once, yea twice, nay ſome hundreds of times in your favour.——Is it the doctrine of our reformers from Popery? With theſe we jar not, but exactly harmonize.——Is it to be taken from the old confeſſions of faith, and the catechiſms of Proteſtant churches? To theſe we appeal, and have the ſanction of their authority. Has the *modern* way of treating and ſtating this momentous ſubject ſo much to alledge for its ſupport?

Let me farther aſk,—Are we better than our fathers? Is Chriſtianity in a thriving condition, or practical religion on the advancing hand? The reverſe, the melancholy reverſe is undeniably true.——When our writers enforced, and our preachers urged, what I am defending, profeſſors were alive, and animated with the power of godlineſs. Whereas now we ſeem to be degenerated into the mere form; we *have a name to live, but are* languid, liſtleſs, and if not *dead* *, yet ready to die.——It behoves us therefore to conſider, whether the declenſion, the decays, the unfruitfulneſs, ſo juſtly lamented in the preſent age, be not owing to the abſence of this appropriating belief, or this aſſured perſuaſion.

A ſweet aſſurance of pardon, a comfortable perſuaſion of our reconciliation with GOD, an eſtabliſhed hope of eternal glory through *JESUS CHRIST;* theſe will be operative in the ſoul, as "a torch in the "ſheaf." Theſe will enkindle love, and increaſe watchfulneſs; theſe will beget the true humility of mind, and work an unfeigned abhorrence of ſin; theſe will enlarge the heart with charity, and exalt the affections above the world. Theſe are the proper, and the only effectual means of *making the man of GOD*

* I muſt beg of the candid reader, to take particular notice of this limitation: and muſt entreat the impartial examiner, not to forget this conceſſion. We no where ſuppoſe, that a freedom from all fears, or a ſuperiority to all doubts, are included in the nature of faith. We only affirm, that an appropriating perſuaſion or aſſurance are neceſſary to the being of faith. This aſſurance may be encumbered with doubts, and may conflict with fears. But ſtill it is *aſſurance,—real* aſſurance,—and proves itſelf to be ſuch, by oppoſing and ſtruggling with the contrary principle.

* 1 John ii. 12.

* Rev. iii. 1.

perfect, that is, *thoroughly furnished to every good work* *.

But the doubting frame is not fitted to yield any of these fruits. Nay, I am apprehensive, there are several graces, which can hardly be exercised, several duties, which can scarcely be performed, so long as this spirit of diffidence prevails.

Ther. Name them, *Aspasio.*

Asp. I am afraid, lest I should seem to arrogate the office of a teacher; which neither becomes my condition, nor is agreeable to my temper.

Ther. I beseech you, my dear friend, let us wave ceremony, and have nothing to do with compliments. My soul is in jeopardy. My present comfort, and my everlasting happiness are at stake. And shall we suffer any little punctilios to overbear such weighty considerations?

Suppose you are a teacher; I have great need, and am very desirous, to become your scholar. For I freely confess, that, knowing as I may seem in other instances, I am very ignorant in the great peculiarities of the gospel. Nay, though I have read the scriptures in a *critical* view, I have been an utter stranger to their spiritual meaning. Here I am uninstructed as a babe. Here, therefore, I ought to be teachable as a babe. Yes, in this respect I would become as a *little child*, that I may enter into the knowledge, and possess the privileges of the kingdom of heaven.

Asp. Your answer, *Theron*, shall be a law.——*Love to* GOD, is the first commandment; and, without all peradventure, is the principal grace. But is it easy, is it possible to love GOD, before we have any persuasion of his love to us? This is what the apostles did not, could not do. And, if it exceeded their ability, it will doubtless be above the reach of our capacity. The thing may be attempted; the practice may be urged; we may see the necessity of it, and desire to perform it: but we shall never, never be able to exercise it, till we have some comfortable apprehension of GOD's reconciliation and good-will to us. *We love HIM.*——Wherefore? from what inducement? *Because he first loved us* †; and because this love hath been made evident to our consciences, by the light of faith.

What think you of *delight in GOD?* This also is a Christian grace. But *how can two walk together except they be agreed?* We never covet an intimacy with the person, who declares himself our enemy. Nay, if there be only a suspicion, that he bears us a secret ill-will, we shall be jealous of trusting him, and averse to approach him. This was the case of our first parents, immediately after the fall. Instead of drawing near to their CREATOR, with pleasure and gratitude; they fled from him, with anxiety and terror. And why? Because they were under the alarming apprehensions of his displeasure.——Whereas, let us once believe, what the apostle affirms, *When we were enemies, we were reconciled to GOD by the death of his SON* *. Let us cordially credit, what the prophet repeatedly declares, *Therefore will the LORD wait that he may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you* †. Then we shall seek his face with alacrity. Our affections will be on the wing to salute the almighty BENEFACTOR. We shall *joy in GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

Ther. To the enjoyment of so many spiritual consolations, and the exercise of several delightful graces, I acknowledge, an assured faith is necessary; but—

Asp. Ay, *Theron*, you may well hesitate. It will be difficult to fill up the chasm in your discourse. For my part, I know not any duty of holiness, which can be performed aright, without some degree of this confiding faith.——We are to *walk worthy of HIM, who hath called us to his kingdom and glory* ‡: but if we doubt, whether we in particular are called, how can this influence our conversation?——We are to be *followers of GOD, as his dear children* ‖. But if we do not, cannot, will not believe, so as to cry "Abba, *FATHER*," how can such a consideration sway our hearts?——Nay, upon what principles can such a person address himself to discharge any office of the *Christian* life? We are to *abound in the works of the* LORD, from the animating prospect of a glorious resurrection §. This he cannot do; because he apprehends himself to have no lot or portion in the blessed hope.——We are to open our hands in charity to others, from a view of that heavenly kingdom, which was prepared for us from the foundation of the world ¶: we are to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, on account of those precious promises, which are freely given to us in CHRIST JESUS ‡: but where unbelieving doubts predominate, these endearing and invigorating motives are lost. The man has no interest in the encouraging promises, has no title to the blissful inheritance; consequently, these sinews of evangelical obedience, with respect to him, are benumbed, withered, dead.

Ther. Such a man may make prayers and supplications. Though he cannot rejoice in the privileges, he may request them at the throne of grace.

Asp. Prayer is a great duty, and as great a privilege. I wish my dear *Theron* the spirit of grace and supplication. This will be better, incomparably better and more advantageous, than a key to hidden treasures. But how can you pray with humble boldness, or with lively hope, unless you believe? believe, that CHRIST

* For the display and confirmation of these points, I do, with great pleasure, and without any diffidence, refer to Mr MARSHALL's *Gospel-Mystery of Sanctification.* Which I shall not recommend in the style of a critic, or like a reader of taste, but with all the simplicity of the weakest Christian; I mean, from my own experience. It has been made one of the most useful books to my own soul. I scarce ever fail to receive spiritual consolation and strength from the perusal of it. And was I to be banished into some desolate island, possessed only of *two* books besides my BIBLE, this should be *one* of the two, and perhaps the first that I would chuse.

Should any person, hitherto a stranger to the work, purchase it on this recommendation, I must desire to suggest one caution:—That he be not surprised, if, in the beginning, he meets with something new, and quite out of the common road: or, if surprised, that he would not be offended, but calmly and attentively proceed. He will find the author's design opening itself by degrees. He will discern more and more the propriety of his method: and what might, at the first view, appear like a stumbling block, will prove to be a fair, compendious, and ample avenue—to the palace of *truth*,—to the temple of *holiness*,—and to the bowers of *happiness*.—*Our author's particular recommendation of this invaluable book, in a preface to an edition printed of it in London, will be inserted afterwards in this work.*

† 1 John iv. 10.

* Rom. v. 10.

† *Is.* xxx. 18. That admirable commentator VITRINGA, who generally draws his bow with a steady hand, and shoots his arrow with the exactest aim, here seems to miss the mark. He appears to have thought, that *waiting to be gracious*, implies a *delay* in the exercise of the attribute, and is the same as to *abstain from being* gracious. Had this been the meaning, the language would probably have been, not יחנכם but מחנכם—*To wait to be gracious* signifies, to stand over a people with the continued tenders of grace and mercy, even while they refuse to accept them. This was the case with GOD and *Israel*. GOD promised to defend the *Israelites*; they obstinately refused to confide in his protection. GOD dissuaded them from trusting in the succour of *Egypt*; they presumptuously resolved to rely on that broken reed. *Therefore*, says GOD, *I will*—withdraw my slighted mercy? deny my despised assistance? This would be the manner of human procedure. But the LORD's ways are not as man's ways. His long-suffering triumphs over our perverseness. Therefore he says, "I will not turn away from "them, in displeasure; I will even wait for them, and wait upon "them, till they see their error, and accept my favour."—Amazing condescension and goodness! I was going to say. But *divine* condescension and goodness are, if I may so speak, infinitely more than amazing.

‡ 1 Thess. ii. 12. ‖ Eph. v. 1. § 1 Cor. xv. 58.

¶ Matth. xxv. 34 ‡ 2 Cor. vii. 1.

is your High Prieſt; is *your* Interceſſor with the FATHER; and, with the incenſe of his infinite merit, preſents *your* petitions? Then, and then only, can you have, what the apoſtle calls, *boldneſs and acceſs with confidence* *. Take notice of theſe vigorous expreſſions; and at your leiſure conſider, whether they countenance the ſuſpicious and miſgiving temper.——At preſent obſerve, how yonder lark warbles and mounts in the firmament; as if ſhe was bidding adieu to the earth, and going to mingle with the ſkies. An image *this* of believing prayer! Should a fowler ſhoot the ſoaring ſongſter through the wing, how would ſhe fall from her elevation, and flutter on the ground! An emblem *that* of diſtruſting prayer.

I know not how to leave this ſubject, without attending to the teſtimony of St *James*; than which nothing can be more awful, or more deciſive. It ſhould really alarm the doubting diſpoſition, as much as any ſolicitation to the moſt horrid ſin. It ſhould alarm the whole religious world, as much as the beacons, ſuddenly kindled, and all on a flame, would alarm the inhabitants of the maritime coaſts. *Let him pray in faith, nothing doubting* †; *for he that doubteth is like a wave of the ſea, driven by the wind, and toſſed.* Nay, the apoſtle adds,—and it is an addition greatly to be regarded. It ſhould abide with weight on our conſciences; for it comes from a caſuiſt, who could neither be too indulgent, through an exceſs of compaſſion; nor too rigorious, through an extravagance of zeal.——*Let not that man*, the doubting ſupplicant, *think, that he ſhall receive any thing of the* LORD.

Never then, my worthy friend, never more be an advocate for doubtings. Purſue them with fire and ſword. Give them no quarter. Deal with them as *Saul* was commanded to treat the *Amalekites*.

Ther. If we are grieved at the remembrance of *paſt* ſin, and feel an averſion to *all* ſin; if the prevailing bias of our affections be to the divine REDEEMER, and the habitual breathing of our ſouls after a conformity to his image; may we not ſuppoſe ourſelves poſſeſſed of the truth and reality, though we have not the confidence and rejoicing of faith? I ſay *we*; becauſe I apprehend, this is not my peculiar caſe, but common to myſelf, and many other Chriſtians of the weaker ſort. I aſk, therefore, in their name and in my own, May we not humbly ſuppoſe our condition ſafe, though we do not preſume to uſe the language of the ſpouſe, *My* BELOVED *is mine, and I am his?*

Aſp. So you are ſtill inclined to ſpare *Agag*; becauſe delicately and ſpeciouſly diſguiſed, under the appearance of tenderneſs to weak ſouls. I ſhould have thought, the text from St *James* muſt have done execution, like the prophet *Samuel*'s ſword. But ſince corroſives ſucceed not, let us make trial of lenitives.

When the great JEHOVAH is pleaſed to ſay, *I am the* LORD *thy* GOD; then, upon this authentic warrant, to uſe the language of the ſpouſe, is neither more nor leſs than to declare; "I am perſuaded, that CHRIST is "faithful and true; that he ſays what he thinks; and "will do what he ſays."——Whereas, to deny this, by downright unbelief; or to queſtion this, by living in ſuſpenſe; is not humble duty, but proud diſobedience. Might not the LORD JESUS juſtly complain, *What iniquity have* ſinners *found in me?* what unkindneſs, or what unfaithfulneſs, that they are ſo much afraid of confiding in my grace, and of believing my word?

You aſk, Whether the ſtate of theſe perſons is ſafe, and their faith real? I anſwer, Why ſhould not their ſtate be *happy*, and their faith *aſſured?* Why ſhould you, or they, or any one, plead the cauſe of unbelief, and veil it with the plauſible pretext of humility? Let theſe perſons know, whatever their names or their circumſtances are, that they have as good a right to adopt the words of the ſpouſe, as we have to walk in theſe gardens, and enjoy their refined delights.—Yet they will do well to remember, that thoſe qualifications, however amiable, are by no means the *ground* of their right. They are to advance their claim, and hold faſt the bleſſing, not as men ornamented with fine endowments, but as poor, indigent, guilty ſinners. For *ſuch* the SAVIOUR is provided; to *ſuch* his benefits are propoſed, and on *ſuch* his grace will be magnified.

Ther. Do you elude my queſtion, or give up your point? One or the other my *Aſpaſio* certainly does.

Aſp. Since my friend ſo peremptorily affirms, I will not have the ill manners to deny. I will own the former charge; the latter I cannot admit. I will own, that, at preſent, I had much rather act as a comforter, than as a diſputant. On ſome other occaſion I will undertake to conſider, and endeavour to anſwer, all your objections.—In the mean time, I am far from giving up the point, barely by inquiring, Why ſuch perſons ſhould loſe their time, and perhaps embarraſs their minds, in theſe leſs profitable ſuppoſitions? when there is a direct, a compendious, and a certain method of obtaining peace, by appropriating CHRIST and his merits; without recurring to any ſuch qualifications.

Nevertheleſs, if you inſiſt upon a poſitive reply, I am obliged to declare, that faith conſiſts in none of thoſe qualifications which you deſcribe. The language of faith is not,—"I feel ſuch an averſion; I am actuated with ſuch "a bias; or I breathe ſuch a deſire." But—"GOD has "freely loved me; CHRIST has graciouſly died for me; "and the HOLY GHOST will aſſuredly ſanctify me "in the belief, the appropriating belief of theſe precious "truths *."

But ſee, *Theron!* Yonder black and low-hung cloud points this way. It ſeems big with a ſhower; it marches on apace, and will ſoon be over our heads. We muſt inſtantly fly to ſhelter.

Ther. It is well we have this ſummer-houſe for our ſhelter. The thickeſt boughs would be inſufficient to ſcreen us. I think, I never ſaw a more impetuous burſt of rain. A ſhower! No, 'tis a deſcending *deluge*. The large, ropy, reeking drops, come down like a torrent †.——Surpriſing! What a dreadful *flaſh*

pecu

* *Eph.* iii. 12. Προσαγωγὴν, *acceſs with a chearing and graceful aſſurance*; ſuch as thoſe petitioners enjoy, who are introduced to the royal preſence, by ſome diſtinguiſhed favourite.—Παῤῥησίαν, *a boldneſs or unreſtrained liberty of ſpeech*; ſuch as children uſe, when they preſent their addreſſes, and make known their requeſts, to an indulgent father.—Ἐν πεποιθήσει, *with a well-grounded and ſteady confidence*, that we ſhall obtain both a favourable acceptance, and a gracious anſwer.—And all this, *through the faith of* CHRIST; through the worthineſs of his perſon, and the prevalence of his interceſſion.

† *Jam.* i. 6. N. B. *Nothing doubting*, is the apoſtle's explanation of *faith*.—Μηδὲν διακρινόμενος is, in our tranſlation, *nothing wavering*. But the very ſame expreſſion is rendered, *Acts* x. 20. *Nothing doubting*. The ſenſe is, either way, alike. Though, I think, *nothing wavering*, correſponds too nearly with the compariſon, *like a wave*; makes ſomething of a diſagreeable jingle; and flattens the force, or ſuperſedes the neceſſity, of the following illuſtration.

* If the reader finds this dialogue too long, *here* he will have a convenient reſting-place.

† *Come down like a torrent.*—This is the import of that ſtrong picturesque word רדו Pſal. lxxvii. 17. In this manner, *The clouds poured out water; while the air thundered and the arrows of the ALMIGHTY went abroad.* Mr *Addiſon*, if I remember right, admires the pſalmiſt's deſcription of a *ſtorm at ſea*; becauſe it dwells only upon the *grand* and *moſt ſtriking* circumſtances; without deſcending, like *Virgil*'s enervated repreſentation, to ſuch *little* particulars, as the cries of men, and the noiſe of oars. *Clamorque virum, ſtridorque rudentum.*—This deſcription of *a tempeſt* is, I think, equally admirable on the ſame account. The three greateſt and moſt terrible

was there! A ſheet of ſulphureous fire, launched from the diſmal gloom, and wrapping the whole ſkies in a blaze!——Not a moment's interval between the lightning's rage, and the *thunder*'s roar. How ſudden and vaſt the exploſion! What a deep, prolonged, tremendous peal enſues! It ſeems as if the poles of earth, and the pillars of nature cracked!

See, my dear *Aſpaſio!* ſee the direful havock; the horrid effects of this elementary tumult.——Yonder oak, which reared its towering head aloft, and ſpread wide its graceful branches, is, in the twinkling of an eye, turned into a *naked trunk*. There it ſtands, ſinged and tore; ſtripped of its verdant honours *, and ſurrounded with its own ſhattered fragments. How fearful is the artillery of heaven!

Aſp. And why—why did not the blow fall on this guilty breaſt? Why was not the fiery bolt, which flew ſo near, commiſſioned to pierce our hearts?—If our heavenly FATHER has been ſo tenderly careful of theſe periſhing *bodies*, will he not be much more gracious to our immortal *ſouls?* Will he not clothe them with that immaculate robe, which is the only ſecurity from the ſtroke of eternal vengeance?—And let me aſk, can this be a ſecurity to us, unleſs we are veſted with it! Could this building, though very ſubſtantial, have ſecured us from the ruſhing rains, if we had not betaken ourſelves to its friendly covert!

CHRIST is repreſented, in the prophecy of *Iſaiah*, by this very image; as *a place of refuge, and as a covert from the ſtorm and from rain* †. That is, his merits and death are a ſure protection from the curſe of the law, and the damnation of hell. No fury of the elements ſo terrible as *theſe*; no bulwark of ſtone ſo impregnable as *thoſe*.—If this is a proper emblem of CHRIST, to what ſhall we liken *faith?* To a perſuaſion, that the ſhelter of the ſummer-houſe is *free* for our uſe? To a high eſteem of its accommodation, an earneſt deſire after its protection, or an habitual tendency towards it?—Would this defend us from the inclemencies of the weather? Would this keep us dry, amidſt (what you call) the deſcending deluge? Would this eſteem, deſire, or tendency, unleſs carried into actual entrance and poſſeſſion, be a proper ſafeguard, or indeed any manner of advantage to our perſons?

Ther. No, *Aſpaſio;* neither would a perſuaſion that the ſummer-houſe *is mine*.

Aſp. True: but a belief that CHRIST is mine, is like entering the ſummer-houſe. When the divine SPIRIT reveals the obedient and dying SAVIOUR in my heart; when I am enabled to believe, that his death was the deſert of my ſins, and his obedience is the matter of my juſtification; when I live in the exerciſe of this appropriating faith, then I find that comfort, and I receive that benefit, which correſpond with the repoſe and ſecurity we now enjoy from this hoſpitable ſtructure.

Ther. May I then, from this inſtant, look upon CHRIST, his glorious perſon his perfect righteouſneſs, and his precious death, as my *certain* inheritance? May I firmly believe, that, through this grand immenſely-meritorious cauſe, I ſhall have pardon and acceptance, true holineſs and endleſs ſalvation?

Aſp. Why ſhould you not believe all this *firmly?* You have the ſame reaſon to believe with a ſteady confidence, as to believe with any degree of affiance. It is the free promiſe of the goſpel, addreſſed to *ſinners*, that warrants the latter; and the very ſame promiſe, under the ſame circumſtances of *unmerited* munificence, authorizes the former.

You have heard my opinion; hear now what our LORD himſelf ſays; *Let him that is athirſt, come; and whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely* *. He may partake of my ſpiritual and unſpeakable bleſſings, as freely as he makes uſe of the moſt common refreſhments; as freely as he drinks of the running ſtream. This is his royal proclamation.——Hear his gracious invitation. *Look unto me, and be ye ſaved* †; ſaved from your diſquieting fears, by juſtification; ſaved from your domineering corruptions, by ſanctification; ſaved from every evil; by complete and eternal redemption. To whom is this moſt affectionate call directed? Not to a few diſtinguiſhed favourites only, but to *all the ends of the earth*. None are excepted; none are prohibited; and can my *Theron* imagine, that *he* is excluded?

Nay farther, hear our LORD's earneſt entreaty; hear his tender and repeated importunity; *As though* GOD *did beſeech you by us, we pray you, in CHRIST's ſtead be ye reconciled to* GOD ‡. Hark! 'Tis the voice of infinitely-condeſcending love, ſpeaking by his ambaſſador:—"Sinners, accept my great ſalvation. Enjoy what I "have purchaſed for you, by my dying agonies. Do "not ſuſpect my kindneſs, or refuſe my gifts. This will "wound me deeper, than the ſpear which pierced my "heart."——O! the grace of our exalted KING. He bows from his celeſtial throne. He almoſt kneels to his guilty creatures. He begs, he even begs of obnoxious ſinners, not to reject his mercies.——After all this, can you entertain the leaſt doubt, *Theron*, whether you have a permiſſion to believe firmly?

Ther. This is extraordinary goodneſs indeed! I have often read theſe paſſages, but never ſaw them, till this hour, in a light ſo engaging and ſo encouraging.

Aſp. Should not this threefold cord be ſtrong enough to draw my dear friend; let me add (what muſt abſolutely ſuperſede all objections) the plain, expreſs, peremptory command of the ALMIGHTY: *This is his command, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son* JESUS CHRIST ‖. Pray, examine the language; not he *allows* only; or barely *adviſes;* but *commands*. We are not only permitted, but ſtrictly required. It is not only our privilege, but GOD's poſitive injunction.——Upon the diſcovery of ſuch a SAVIOUR, methinks every heart ſhould cry; "O that I might be allowed to ap-"proach him! to ſolicit an intereſt in him! How glad-"ly would I wait, ever ſo long a time, in ever ſo mean a "poſture, if I might at the laſt receive him as my por-"tion?"—The ſuperabundant goodneſs of GOD prevents our wiſhes, and exceeds our hopes. "I freely give "my SON," ſaith the LORD, "and all his riches to "you. I beſeech you, as a compaſſionate *friend*, not to "refuſe him. I injoin you, as an uncontrollable *Sovereign*, "to believe on him."——How gracious! moſt amazingly gracious is this command! And give me leave to hint, it is the greateſt and moſt important command that ever iſſued from the throne of glory. If this be neglected, no other can be kept? if this be obſerved, all

peculiarities are ſelected; and expreſſed with all the conciſeneſs, yet with all the vigour, which language can unite.

I have not met with any commentator, who enters into the ſpirit of the next verſe. And in our liturgy-tranſlation, its majeſty ſinks into meanneſs, its propriety degenerates into tautology. Whereas, it is by no means a vain repetition; but heightens and enlarges the formidable idea, by diſplaying *the effects* of what had been deſcribed, in the foregoing lines. *The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven;* the volleys not only reſounded, but reſounded from pole to pole, and filled גלגל the vaſt circumference of the ſkies.——*The lightnings, lightened the world;* the flaſhes not only ſhone, but ſhone far and near, and illuminated the whole world with their blaze. *The earth trembled* to its centre, *and* its inhabitants *ſhook* with horror.

* Does not this give us the moſt awful and grand ſenſe of *Pſal.* xxix. 9. *The voice of the* LORD, when uttered in thunder and accompanied with lightning, יחשף יערות, not *diſcovereth the thick buſhes*, but *ſtrips the foreſts*; lays bare the branching woods; reduces the moſt magnificent and flouriſhing cedars to naked and withered trunks.

† Iſ. iv. 6.

* Rev. xxii. 17. † Iſ. xlv. 22.

‡ 2. Cor. v. 20. ‖ 1 John iii. 23.

all others will be eaſy.——Now, *Theron*, will you not receive *CHRIST*, and look upon his all-ſufficient merits as your own? Is not your warrant clear and unexceptionable? nay, is not your obligation ſtrong and indiſpenſable?

Ther. Truly, *Aſpaſio*, you put all my miſtruſtful apprehenſions to the ſtand. Here is a proclamation from the bleſſed GOD,—ſeconded by his invitation,—accompanied by his entreaty,—and all enforced by his command. I know not what can be a fuller proof of your point, or a ſtronger inducement to believe.

Aſp. Yes, my friend, I can produce (if ſuch a thing be poſſible) ſtronger proof ſtill; ſuch as, I hope, will totally root unbelief, and drive all her forces from the field.

GOD has not only invited you, entreated you, and commanded you to live under the ſweet perſuaſion, that his SON is your SAVIOUR; but he has given you the grandeſt *ratification* of this precious truth.——He has paſſed his word; he has made you a firm promiſe; nay, he has given you *many* and *various* promiſes, of this inеſtimable bleſſing. And *GOD is not a man, that he ſhould lie; or the SON of man, that he ſhould repent. Hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good* *? Heaven and earth may drop into nothing, ſooner than one promiſe, or indeed one jot or tittle of his promiſe, ſhould fall to the ground.

Beſides this, he has given you, if I may ſo ſpeak, a note under his own hand. He has *recorded* his promiſes in the Bible, and *written* them with an everlaſting pen: ſo that they will ſtand conſpicuous and indelible, like a bill drawn upon heaven, and a baſis laid for faith, ſo long as the ſun and moon endure.

Nay, he has confirmed all, by the moſt ſolemn ſanction imaginable; by his *oath*; by *his own* oath; by the oath of *a GOD*. Though his word is ſure, and his promiſe immutable, he adds (aſtoniſhing condeſcenſion! adorable benignity!) he adds HIS OATH to all.——He not only ſpeaks, but ſwears, ſwears by himſelf; ſwears by his own eternal exiſtence; that his promiſes belong —*to whom?* Mark this particular with the moſt exact attention. To whom do thoſe promiſes belong, which are ratified in this unequalled and inviolable manner?—To the holy, the upright, the accompliſhed?—To thoſe, ſays the ſcripture, *who fly for refuge to the hope ſet before them* †; the hope ſet before them in the propitiation, the righteouſneſs, the ineffable merits of CHRIST.

Ther. May I then believe, firmly believe, aſſuredly believe, that *JESUS* the Mediator, and all the rich benefits of his mediation, are mine? Pardon me, *Aſpaſio*, for reiterating the queſtion. I am really, with reſpect to the obedience of faith, too much like that *Saxon* monarch, who, for his remiſſneſs and inactivity, was ſirnamed *The Unready* ‡.

Aſp. I do more than pardon my dear *Theron*. I feel for him, and I ſympathize with him. If there is ſome of that *Saxon* prince's diſeaſe running in his religion; I am ſure, there is too much of it in mine; and I fear it is an *epidemical* diſtemper. But let us reflect a moment. ——Suppoſe any neighbour of ſubſtance and credit, ſhould bind himſelf by a deliberate *promiſe*, to do you ſome particular piece of ſervice;—if he ſhould add to his promiſe a *note* under his own hand; if he ſhould corroborate both by ſome authentic *pledge*;—if he ſhould eſtabliſh all by a moſt awful and ſolemn *oath*:—could you ſuſpect the ſincerity of his engagement, or harbour any doubt with regard to its execution? This would be moſt unreaſonable in any one; and to your generous temper, I am very certain, it would be impoſſible.—— Let us remember, that *GOD* has given us all this cauſe for an aſſurance of faith, and more. Nay, I will defy the moſt timorous and ſuſpicious temper, to demand from the *moſt treacherous* perſon on earth, a greater, ſtronger, fuller ſecurity, than the *GOD* of infinite fidelity has granted to you and me.——After all this, one would think, diffidence itſelf could no longer heſitate, nor the moſt jealous incredulity demur. Shall we, can we with-hold that affiance from the unchangeable *CREATOR*, which we could not but repoſe on a fallible creature?

Ther. You rouſe and animate me, *Aſpaſio*, O! that I may ariſe, and with the divine aſſiſtance, ſhake off this ſtupor of unbelief! Certainly, it can never be honourable to *GOD*, nor pleaſing to *CHRIST*, nor profitable to ourſelves.

Aſp. If it be, then cheriſh it; maintain it; and never relinquiſh it.——But how can it be *honourable to GOD?* It depretiates his goodneſs; it is a reproach to his veracity; nay, the apoſtle ſcruples not to affirm, that it *makes him a liar* *. Whereas, they who believe his teſtimony, glorify his faithfulneſs; glorify his beneficence; and, as *John* the Baptiſt ſpeaks, *ſet to their ſeal, that GOD is true* †.——I have been informed, that, when the late *Elector* of *Hanover* was declared, by the parliament of *Great Britain*, ſucceſſor to the vacant throne; ſeveral perſons of diſtinction waited upon his Highneſs, in order to make timely application for the moſt valuable preferments. Several requeſts of this nature were granted and each was confirmed by a kind of promiſſory note. One gentleman, particularly, ſolicited for the *Maſterſhip* of the *Rolls*. Being indulged in his deſire, he was offered the ſame confirmation, which had been vouchſafed to other ſucceſsful petitioners. Upon which, he ſeemed to be under a pang of graceful confuſion and ſurpriſe; begged, that he might not put the royal donor to ſuch unneceſſary trouble; at the ſame time proteſting, that he looked upon his Highneſs's *word*, as the very beſt ratification of his ſuit.——With this conduct, and this compliment, the Elector was not a little pleaſed. "This "is the gentleman," he ſaid, "who does me a real ho- "nour; treats me *like a king*; and whoever is diſap- "pointed, he ſhall certainly be gratified." So, we are aſſured by the teſtimony of revelation, that the patriarch, *who ſtaggered not* through unbelief, *gave*, and in the moſt ſignal, the moſt acceptable manner, *glory to GOD* ‡.

Is it *pleaſing to CHRIST!*—Quite the reverſe. It diſhonours his merit; it detracts from the dignity of his righteouſneſs; it would enervate the power of his interceſſion. Accordingly you may obſerve, there is nothing which our *LORD* ſo frequently reproved in his followers, as this ſpirit of unbelief.——What ſays he to his diſciples, when he came down from the mount of transfiguration? *O faithleſs and perverſe* ‖ *generation!* They were perverſe, becauſe faithleſs.——What ſays he to the travellers, whom he overtook in their journey to *Emmaus? O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe* §! They were fools, becauſe ſlow to believe.——What ſays he to the apoſtles, after his reſurrection? *JESUS upbraideth them with their unbelief* ¶. He took no notice

* Numb. xxiii. 19. † Heb. vi. 17. 18.

‡ ETHELRED.

* 1 John v. 10. † John iii. 33. ‡ Rom. iv. 20.

‖ Διεστραμμενη, Matth. xvii. 17. A believing ſtate of mind, is like ſome *well-arranged* and beautiful ſyſtem of limbs. Unbelief *diſlocates* the parts, *diſtorts* the harmonious frame, and diſfigures its comely proportion.

§ Ανοητοι, Luke xxiv. 25. Not *thoughtleſs*, but *ſtupid* creatures; void of underſtanding: as we ſay in *Engliſh*, *without common ſenſe*; or, as *Horace* would have ſaid in *Latin*,

O tribus Anticyris caput inſanabile!

¶ *Mark* xvi. 14. The word is not επιλεγειν, as in *Luke* xvii. 3. not ελεγξιν, as in *Tit.* i. 13. but ονειδισαι. Which ſignifies, not barely a rebuke, but a rebuke accompanied with *keen* and *ſtinging* reflections; ſuch as may cover the face with bluſhes, and wound the heart with anguiſh.——It is uſed, by the evangeliſt *Luke*, and by the apoſtle *Peter*, to deſcribe thoſe calumnies, invectives, and reproaches, with which the perſecutors of Chriſtianity endeavoured to *gall* and *afflict* the Chriſtians. *Luke* vi. 22. 1 *Pet.* iv. 14. ——Though our *LORD JESUS* was moſt amiably tender

of their cowardly and perfidious behaviour; he inveighed againſt none of their other follies and infirmities; but he upbraided them with their unbelief. Not *gently rebuked.* No; this was a fault ſo unreaſonable in itſelf, ſo reproachful to their MASTER, ſo pernicious to themſelves, that he *ſeverely reprimanded* them for it; with an air of vehemence, and with a mixture of invective.

Is it *profitable to ourſelves?*—Nothing leſs. It damps our love, and diminiſhes our comfort. It ſubjects us to that fear, which hath torment; and diſqualifies us for that obedience, which is filial. In a word, this diſtruſtful and unbelieving temper weakens every principle of piety, and impoveriſhes the whole ſoul.——Whence come ſpiritual oſcitancy and remiſſneſs? whence proceed ſterility and unfruitfulneſs in the knowledge of CHRIST? St *Peter* aſcribes them all to an habitual unbelief. Such perſons, he ſays, *have forgotten that they were purged from their former ſins* *.—In the regenerate, where it remains, it is very detrimental; for *they that will not believe, ſhall not be eſtabliſhed* †. In the unregenerate, where it prevails, it is abſolutely deſtructive; and though it may not kill like an apoplexy, it waſtes like a conſumption. *They could not enter in, becauſe of unbelief* ‡.

Let us then, my dear friend, *caſt away this ſin*, which *ſo eaſily beſets us* both. It clogs our feet; it hampers all our powers; and hinders us from *running*, with alacrity and ſpeed, *the race that is ſet before us.*—What ſays *David? GOD hath ſpoken in his holineſs* ‖; hath made an expreſs and inviolable promiſe, that I ſhall be ruler of his people *Iſrael. I will rejoice therefore*; away with every alarming apprehenſion; I will even exult and triumph. Nay more; *I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valey of Succoth*; I will look upon the whole land as my own. I will divide it, and diſpoſe of it, juſt as if it was already in my poſſeſſion.—Why ſhould not you and I alſo ſay? *GOD hath ſpoken in his holineſs*; hath expreſsly and ſolemnly declared, *The promiſe* of an all-ſufficient SAVIOUR *is to you. We will rejoice therefore*; confiding in this moſt faithful word, we will bid adieu to all diſquieting fears, and make our boaſt of this glorious REDEEMER. Yes; notwithſtanding all our unworthineſs, *CHRIST* and his atonement, *CHRIST* and his righteouſneſs, are ours. GOD hath paſſed his word; and, amidſt our temptations, his word is our anchor; its hold is firm, and its ground immoveable §.

Ther. I have heard ſome people diſtinguiſh between the faith of *reliance*, and the faith of *aſſurance*; between the *reflex* and the *direct* act of faith. Methinks, I approve theſe ſentiments, though I diſlike the terms. The ſentiments are happily adapted to the relief of human infirmity; though the terms are rather too abſtruſe for ordinary capacities to underſtand.

Aſp. I cannot ſay, that I am very fond, either of the one, or of the other. In my opinion, they both partake too much of the ſubtilty of the ſchools; and are more likely to create perplexity, than to adminiſter godly edifying. For which reaſon, I ſhould chuſe to drop the difficult phraſes, and not to dwell on the nice diſtinctions. Yet, if we muſt not diſmiſs them, without ſome notice, I would juſt remark,—

That the faith of *reliance*, in its true ſcriptural ſenſe, includes or preſuppoſes a degree of aſſurance.—*Includes*; for what is reliance, but a repoſe of the mind, which is attended with tranquillity, and excludes perturbation? How can this take place, if there be no ſort of conviction, that *the LORD is my light and my ſalvation?*—*Preſuppoſes*; for who would rely on a ſatisfaction made, without being perſuaded, that the ſatisfaction is for him and his iniquities? Reliance, ſeparated from this perſuaſion, ſeems to be neither comfortable, nor reaſonable.

As to thoſe who inſiſt upon what they call the *reflex* act of faith; ſure, they miſtake the nature of the thing. This, if I underſtand them aright, is their way of arguing; "I am a new creature; I love the *LORD JE-*"*SUS* in ſincerity; I have the fruits of the SPIRIT. "From whence it is plain, that *CHRIST* and his ſalva-"tion are mine." Now, in all this procedure, I cannot diſcern the leaſt footſtep of faith; no not the leaſt trace of receiving a teſtimony, or relying upon a SAVIOUR. Here is nothing more than a logical deduction of one propoſition from another; a concluſion drawn from given premiſes. Grant the latter, and any perſon, without any aid from the SPIRIT, will infer the former. It may, therefore, more properly be reckoned an act of reaſoning, than of believing; it is founded on what we ourſelves *feel*, not upon the *record* of a faithful GOD; and it is ſtyled, by judicious writers, the aſſurance of *ſenſe* rather than of faith.

When, in conformity to the aforementioned opinion, we are adviſed to prove our title to comfort, by genuine marks of converſion; and taught on this column to fix the capital of aſſurance; I would rather propoſe a queſtion, than advance objections.—Is not this ſomewhat like placing the dome of a cathedral upon the ſtalk of a tulip?

Ther. No, ſay they; it was the practice of the apoſtle himſelf; and he has left it upon record, as a pattern for all poſterity to copy. *We know that we are paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the brethren.*

Aſp. Obſerve, *Theron*, the proceſs of the apoſtle's reaſoning. It is like the form of an inverted cone; where you have firſt the point, and from thence proceed to the baſe. So the ſacred writer begins with the leſs, and aſcends to the greater proof. He ſays, in one of the following verſes; *Hereby perceive we the love of GOD* *, *becauſe he laid down his life*, not merely for ſinners, but *for us* in particular.——Here, you ſee, is aſſurance by the direct act of faith. From this truth believed, from this bleſſing received, the love of the brethren takes its riſe. Which may very juſtly be admitted as an evidence, that our faith is real, and our aſſurance no deluſion. As yonder leaves may ſerve to diſtinguiſh the particular ſpecies, and aſcertain the healthy ſtate of the trees on which they grow.

When your tenants bring in their rent, this affords no contemptible evidence, that the lands which they reſpectively occupy, are yours. But this is a proof

and gentle; yet, when ſeverity was neceſſary and wholeſome, he knew how to be ſevere. Our all-wiſe PHYSICIAN could apply the *cauſtic*, as well as adminiſter the *cordial*.

* 2 Pet. i. 8, 9. † Iſ. vii. 9.

‡ Heb. iii. 19. ‖ Pſal. lx. 6.

§ This very important doctrine is more copiouſly diſplayed, in ſome ſermons of Mr *Ebenezer Erſkine*'s on the *aſſurance of faith*, vol. III. p. 201. *.—Was I to read, in order to refine my taſte, or improve my ſtyle; I would prefer Biſhop *Atterbury*'s ſermons, Dr *Bates*'s works, or Mr *Saul*'s diſcourſes. But was I to read, with a ſingle view to the edification of my heart, in true faith, ſolid comfort, and evangelical holineſs; I would have recourſe to Mr *Erſkine*, and take his volumes for *my guide, my companion, and my own familiar friend.*

* This refers to a ſelect collection of Meſſ. *Ebenezer* and *Ralph Erſkine*'s ſermons publiſhed at *London*, in three volumes Octavo. The ſermons on the *aſſurance of faith* are to be found in the firſt volume of Mr *Ebenezer Erſkine*'s ſermons printed at *Edinburgh* in 1761.

* 1 *John* iii. 16. The word GOD is not in the original. It was omitted by the apoſtle, juſt as the particular name is omitted by *Mary*, when ſhe ſpeaks to the gardener; *Sir, if thou haſt borne* him *hence*;—and by the *church*, when ſhe addreſſes the ſacred object of her affection; *Let* him *kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth*: John xx. 15. Cant. i. 1.—In all which places, there is a language, a very emphatical language, even in the ſilence. It declares, how deeply the heart was penetrated, how totally the thoughts were poſſeſſed, by the beloved and illuſtrious ſubject. It expreſſes alſo the ſuperlative dignity and amiableneſs of the perſon meant: as though *he*, and he *alone*, either was or deſerved to be known and admired by *all*. For which reaſon, to mention his name, or diſplay his excellencies, ſeemed as *needleſs*, as to ſhew light to the opened eye.

which

which does not occur, every day or every week; it is occaſional only, and of the ſubordinate kind.——The *grand* demonſtration, that which is always at hand, and always forcible, is your poſſeſſion of the *deeds* of conveyance. Thus, the promiſe of GOD in his divine word is our charter, or the authentic conveyance of our right to pardon and ſalvation. Make juſt the ſame difference between this promiſe and your own holineſs, as you make between the writings of your eſtate and the receival of the revenues; you will then judge aright, becauſe your judgment will coincide with the apoſtle's.

Beſides, this method of ſeeking peace and aſſurance, I fear, will perplex the ſimple-minded; and cheriſh, rather than ſuppreſs, the fluctuations of doubt. For, let the marks be what you pleaſe, a love of the brethren or a love of all righteouſneſs, a change of heart or an alteration of life; theſe good qualifications are ſometimes like the ſtars at noon-day, *not eaſily*, if at all, diſcernable; or elſe they are like a glow-worm in the night, *glimmering*, rather than ſhining; conſequently will yield, at the beſt, but a feeble, at the worſt, a very precarious evidence.—If, in ſuch a manner, we ſhould acquire ſome little aſſurance, how ſoon may it be unſettled by the incurſions of daily temptation, or deſtroyed by the inſurrection of remaining ſin! At ſuch a juncture, how will it keep its ſtanding! how retain its being! It will fare like a tottering wall, before the tempeſt; or be *as the ruſh without mire, and the flag without water* *.

Inſtead therefore of poring on our own hearts, to diſcover, by inherent qualities, our intereſt in CHRIST, I ſhould rather renew my application to the free and faithful promiſe of the LORD; aſſert and maintain my title, on this *unalterable* ground.——"Pardon is mine, I "would ſay grace is mine, CHRIST and all his ſpiritual "bleſſings are mine. Why? becauſe I am conſcious of "ſanctifying operations in my own breaſt? Rather be-"cauſe GOD *hath ſpoken in his holineſs*; becauſe all theſe "precious privileges are conſigned over to me in the "everlaſting goſpel, with a *clearneſs* unqueſtionable as the "truth, with a *certainty* inviolable as the oath of GOD."

Caſt your eye into yonder meadow. Take notice of that induſtrious *fiſherman*; how intent he is upon the purſuit of his buſineſs. He has juſt thrown his net, and taken a conſiderable booty. You do not ſee him ſpending his time in idle triumphs, on account of his ſucceſs. He does not ſtand to meaſure the dimenſions of the fiſh, or complete the value of his prize. But having, without delay, ſecured the captives; he prepares for *another* caſt, and hopes for *another* draught.

So let us, inſtead of exulting in any paſt acquiſitions, ſeek afreſh to the inexhauſtible fulneſs of our SAVIOUR, for renewed communications. If we have been bleſſed with any taſte of his goodneſs, or any tokens of his love, let us not too fondly dote upon the ſweetneſs of ſuch experiences. Let us not make them the foundation of our confidence, but only ſo many encouragements to perſevere and advance in believing: that, having life and having peace from our divine HEAD, we may have them *more abundantly* †. Then will be fulfilled the ſaying which is written; *The juſt*, the righteous in JESUS CHRIST—*ſhall live*, ſhall not only be delivered from condemnation and death, but ſhall thrive in comfort, and flouriſh in holineſs:—How? by reflecting on their ſanctification, or viewing their own attainments? No; but by the infinitely more encouraging views of their completeneſs in CHRIST, and *by* a freſh, a repeated, a never-ceaſing exerciſe of *faith* ‡, on that HOLY ONE of GOD.

This, I verily think, nay this, the apoſtle teſtifies, is the *moſt effectual* way of feeding that lamp, and quickening that flame; which, having cheared us in our earthly pil-

* Job viii. 11. † John x. 10.

‡ Rom. i. 17.

grimage, will be brightened up into immortal glory in the heavens.

Here they went in; and, after a ſlight refreſhment, took coach.——As they were returning home, *Theron* obſerved, not without concern, the changed and melancholy aſpect of things, in the territories of the huſbandman. The fields of corn, which, a little while ago, were gracefully erect, or ſoftly inclining to the breeze, lay ſunk and flatted under the impetuous rains.——Such, added *Aſpaſio*, ſuch I apprehend will be our faith, if it aſpires not after aſſurance, or if its aſſurance is erected on any endowments of our own.

Ther. If this is the caſe, what can be the reaſon, why ſo many people are totally deſtitute of all religious aſſurance? have no notion of it, much leſs aſpire after it? and as to *full* aſſurance, they would be much ſurpriſed, perhaps highly diſguſted, at the very mention of ſuch a doctrine?

Aſp. If people never aſpire after the aſſurance of faith, or an *appropriating* intereſt in CHRIST, I very much queſtion, whether they are truly awakened, or really in earneſt. They are like the men of *Ephraim*, whom the prophet ſtyles *a cake not turned* *; neither bread, nor yet dough; neither abſolute reprobates, nor real ſaints. Or, as our LORD explains the proverb, in his charge againſt the church of *Laodicea*, they are *neither hot nor cold* †; not frozen in inſenſibility, 'tis true; at the ſame time, not fervent in ſpirit; but indifferent and lukewarm in the concerns of religion.—As to a *full* aſſurance, or the higheſt degree of this grace, was I to declare myſelf more explicitly upon this point, it ſhould be in the calm and moderate words of a judicious divine; "I do not affirm, "that, without a *full* aſſurance, there is no faith. But "this I maintain, that where-ever the latter exiſts, there "will be a ſincere purſuit of the former."

Among the reaſons why ſo few perſons attain this eminent bleſſing, we may reckon the following.—They underſtand not the perfect *freeneſs* of grace, nor the *immenſe* merits of CHRIST.——They never conſider the unſpeakable *value* of an aſſured faith; neither are they aware, that it is intended for the enjoyment of *ſinners*.—Either they ſeek it not at all; or elſe they ſeek it, where it is not to be found; from ſome works of righteouſneſs in themſelves, rather than from the gracious promiſe of GOD in his word: which is altogether as ill judged, and as ſure to iſſue in diſappointment, as if a perſon ſhould go in queſt of ice amidſt the torrid zone, or expect to find ſpicy iſlands under the northern pole.

But whether people conſider it or no, the value of an aſſured faith is indeed unſpeakable.——When this is wrought in the heart, peace will ſtand firm, and afflictions drop their ſting. Prayer will return laden with treaſures, and death will approach ſtripped of its terrors. The ſoul will be *as a watered garden*, and all her graces *bloſſom as a roſe*.—When this is wrought in the heart, the goſpel of CHRIST will appear with new charms, and operate with new energy. Its hymns will no longer be a ſtrange language to your ear, nor its privileges as forbidden fruit to your palate. You will then, as you peruſe each ſacred page, feel it to be the power of GOD, and *taſte that the* LORD *is gracious* ‡. You will reap a benefit, and enjoy a delight, as much ſuperior to thoſe of the doubting reader, as the pleaſure of *eating* this delicious peach is ſuperior to the mere deſcription of its agreeable reliſh.

Bear with me a moment longer, *Theron*. For you can hardly imagine, what an improvement and exaltation this will give to every *truth* you contemplate, and every *object* you behold.——When you contemplate the riſe of kingdoms, and the fall of empires; when you recollect the many great and aſtoniſhing events

* Hoſ. vii. 8. † Rev. iii. 15. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 3.

recorded

recorded in the history of nations; how highly delightful must it be to say, "All these passed under the superintendency of *that hand*, which was pierced with the "bloody nail, and fastened to the cursed cross for me!" ——When you behold the magnificence of creation, and the richness of its furniture; the grandeur of nature, and the variety of her works; what a heightened pleasure must they all impart, if, as you view the glorious scene, your thoughts make answer to your eyes; "All these "were brought into existence by *that adorable* PERSON, "who sustained my guilt, and wrought out my justifying "righteousness!"

O! that ye may possess this *precious faith* *! that it may grow incessantly, *grow exceedingly* †! till it be *rooted*, like those full-grown oaks, under which we lately walked! and *grounded* ‡, like that well-built edifice, which is still in our view!

Ther. I join with my *Aspasio* in this wish; and must beg of him to inform me, how I may attain so desirable a blessing.

Asp. You have entirely cured me, *Theron*, of making apologes: would to GOD I might be as successfully instrumental in delivering my friend from his doubts! that the gospel might come to us, as it came to the *Thessalonians*, *not in word only, but in power, and in the HOLY GHOST, and in much assurance* ‖!

Prayer is the first expedient. Every good gift is from above, and cometh down from the FATHER of lights. CHRIST is not only the object, but the author and finisher of our faith. LORD, *increase our faith*, was the request of the disciples, and should be the prevailing language of our hearts.

Lay up many of the divine *promises* in your memory. Stock that noble cabinet with this invaluable treasure. *Faith cometh by hearing* §, by meditating on, by praying over, this word of life, and word of grace.—And never, never forget the *freeness*, with which the promise is made, and its good things are bestowed. You are to receive the one, and apply the other, not with a full, but with an empty hand; not as a righteous person, but as an unworthy creature.

Make the trial. Exercise yourself in this great secret of true godliness. I am satisfied, it will be productive of the most beneficial effects.——Look unto JESUS as dying in *your* stead, and purchasing both grace and glory for *your* enjoyment. Come unto GOD, as a poor sinner, yet with a *confident* dependence; expecting all spiritual blessings, through HIM that loved *you*, and gave himself for *you*.——*He that believeth*, with this appropriating faith, *shall not be confounded* *, nor frustrated in his expectations. *He that believeth* with this appropriating faith, *shall have the witness in himself* †. Nothing will bring in such light and peace, such holiness and happiness to his soul.——The *Ephesians*, thus believing, *were sealed with that holy* SPIRIT *of promise* ‡. The dispersed of *Israel*, thus believing, *rejoiced with joy unspeakable* ‖.—Those were *marked out* as rightful heirs, these were blessed with some delightful *foretastes*, and both were prepared for the complete fruition, of life and immortality. O! that we may *be followers of their example, and sharers of their felicity!*

As for those doubts, which have given you so much perplexity, and cost us so long a disquisition, look upon them as some of your *greatest enemies*.——Oppose them, with all the resolution and all the vigour of your mind. ——Nay, look upon those unreasonable doubts, as some of your *greatest sins*. Confess them, with the deepest shame; and pray against them, with the utmost ardour. ——With equal assiduity and zeal, let us press after a stedfast, an immoveable, a triumphant faith.——Faith is the vehicle and the instrument of every good; *All things are possible to him that believeth* §.—Faith is the immediate and grand end of the whole gospel; *These things are written, that ye might believe* ¶.—Let us therefore covet, earnestly let us covet this best of gifts, and *shew all diligence to the* FULL ASSURANCE *of hope* †.

* 2 Pet. i. 1. † 2 Thess. i. 3.

‡ *Rooted and grounded*, ἐρριζωμένοι καὶ τεθεμελιωμένοι. These are the apostle's beautiful ideas, or rather expressive similitudes, each comprehended in a single word, *Eph.* iii. 18. ‖ 1 Thess. i. 5.

§ *Rom.* x. 17. On which account the scriptures are styled, *the words of faith*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 6.

* 1 Pet. ii. 6. † 1 John v. 10.

‡ *Eph.* i. 13. Πιστεύσαντες ἐσφραγίσθητε, not *after that ye believed, ye were sealed*; but *believing ye were sealed*. In the way of believing, ye became partakers of this sealing and sanctifying SPIRIT. Conformably to the expostulation of the apostle on another occasion, *Received ye the SPIRIT by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

‖ 1 Pet. i. 8. § Mark ix. 23.
¶ John xx. 31. † Heb. vii. 11.

DIALOGUE XVII.

THE next morning, *Theron* ordered a cold collation to be prepared, and his pleasure-boat to hold itself in readiness.—Breakfast being dispatched, and some necessary orders relating to the family given:—Now, says he to *Aspasio*, let me fulfil my promise; or rather let us execute our mutual engagement; and consign the remainder of this mild and charming day to a rural excursion.

We will take our route alone one of the *finest roads* in the world: A road incomparably more curious and durable, than the famous causeys raised by those puissant hands which conquered the globe: A road which has subsisted from the beginning of time; and, though frequented by innumerable carriages, laden with the heaviest burdens, has never been gulled, never wanted repair, to this very hour.—Upon this, they step into the chariot, and are conveyed to a large *navigable river*, about three quarters of a mile distant from the house.——Here they launch upon a new element, attended by two or three servants, expert at handling the oar, and managing the nets.

Is this the road, replied *Aspasio*, on which my friend bestows his panegyric? It is indeed more curious in its structure, and more durable in its substance, than the celebrated *Roman* causeys: though I must assure you, the latter have a very distinguished share of my esteem. I admire them far beyond *Trajan*'s pillar, or *Caracalla*'s baths; far beyond the idle pomp of the *Pantheon*, or the worse than idle magnificence of the *amphitheatre*. They do the truest honour to the empire; because, while they were the glory of *Rome*, they were a general good *; and not only a monument of her grandeur, but a benefit to mankind.

But more than all these works, I admire that excellent and divinely-gracious purpose, to which Providence made the empire itself subservient. It was a kind of road or causey for the everlasting gospel, and afforded the word of life a free passage to the very ends of the earth. The *evangelical* dove mounted the wings of the *Roman* eagle; and flew, with surprising

* These roads ran through all *Italy*, and stretched themselves into the territories of *France*. They were carried across the *Alps*, the *Pyrenean* mountains, and through the whole kingdom of *Spain*.—Some of them towards the south, reached even to *Æthiopia*; and some of them, towards the north, extended as far as *Scotland*. The remains of several of them continue in *England* to this day; though they were made, it is probable, above 1600 years ago.

prising expedition, through all nations.—Who would have thought, that insatiable ambition and the most bloody wars should be paving a way for the PRINCE of humility and peace? How remote from all human apprehension was such a design; and how contrary to the natural result of things was such an event! Most remarkably therefore was that observation of the psalmist verified; *His ways are in the sea, and his paths in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known* *.

Conversing on such agreeable subjects, they were carried, by the stream, through no less agreeable scenes. They pass by hills clothed with hanging woods, and and woods arrayed in varying green. Here, excluded from a sight of the outstretched plains, they are entertained with a group of *unsubstantial* images, and the wonders of a *mimic* creation.------Another sun shines, but stript of his blazing beams, in the watery concave: while clouds sail along the downward skies, and sometimes disclose, sometimes draw a veil over, the radiant orb. Trees, with their inverted tops, either flourish in the fair serene below; or else paint, with a pleasing delusion, the pellucid flood. Even the mountains are there, but in a headlong posture; and, notwithstanding their prodigious bulk, they quiver in this floating mirror, like the poplar-leaves which adorn their sides.

Soon as the boat advances, and disturbs the placid surface; the waves pushed hastily to the bank, bear off, in broken fragments, the *liquid landscape*. The spreading circles seemed to prophesy, as they rolled; and pronounced the pleasures of this present state,—the pomp of power, the charm of beauty, and the echo of fame; —pronounced them *transient*, as their speedy passage; *empty*, as their unreal freight.—Seemed to prophesy? It was more. Imagination heard them utter, as they ran,

Thus pass the shadowy scenes of life away!

Emerging from this fluid alley, they dart amidst the level of a spacious meadow. The eye, lately *immured*, though in pleasurable confinement, now expands her delighted view, into a space almost boundless, and amidst objects little short of innumerable. Transported for a while, at the numberless variety of beauteous images, poured in a sweet confusion all around, she hardly knows where to fix, or which to pursue. Recovering, at length, from the pleasing perplexity, she glances, quick and instantaneous, across all the intermediate plain, and marks the distant *mountains*: how cliffs climb over cliffs, till the huge ridges gain upon the sky; how their diminished tops are dressed in blue, or wrapped in clouds; while all their leafy structures, and all their fleecy tenants, are lost in air.

Soon she quits these aereal summits, and ranges the russet *heath*: here shagged with brakes, or tufted with rushes; there interspersed with straggling thickets, or solitary trees; which seem, like disaffected partisans, to shun each other's shade.—A *spire*, placed in a remote valley, peeps over the hills. *Sense* is surprised at the amusive appearance; is ready to suspect, that the column rises, like some inchanted edifice, from the rifted earth. But *reason* looks upon it, as the earnest of a hidden vale, and the sure indication of an adjacent town; performing in this respect, much the same office to the eye, as *faith* executes with regard to the soul, when it is *the evidence of things not seen* †.

Next, she roves, with increasing pleasure, over spacious tracts of fertile glebe, and cultured *fields*; where cattle of every graceful form, and every valuable quality, crop the tender herb, or drink the crystal rills.—— Anon, she dwells with the utmost complacency, on *towns* of opulence and splendor; which spread the sacred dome, and lift the social roof: Towns, no longer surrounded with the stern forbidding majesty of unpassable entrenchments, and impregnable ramparts; but encircled with the delicate, the inviting appendages of gardens and orchards: *those*, decked with all the soft graces of art and elegance; *these*, blushing and pregnant with the more substantial treasures of fruitful nature.—Wreaths of ascending smoke, intermingled with turrets and lofty pinnacles, seem to contend which shall get *farthest* from the earth, and *neareſt* to the skies. Happy for the inhabitants! if such was the habitual tendency of their desires *; if no other contention was known in their streets.

Villas, elegant and magnificent, seated in the centre of an ample park, or removed to the extremity of a lengthened lawn; not far from a beautiful reservoir of standing waters, or the more salutary lapse of a limpid stream. ——*Villages*, clad in homely thatch, and lodged in the bosom of clustering trees. Rustics, singing at their works; shepherds, tuning their pipes, as they tend their flocks; travellers, pursuing each his respective way, in easy and joyous security.

How pleasing, said *Aspasio*, is *our* situation! How delightful is the aspect of all things! One would almost imagine, that nothing could exceed it, and that nothing can increase it. Yet there is a method of *increasing* even this copious delight, and of *heightening* even this exquisite pleasure.——Let me desire my friend, answered *Theron*, to explain his remark; and not only to explain, but to exemplify.——If we view, resumed *Aspasio*, our own *prosperous*, and compare it with the *afflicted* condition of others, the method I propose, will be reduced to practice. Such a dark and mournful contrast must throw additional brightness, even upon the brightest scene.

Above, the skies smile with serenity; below, the fields look gay with plenty; all around, the sportive gales,

Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes; and whisper, whence they stole
Those balmy spoils †.

With us all circumstances are as *easy*, as the wafture of the boat; as *smooth*, as the flow of the stream. ——But let us not forget these grievous calamities, which befal our brethren, in some remote tracts of the earth, or distant parts of the ocean. How many sailors are struggling, vainly struggling, with all the fury of rending winds, and dashing waves! while their vessel, flung to and fro, by *tempestuous* billows, is

* Psal. lxxvii. 19.

† Heb. xi. 1.

* This comparison, I think, cannot appear vulgar to those persons, who have read, and who reverence, *the book of Canticles*. There, the church, ascending continually in devout affections, to her beloved *JESUS*, and to her heavenly home, is characterized by this very similitude: *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke?* Cant. iii. 6.——Though it must be confessed, that this similitude, like many of the illustrations used in scripture, might have a sort of *local* propriety; peculiar to the people of that age, country, and religion. It might probably refer to those columns of smoke, which arose from the *burnt-offering*, or fumed from the altar of *incense*. If so, this circumstance must give a solemnity and dignity to the idea, of which many readers are not at all aware, and which indeed no modern reader can fully conceive.

May I take leave to mention another comparison of this kind? *The enemies of the LORD shall consume as the fat of lambs; yea, even as the smoke shall they consume away*, Psal. xxxvii. 20.—*As the fat of lambs*, is not to *us* a striking representation. But to those who attended the altar, who saw the unctuous and most combustible parts of the victim blazing in the sacred fire, it presented a very lively image: which was still more apposite and significant, if this *psalm* was sung, while the sacrifice was burning.—None, I believe, in such a case, could forbear either observing or admiring the beautiful *gradation*: "They shall perish as yonder *fat*, which is so "easily set on fire; and, when once in a flame, is so speedily "consumed. Nay, they shall be as the *smoke*, which is still more "transient; whose light unsubstantial wreaths but just make "their appearance to the eye; and, in a moment, vanish into "empty air."

† Milton, book IV.

mounted into the clouds, or plunged in the abyſs. Poſſibly, the miſerable crew hear their knell ſounded in the ſhattered maſt, and ſee deſtruction entering at the burſting planks. Perhaps, this very moment, they pour the laſt, diſmal, dying ſhriek; and ſink, irrecoverably ſink, in the all-overwhelming ſurge.——The traveller, in *Africa*'s barren waſtes, pale even amidſt thoſe glowing regions, pale with prodigious conſternation, ſees ſudden and ſurpriſing mountains riſe; ſees the ſultry deſert, aſcending the ſky, and ſweeping before the whirlwind. What can he do? whither fly? how eſcape the approaching ruin? Alas! while he attempts to rally his thoughts, attempts to deviſe ſome feeble expedient, he is overtaken by the choking ſtorm, and ſuffocated amidſt the *ſandy inundation*. The driving heaps are, now his executioner; as the drifted heaps will, ſoon, be his tomb.

While *we* poſſeſs the valuable privileges, and taſte the delicious ſweets of *liberty*, how many partakers of our common nature are condemned to perpetual exile, or chained to the oar for life? How many are immured in the gloom of dungeons, or buried in the caverns of the mines, never to behold the all-enlivening ſun again!—While reſpect waits upon our perſons, and reputation attends our characters; are there not ſome unhappy creatures, led forth by the hand of *vindictive juſtice*, to be ſpectacles of horror, and monuments of vengeance? ſentenced, for their enormous crimes, to be broke limb by limb on the wheel, or to be impaled alive on the lingering ſtake. To theſe, the ſtrangling cord, or the deadly ſtab, would be a moſt welcome favour. But they muſt feel a *thouſand* deaths, in undergoing *one*. And this, too probably, is but the beginning of their ſorrows; will not only conſign them over to infinitely more terrible torment.

While eaſe and pleaſure, in ſweet conjunction, ſmooth our paths, and ſoften our couch; how many are toſſing on the fever's fiery bed, or toiling along affliction's thorny road! Some under the *excruciating*, but neceſſary operations of ſurgery: their bodies ripped open, with a dreadful inciſion, to ſearch for the torturing ſtone; or their limbs lopt off by the bloody knife, to prevent the mortification's fatal ſpread. Some *emaciated* by pining ſickneſs, are deprived of all their animal vigour; and transformed into ſpectres, even before their diſſolution *. Theſe are ready to adopt the complaint of the *pſalmiſt; I am withered like graſs: my bones are burnt up, as it were a firebrand; I go hence like the ſhadow that departeth.* While *health*, that ſtaple bleſſing; which gives every other entertainment its flavour and its beauty; adds the gloſs to all we ſee, and the gout to all we taſte; health plays at our hearts; dances in our ſpirits; and mantles in our cheeks, as the generous champaign lately ſparkled in our glaſs.

We are bleſſed with a calm poſſeſſion of ourſelves; with tranquillity in our conſciences, and an habitual harmony in our temper. Whereas many, in the doleful *cells* of *lunacy*, are gnaſhing their teeth or wringing their hands; rending the air with volleys of horrid execrations, or burdening it with peals of diſconſolate ſighs. And O! what multitudes, even amidſt courts and palaces, are held in *ſplendid vaſſalage*, by their own domineering paſſions, or the vanities of a bewitching world! Far leſs innocently, far more deplorably diſordered †, than the fettered madman, they are gnawed by the envenomed tooth of envy; they are agitated by the wild ſallies of ambition; or feel the malignant ulcer of jealouſy, rankling in their breaſts. In ſome, avarice, like a ravening harpy, gripes. In ſome, revenge, like an implacable fury, rages. While others are goaded by lordly and imperious luſts, through the loathſome *ſewers* of impure delight; and left, at laſt, in thoſe hated and execrable *dens*, where remorſe rears her ſnaky creſt, and infamy ſharpens her hiſſing tongue. —— ——

Why this long pauſe! replied *Theron*. Your obſervations are as uſeful, as they are juſt. We ſhould all be acquainted, at leaſt in ſpeculation acquainted with grief; and ſend our thoughts, if not our feet, to viſit the abodes of ſorrow:—that, in this ſchool, we may learn a ſympathizing pity for our diſtreſſed fellow creatures; and ſee, in this glaſs, our inexpreſſible obligations to the diſtinguiſhing goodneſs of Providence; which has crowned our table with abundance, and repleniſhed our cup with delicacies; permitting neither penury to ſtint the draught, nor adverſity to mingle her gall.—Go on, I muſt entreat you, with your deſcription of *comparative felicity*. We have a large circuit ſtill to make, before we arrive at our intended port. And I could wiſh, that your diſcourſe might keep pace with the current.

Since you approve the ſubject, anſwered *Aſpaſio*, I will purſue it a little farther.—We, the inhabitants of this favoured iſle, breathe an air of the moſt *agreeable* temperature, and moſt *wholeſome* qualities. But how many nations languiſh under brazen ſkies, vaulted as it were with fire? They welter amidſt thoſe furnaces of the ſun, till their "viſage is burnt, and black as a coal*." ——What is far more diſaſtrous, beds of ſulphur and combuſtible materials lie in ſubterraneous anguiſh, ready to ſpring the *irreſiſtible mine*; ere long,—perhaps, on ſome day of univerſal feſtivity †, or in ſome night of deep repoſe,—to be touched by heaven's avenging hand.—Then with what outrageous violence will they burſt! rock the foundations of nature! wrench open the ponderous jaws of earth! and ſwallow up aſtoniſhed cities, in the dark, tremendous, cloſing chaſm!

Theſe *earthquakes*, it may be, both proceed and portend, *the peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs, and the ſickneſs that deſtroyeth at noon-day* ‡. They are, at once, a fearful omen, and a ruinous blow. The ſtagnating atmoſphere, rank with malignant vapours, becomes a ſource of deadly infection; or, replete with poiſonous animalcules, is one vaſt incumbent cloud of *living bane*. If the active gales ariſe, they ariſe only to ſtir the ſeeds of diſeaſe, and diffuſe the

* A very little excurſion of thought will eaſily convince the reader, that there is no period of time, in which ſome of theſe calamities do not befal our fellow-creatures, in one part of the world or another.

† *Give me any plague*, ſays an apocryphal writer, *but the plague of the heart*, Ecclus xxv. 13. Upon which judicious and weighty apophthegm, *Maſſiniſſa*'s ſpeech in Mr *Thomſon*'s *Sophoniſba*, is a very pertinent and affecting paraphraſe.

O! ſave me from the tumult of the ſoul!
From the wild beaſt within!—For circling ſands,
When the ſwift whirlwind whelms them o'er the lands;
The roaring deeps, that to the clouds ariſe,
While thwarting thick the mingled lightning flies;
The monſter-brood, to which this land gives birth,
The blazing city, and the gaping earth;
All deaths, all tortures in one pang combin'd,
Are gentle *to the tempeſt of the mind.*

* Lam. iv. 8.

† There is a remarkable paſſage in *Pſal.* lviii. 9. which ſeems to denote ſome ſuch *unexpected*, but *ſpeedy* and *inevitable* doom. The ſenſe is darkened, not a little, by the verſion admitted into our liturgy. I believe, the true tranſlation may be ſeen in the following *Italics*, and the true meaning learned from the *interwoven* paraphraſe.—Speedily, or *before your pots can perceive the* warmth of blazing *thorns*, *ſhall HE* that ruleth over all, ſweep away the wicked; *ſweep him away by* a ſtroke of righteous *indignation*, as by a fierce and mighty tempeſt: ſo that, *even from* the fulneſs of his ſufficiency, and the height of his *proſperity*, he ſhall be plunged into utter deſtruction.—The word חי, which is very unhappily rendered *raw*, ſignifies a ſtate of *proſperity* or *pleaſureable enjoyment*. 1 Sam. xxv. 6.—The whole verſe, in a gradation of ſtriking images, gives us a moſt awful diſplay of divine vengeance: vengeance quite ſudden; utterly irreſiſtable; and overtaking the ſecure ſinner, amidſt all the careſſes of, what the world calls, *fortune*.

‡ Pſal. xci. 6.

fatal

fatal contagion far and near.——Unhappy people! The *plague*, that ſevere miniſter of divine indignation, fixes her head-quarters in their blaſted provinces; and ſends death abroad, on his pale horſe *, to empty their houſes, depopulate their towns, and croud their graves.

Our iſland is ſeldom viſited with either of theſe dreadful judgments; and has never ſuſtained any very conſiderable calamity from the former. However, let us not be preſumptuouſly ſecure. We have, not long ago, received an awful warning. The rod has been ſhaken, or rather the ſword has been brandiſhed, over our territories.—Who can forget the general conſternation, which ſeized our *metropolis*, on occaſion of the late earthquake? And not without reaſon. For, of all divine viſitations, this is the moſt terribly vindictive. The whirlwind is *ſlow* in its progreſs; war is *gentle* in its aſſaults; even the raging peſtilence is a *mild* rebuke; compared with the inevitable, the *all-overwhelming* fury of an earthquake.—When it begins, it alſo makes an end †; puts a period, in a few minutes, to the work of ages, ruins all, without diſtinction; and there is no defence from the deſtructive ſtroke.

Should almighty vengeance ſtir up again thoſe fierce ſubterranean commotions; ſhould the moſt high GOD bid ſtrong convulſions tear the bowels of nature, and make the foundations of the world tremble like a leaf: what, *O ye careleſs ones* ‡, what will you do? whither will you fly?—See! the pavement ſinks under your feet.—Your houſes are tottering over your heads. The ground, on every ſide, cracks and opens like a gaping grave; or heaves and ſwells like a rolling ſea. *A noiſe of craſhing* ‖ is heard from without, occaſioned by the rending ſtreets, and falling ſtructures. Thunders, infernal thunders §, bellow from beneath; mingled with deſpairing ſhrieks, and dying groans from thoſe wretched creatures, who are jammed between the cloſing earth, or going down alive into the horrible pit ¶.——Where now will you fly? To your ſtrong towers? They are ſhattered in pieces.——To the ſtronger rocks? They are thrown out of their place.——To the open fields? They are a frightful gulf, yawning to devour you.——Where-ever you fly; in the wildneſs of your diſtraction, where-ever you ſeek for ſhelter; it ſhall be, *as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the houſe, and leaned his hand upon the wall, and a ſerpent bit him* *.

Yet there is *one* place of refuge, which will prove an inviolable ſanctuary, and a perfect ſecurity. I mean, the great, the gracious, the adorable REDEEMER's righteouſneſs. Hither let us betake ourſelves. Now, before the day of deſolation cometh, let us betake ourſelves to *this ſtrong-hold*. Then ſhall we have no reaſon to fear, though the earth be moved, and though the hills be carried into the midſt of the ſea. For thus ſaith GOD, the omnipotent and faithful GOD; *The ſun and the moon ſhall be darkened, and the ſtars ſhall withdraw their ſhining.——The LORD alſo ſhall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jeruſalem. The heavens and the earth ſhall ſhake; but the LORD JESUS CHRIST will be the hope of his people, and the ſtrength of the children of Iſrael* †.——Or, if the true believer is involved in the ſame undiſtinguiſhed ruin with the ungodly; even this ſhall turn to his gain. It ſhall exempt him from the lingering pains, and the melancholy ſolemnities of a dying bed. Like *Elijah*'s fiery chariot, it ſhall ſpeedily waft his ſoul to the boſom of his SAVIOUR. While the hideous cavern, that whelms his body in the centre, ſhall be its chamber of reſt, till the beloved BRIDEGROOM comes, and the day of reſurrection dawns.

We lift up our eyes, and behold the radiant colours, which fluſh the forehead of the morning: we turn, and gaze upon the no leſs beautiful tinges, which impurple the cheek of evening. We throw around our view, and are delighted with numberleſs forms of fertility, which both decorate and enrich our plains.—Whereas, other countries are over-run with immenſe ſwarms of *locuſts*: which intercept, where-ever they fly, the fair face of day; and deſtroy, where-ever they alight, the green treaſures of the ground.

Ah! what avails it, that the laborious hind ſows his acres, or the ſkilful huſbandman prunes his vineyard? that ſpring, with her prolific moiſture, ſwells the bud; or, with her delicate pencil, paints the bloſſom? Nor grain, nor fruit, can hope for maturity, while theſe *rapacious* and *baleful* creatures infeſt the neighbourhood.——They ravage the gardens they ſtrip the trees, and ſhave the meadows. Scarce a ſingle leaf remains on the boughs, or ſo much as a ſingle ſtalk in the furrows. *A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a deſolate wilderneſs; yea, and nothing can eſcape them* ‡.

Now, let the dreadful artillery roar from all its iron throats, and diſgorge the heavieſt glut of mortal hail. Now, ye ſons of ſlaughter, men *ſkilful to deſtroy* ‖, now hurl the ſulphureous globes, which kindle into a hurricane of fire, and burſt in ragged inſtruments of ruin.——To no purpoſe. The linked thunderbolts are

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* Rev. vi. 8. † 1 Sam. iii. 12.

‡ Iſ. xxxii. 11. ‖ Zeph. i. 10.

§ Before the overthrow of *Catania* by an earthquake, a noiſe was heard, vaſt and horrid, as if all the artillery in the world was diſcharged at once.

¶ Very memorable, and equally tremendous, is the account of the earthquake, that viſited *Sicily*, in the year 1693.—It ſhook the whole iſland. The miſchief it cauſed, is amazing. Fifty-four cities and towns, beſide an incredible number of villages, were either demoliſhed, or greatly damaged. *Catania*, one of the moſt famous and flouriſhing cities in the kingdom, was entirely deſtroyed. Of 18,914 inhabitants, 18,000 periſhed.

Another earthquake almoſt as dreadful, and in the ſame year, ſpread deſolation through the colony of *Jamaica*. In two minutes time, it ſhook down, and laid under water, nine tenths of the town of *Port-Royal*. In leſs than a minute, three quarters of the houſes, and the ground they ſtood on, together with the inhabitants, were quite ſunk; and the little part left behind, was no better than heaps of rubbiſh.—The ſhake was ſo violent, that it threw people down upon their knees, or their faces, as they were running about for ſhelter. The ground heaved and ſwelled, like a rolling ſea; and ſeveral houſes, ſtill ſtanding, were ſhuffled ſome yards out of their places. The earth would crack and yawn; would open and ſhut, quick and faſt. Of which horrid openings, two or three hundred might be ſeen at once. In ſome whereof, the people went down, and were ſeen no more. In ſome they deſcended, and roſe again in other ſtreets, or in the middle of the harbour. Some ſwiftly cloſing, ſeized the miſerable creatures, and preſſed them to death; leaving their heads or half their bodies above ground, to be a ſpectacle of terror, and a prey to dogs. Out of others would iſſue whole rivers of water, ſpouted to a great height in the air, and threatening a deluge to that part, which the earthquake ſpared.—Scarce a planting-houſe or ſugar-work was left ſtanding in all the iſland. Two thouſand lives were loſt, and a thouſand acres of land ſunk. The whole was attended with frightful noiſes, with brimſtone blaſts, and offenſive ſmells. The noiſome vapours belched forth, corrupted the air, and brought on a general ſickneſs; which ſwept away more than three thouſand of thoſe who eſcaped the fury of the earthquake. *See* CHAMB. *Dict.* on the word *earthquake*.

* Amos v. 19. † Joel iii. 15, 16.

‡ *A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth*, Joel ii 3. This is one of thoſe *bold* and *expreſſive* metaphors, in which the *Hebrew* language delights, and by which it is eminently diſtinguiſhed. It ſignifies a *total devaſtation*, of the vegetable produce; ſuch as muſt enſue, if a raging and reſiſtleſs fire attended the progreſs of theſe pernicious animals; burning with ſuch vehement impetuoſity, that none could quench it; ſpreading ſuch extenſive havock, that nothing could eſcape it.

‖ Ezek. xxi. 31.

turned

turned into ſtubble, the burſting bombs are accounted as ſtraw. Theſe armies of the air laugh at all the formidable preparations of war; *and when they fall on the ſword, they ſhall not be wounded* *.——Surpriſing and awful deſtination of the everlaſting GOD! at once, to ſtain the pride, and chaſtiſe the guilt of man! Theſe are a deſpicable and puny race; clad in no coat of mail, but cruſhed by the ſlighteſt touch. They wear neither ſword, nor ſcymitar, nor any offenſive weapon. Yet, in ſpite of oppoſing legions, they carry on their depredations, and puſh their conqueſts. *Terror* marches in their front, and *famine* brings up the rear. They ſpread univerſal devaſtation, as they advance; and frequently give the ſignal for the peſtilence to follow. Potent armies loſe their hands, and haughty tyrants tremble for their dominions.

O! that the natives of *Great Britain* would bethink themſelves! would break off their ſins by righteouſneſs, and their iniquities by cheriſhing the influences of the divine SPIRIT! leſt this *overflowing ſcourge* †, under which ſome neighbouring kingdoms have ſeverely ſmarted, ſhould be commiſſioned to viſit *our* borders, and avenge the quarrel of its MAKER's honour.——Diſtant as thoſe countleſs legions are, with interpoſing ſeas between; yet, if GOD lift up a ſtandard from far, or but hiſs ‡ unto them from the ends of the earth *they come with ſpeed ſwiftly*.——Who will convey this wiſh to the ears, who will tranſmit it to the hearts of my countrymen? that our land may always appear, as it does at preſent, like the darling of Providence; may always reſound with the voice of joy, and be filled with the fruits of plenty; may always wear the robe of beauty, and be adorned with the ſmile of peace.

How great are the advantages of *peace!* ſaid *Theron*. Peace at her leiſure plans, and leads out induſtry to execute, all the noble and commodious improvements, which we behold on every ſide. Peace ſets the mark of property on our poſſeſſions, and bids juſtice guarantee them to our enjoyment. Peace ſpreads over us the banner of the laws, while we taſte, free from outrage, and ſecure from injury, the milk and honey of our honeſt toil *.—Amidſt the tumultuous confuſions of *war*, who could have a heart to contrive, or a hand to accompliſh, any ſuch works of dignity and uſe? In thoſe days of darkneſs and diſtraction, how languid to the ſight are all the dewy landſcapes of ſpring? How inſipid to the taſte are all the delicious flavours of autumn?—When the nation is over-run with armies, and embroiled in ſlaughter, *a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and ſorrow of mind* †, are the diſmal diſtinction of the times. Inſtead of a calm acquieſcence in our portion, our very life hangs in continual ſuſpenſe.

But what are all the benefits of *external* peace, though diſplayed in the faireſt light, and enlivened by the ſtrongeſt contraſts.——What are they all, compared with the bleſſings of the goſpel? by which ſinners may have *peace with* GOD *through* JESUS CHRIST *our* LORD.

This, reſumed *Aſpaſio*, ſuggeſts a freſh inſtance of happineſs, which others want, and *we* poſſeſs; an inſtance never to be omitted in our catalogue of peculiar mercies; I might add, never to be forgotten, by any *Chriſtian*, on any occaſion.——While many kingdoms of the earth are ignorant of the true GOD, and know neither the principles of piety, nor the paths of felicity; *the day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us, to give the knowledge of ſalvation, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.*——While millions of *rebellious angels*, caſt from their native thrones, are reſerved in chains of darkneſs, unto the judgment of the great day; we, though rebellious and apoſtate ſinners of mankind, are delivered from the wrath to come. The holy JESUS (bleſſed be his redeeming goodneſs!) has endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame, on purpoſe to reſcue us from thoſe doleful and ignominious dungeons; where the priſoners of almighty vengeance

——Converſe with groans,
Unreſpited, unpitied, unrepriev'd,
Ages of hopeleſs end ‡.

Yes, my dear *Theron*; let me repeat your own important words; "What are all the benefits of exter-
"nal peace, though diſplayed in the faireſt light, and
"enlivened by the ſtrongeſt contraſts;—what are they
"all, compared with the *bleſſings* of the *goſpel?*"——This brings the olive-branch from heaven, and glad tidings of reconciliation with our offended GOD.——This compoſes the tumult of the mind; diſarms the warring paſſions; and regulates the extravagant deſires. This introduces ſuch an integrity of heart, and benevolence of temper, as conſtitute the health of the ſoul.

* The prophet *Joel*, foretelling the plague of *locuſts*, gives, under the image of an *embattled hoſt*, a moſt alarming diſplay of their terrible appearance; their impetuous progreſs; the horrible dread they raiſe, as they advance; and the irreparable miſchief they leave, as they depart; adding, among other amazing circumſtances, *When they fall upon the ſword, they ſhall not be wounded.* Which implies, I apprehend, that no method of ſlaughter ſhould prove deſtructive to their troops; or, that every expedient, contrived for their ſuppreſſion, ſhould be utterly baffled: being, through their immenſe numbers, as *invincible*, as if every one was abſolutely *invulnerable*. For, though millions and millions ſhould periſh by the weapons of war; even ſuch a blow, in reference to their whole *collective* body, ſhould ſcarce be perceived as a loſs, ſcarce be felt as a wound; neither diminiſhing their ſtrength, nor retarding their march, *Joel* ii. 8.

† *Overflowing ſcourge*, Iſ. xxviii. 15. It is the property of a ſcourge to *laſh*, of a river to *overflow*. The ſacred writer (by an elegant παρονομασια, which beautifies the original, but cannot be preſerved in the tranſlation) has connected theſe different ideas and different effects. The vindictive viſitation, with which he threatens the diſobedient *Jews*, ſhall *pierce deep* as a ſcourge, and *ſpread wide* as an inundation. They ſhall feel it to their very ſouls; and it ſhall involve the whole nation in miſery, anguiſh, and ruin.

There ſeems to be ſuch a form of expreſſion in the ſervice of our church; when we pray, in behalf of our fellow-Chriſtians; "*Pour*
"upon them the continual *dew* of thy bleſſing;" that which may be refreſhing and ſalulary as the dew, yet copious and abundant as the ſhower.

‡ *Hiſs unto them*, Iſ. v. 26. With great ſignificancy, and peculiar grandeur, the prophet applies this expreſſion to the LORD GOD of hoſts, influencing the moſt powerful armies; *q. d.* "They come, without a moment's delay, and from the remoteſt
"regions of the earth, to execute all his pleaſure. Formidable and
"innumerable as they are, they come,—I ſay not, upon his re-
"peated injunctions, or at his ſtrict command,—but at the firſt,
"the very *ſmalleſt* intimation of his will;"—ſuch as the ſhepherds uſed to their flocks; ſuch as the bee-men, of old, to their ſwarms; or ſuch as we, in theſe days, to ſome of our domeſtic animals.—— The Hebrew שרק I would not tranſlate, *at his whiſtle;* becauſe this phraſe, in our language, creates a vulgar ſound, and conveys a low idea: but ſuch is the import of the original; which denotes all that *unconcerned eaſe* of action, without any of the *offenſive familiarity* of diction.

* *Pax optima rerum*, ſays the *Latin* poet.—But the *Orientals*, I think, diſcover the moſt ſuperlative eſteem for this bleſſing, by making it the conſtant form of their ſalutations, and the ſubject of their moſt cordial wiſhes for their friends; PEACE BE UNTO THEE.—In this *ſhort ſentence*, they ſeem to have compriſed a *whole volume* of mercies; meaning, by their ſingle שלום all that the *Greeks* expreſſed by their χαιρειν, υγιαινειν, ευπραττειν. i. e. a confluence of that joy of mind, that health of body, that proſperity of outward circumſtances, which *complete* the happineſs of mankind.

We have a fine deſcription of peace, and its various bleſſings, 1 *Maccab.* xiv. 8. 9, &c. The picture is very exact, though perfectly artleſs. Nothing ſhould hinder me from tranſcribing the paſſage, but a fear of being too *diffuſive* in my notes. Leſt the reader, who expects a *treat*, ſhould complain of a *glut*; or have reaſon to object, that the ſide-board is more copiouſly furniſhed than the table.

† Deut. xxviii. 65. ‡ MILTON.

ſoul. This ſpreads ſuch an uniform beauty of holineſs through the conduct, as is far more amiable than the moſt engaging forms of material nature.

O! that thou wouldſt bow the heavens! that thou wouldſt come down, *celeſtial VISITANT*; and make thy ſtated, thy favourite abode in our iſle! that every breaſt may be animated with thy power; and every community, every individual, may wear thy reſplendent badge!—Then ſhall it be the *leaſt* ingredient of our public felicity, that the ſword of ſlaughter is beaten into a plough-ſhare, and the once bloody ſpear bent into a pruning-hook. It ſhall be the *loweſt* upon the liſt of our common bleſſings, that *violence is no more heard in our land, waſting and deſtruction within our borders. Our* very *officers will be peace, and our exactors* * *righteouſneſs. We ſhall call* (and the event will correſpond with the name) *our walls ſalvation, and our gates praiſe.* Then ſhall every harp be taken down from the willows, and every voice burſt into a ſong.——"In other climes"——will be the general acclamation—

"In other climes, let myriads of curious *inſects* ſpin "the delicate thread, which ſoftens into velvet, ſtiffens "into brocade, or flows in gloſſy ſattin; which reflects "a lovelier glow on the cheek of beauty, and renders "royalty itſelf more majeſtic. We are preſented with "infinitely-*finer robes*, in the imputed righteouſneſs of "our REDEEMER, and the inherent ſanctification of "his SPIRIT; which beautify the very ſoul, and pre"pare it for the illuſtrious aſſembly—of ſaints in light, "—of angels in glory.

"Let eaſtern rocks ſparkle with diamonds, and give "birth to gems of every dazzling tincture. We have, "hid in the field of our ſcriptures, the *Pearl* of great "*price*; the *white* and precious *ſtone* † of perfect abſo"lution; a diadem, which will ſhine with undiminiſhed "luſtre, when all the brilliant wonders of the mine are "faded, extinguiſhed, loſt.

"Let richer ſoils nouriſh the nobleſt plants, and "warmer ſuns concoct their exquiſite juices; the lemon, "pleaſingly poignant; the citron, more mildly deli"cious; or that pride of vegetable life, and compen"dium of all the blandiſhments of taſte, the pine-apple. "We enjoy far more exalted dainties, in having acceſs "to the *Tree of life, whoſe leaves are for the healing of the "nations* ‡; whoſe boughs are repleniſhed with a never"failing abundance of heavenly fruits; and the nutri"ment they diſpenſe, is bliſs and immortality.

"Let *Iberian* vines ſwell the tranſlucent cluſter, and "burſt into a flood of generous wine: let the *Tuſcan* "olive extract the fatneſs of the earth, and melt into a "ſoft mellifluous ſtream. We ſhall neither envy, nor "covet theſe inferior gifts, ſo long as we may draw "water out of the wells of ſalvation: ſo long as we may "receive that *unction from the HOLY ONE* ‖, thoſe in"fluences of the COMFORTER, which not only make "a chearful countenance, but gladden the very heart: "imparting ſuch a *refined* ſatisfaction, as the whole "world cannot give; ſuch a *permanent* ſatisfaction, as no "calamities can take away.

"Let *Ethiopian* mountains be ribbed with marble, and "*Peruvian* mines embowelled with gold. We want "neither the impenetrable quarry, nor the glittering "ore; having, in our adored MESSIAH, a ſure *foun"dation* for all our eternal hopes, and an inexhauſtible "*fund* of the divineſt riches.

"Be it ſo, that our *Iſis* is but a creeping drop; and "the *Thames* itſelf no more than a ſcanty rivulet; com"pared with the magnificent ſweep of the *Ganges*, or "the ſtupendous amplitude of *Rio de la Plata* *. The "wretched natives, even on the banks of thoſe ſtately "rivers, are at a diſtance from all the ſprings of true "conſolation. Whereas we have a fountain, we have "a river, that iſſues from the ocean of eternal love. "With incomparable dignity, and with equal propriety, "it is ſtyled *the river of life* †. It viſits the houſe of the "mourner, and revives the ſpirit of the ſorrowful. It "makes glad the city, and makes happy the ſervants of "our GOD. It quickens even the dead; and every "human creature, that drinks of its water, lives for "ever.

"Let *Aſiatic* iſlands boaſt their mountains of myrrh, "and hills of frankincenſe; let *Arabian* groves, with a "ſuperior liberality, diſtil their healing gums; and "ripen, for rigorous operation, their vital drugs. We "have a *more ſovereign* remedy, than their moſt power"ful reſtoratives, in the great MEDIATOR's atoning "blood. We have a *more refreſhing* banquet, than all "their mingled ſweets, in commemorating his paſſion, "and participating his merits.

"In ſhort, we have an equivalent, far more than an "equivalent, for all thoſe choice productions, which "bloom in the gardens, or baſk in the orchards of the "ſun. We have a goſpel, rich in precious privileges, "and abounding with ineſtimable promiſes: we have a "*SAVIOUR*, full of *forgiving goodneſs*, and liberal of *re"newing grace*. At whoſe auſpicious approach, foun"tains ſpout amidſt the burning deſert; under whoſe "welcome footſteps, the ſandy waſte ſmiles with her"bage; and beneath his potent touch, *the wilderneſs "buds and bloſſoms as a roſe* ‡. Or, to ſpeak more "plainly, the deſolate and barren ſoul brings forth "thoſe fruits of the SPIRIT, which are infinitely more "ornamental than the ſilken gems of ſpring; in"finitely more beneficial than the ſalubrious ſtores of "autumn.

"We have a *SAVIOUR*,——tell it out among the "Heathen, that all the nations on earth may partake "of the gift, and join in the ſong,——a *SAVIOUR* "we have, whoſe radiant eye brightens the gloomy "paths of affliction; whoſe efficacious bleſſing makes "*all things work together for the good* ‖ of his people. "Death, gilded by his propitious ſmile, even death "itſelf looks gay. Nor is the grave under his be"nign adminiſtration, any longer a den of deſtruc"tion; but a ſhort and ſhady avenue to thoſe im"mortal manſions; whoſe *foundations are laid with "ſapphires; whoſe windows are of agate; the gates*

* If. lx. 17. *Officers* and *exactors* ſignify perſons veſted with public authority; who have it in their power to rule with rigour. But theſe, inſtead of abuſing their power, ſhall conduct the adminiſtration with all poſſible equity and gentleneſs; with a *parental* tenderneſs, rather than a *magiſterial* auſterity. So that, though the title and office of an exactor may remain; nothing of the domineering inſolence, or oppreſſive ſeverity, ſhall continue.—The prophet, who always delivers his ſentiments with the utmoſt emphaſis, ſays, They ſhall be, not barely *peaceable* and *righteous*, but poſſeſſed of theſe qualities in the higheſt degree. Or, which implies more, than any other words can expreſs, they ſhall be *peace* and *righteouſneſs* itſelf.—The ſame beautiful figure is uſed in the next clauſe, which deſcribes the inviolable *ſecurity* of the city, together with the univerſal both *joy* and *piety* of the inhabitants.

* This river is near two hundred miles broad, where it diſcharges itſelf into the ſea. It pours ſuch an immenſe quantity of the liquid element into the *Atlantic* ocean, that freſh water may be taken up for the ſpace of many a league. It continues thus *amazingly vaſt* through a courſe of ſix hundred miles; when it divides into two mighty branches, the *Parana* and the *Paraguay*, which, having run in ſeparate channels, ſeveral thouſand miles along the country, unite at laſt; and form, by their conflux, this magnificent and ſpacious ſtream: which is ſuppoſed to be the very largeſt in the world.—To conceive a proper idea of its prodigious dimenſions, we may imagine a current of waters, taking its riſe beyond *Jeruſalem*; and, after having received all the rivers of *Europe* into its capacious bed, making its entry on the *Britiſh* ocean, by a mouth extended from *Dover* to *Briſtol*.

† Rev. iii. 17. ‡ Rev. xxii. 2. ‖ 1 John ii. 20. † Rev. xxii. 1. ‡ If. xxxv. 1. ‖ Rom. viii. 28.

"*of carbuncle; and all the borders of pleaſant ſtones* *."

Pardon my rhapſody, dear *Theron*. Your own remark, added to the grand and lovely views, have warmed, have animated, have almoſt tranſported me.——*Theron* anſwered not a word; but ſeemed fixed in thought.——While he is indulging his contemplation, we may juſt obſerve ſome other peculiarities of the proſpect.

Here and there, a loneſome *cottage* ſcarcely lifts its humble head. No pompous ſwell of projecting ſteps ſurrounds the door; no appendant wings of inferior offices ſkirt the edifice; no ſtately hall, ſlabbed with marble, and roofed with ſculpture, receives the gazing ſtranger. But young-eyed Health, and white-robed Innocence, with ſweet-featured Contentment, adorn the habitation. While Virtue lends her graces, and Religion communicates her honours, to dignify the abode; rendering the blameleſs hut ſuperior, in *real* majeſty, to a diſſolute court.

At ſome diſtance, appear the hoary remains of an ancient *monaſtery*. Sunk beneath the weight of revolving years, the once venerable fabric is levelled with the duſt. The lofty and ornamented temple lies rudely overgrown with moſs, or ſtill more ignobly covered with weeds. The walls, where ſainted imagery ſtood, or *idolized* painting ſhone, are claſped with twining ivy, or ſhagged with horrid thorn.——Through iſles, that once echoed to the chantor's voice, mingled with the organ's majeſtic ſound, the hollow winds roar, and the daſhing ſtorm drives. Where are, now, the ſilent cells, the vocal choirs, the duſky groves, in which the *romantic* ſaints prolonged their lonely vigils, by the midnight-taper; or poured their united prayers, before the lark had wakened the morn, or ſtrolled, in ever-muſing melancholy, along the moon-like glade.—Surely, thoſe mouldering fragments now teach, (and with a much better grace, with a much ſtronger emphaſis) what formerly their unſocial and gloomy reſidentiaries profeſſed. They teach the *vanity* of the world, and the *tranſitory* duration of all that is moſt ſtable, in this region of ſhadows.

Behold, on yonder eminence, the rueful memorials of a magnificent *caſtle*. All diſmantled, and quite demoliſhed; it gives a ſhading of ſolemnity to the more lively parts of nature's picture; and attempers the rural delight, with ſome touches of alarming dread.—*War*, deſtructive *war*, has ſnatched the ſithe from the hand of time, and hurried on the ſteps of deſtiny. Thoſe broken columns, and battered walls; thoſe proſtrate towers, and battlements daſhed to the ground, carry evident marks of an immature downfal. They were built for ages, and for ages might have ſtood, a defence and accommodation to generations yet unborn, if haply they had eſcaped the dire aſſaults of hoſtile rage.—But what vigilance of can prevent the miner's dark approach? or what ſolidity of bulwark can withſtand the bellowing engine's impetuous ſhock?

Thoſe, perhaps, were the rooms, in which *licentious* Mirth crowned with roſes the ſparkling bowl, and tuned to the ſilver-ſounding lute the ſyren's inchanting ſong. Thoſe, the ſcenes of voluptuous Indulgence, where Luxury poured her delicacies; where Beauty, inſidious Beauty, practiſed her wiles; and ſpread, with bewitching art, her wanton ſnares.—Now, inſtead of the riotous banquet, and intrigues of lawleſs love, the owl utters her hated ſcreams by night, and the raven flaps her ominous wing by day.—Where are the violet-couches, and the woodbine-bowers, which fanned, with their breathing ſweets, the polluted flame? The ſoil ſeems to ſuffer for the abuſes of the owner. Blaſted and diſhonoured, it produces nothing but ragged briers, and noiſome nettles; under whoſe odious covert, the hiſſing ſnake glides, or the croaking toad crawls.—Fearful intimation of that *ignominious* and *doleful* cataſtrophe, which awaits the ſons of riot! when their momentary gratifications will drop, like the faded leaf; and leave nothing behind, but pangs of remorſe, keener far than the pointed thorn, and more envenomed than the viper's tooth.

Perhaps, they were the beauteous and honoured abodes, where *Grandeur* and *Politeneſs* walked their daily round, attended with a train of guiltleſs delights! where amiable and refined *Friendſhip* was wont to ſit and ſmile looking love, and talking the very ſoul: where Hoſpitality, with Oeconomy always at her ſide, ſtood beckoning to the *diſtreſſed*, but *induſtrious* * poor; and ſhowered bleſſings from her liberal hand.—But war, deteſted war, has ſtretched over the ſocial and inviting ſeat, *the line of confuſion, and the ſtones of emptineſs* †. Now, alas! nothing but deſolation and horror haunt the ſavage retreat. The ample arches of the bridge, which ſo often tranſmitted the wondering paſſenger along their penſile way, lie buried in the dreary moat.—Thoſe relics of the maſſy portals, naked and abandoned, ſeem to bemoan their melancholy condition. No ſplendid chariots, with their gay retinue,

* If. liv. 11, 12.

* I ſay diſtreſſed, but *induſtrious* poor;—becauſe I would not be underſtood as encouraging, in any degree, the relief of our *common beggars*.—Towards the former, I would cultivate a tender and ever-yearning compaſſion; I would anticipate their complaints; and, as a ſacred writer directs, would even SEEK *to do them good*.—But as to the latter, I frankly own, that I look upon it as my duty, to diſcourage ſuch cumberers of the ground. They are, generally ſpeaking, luſty drones; and their habitual *begging* is no better than a ſpecious *robbing* of the public hive. For ſuch *ſturdy* ſupplicants, who are able to undergo the fatigue of travelling; able to endure the inclemencies of the weather; and conſequently much more able, were they equally willing, to exerciſe themſelves in ſome ſpecies of laudable induſtry;—for theſe, the *houſe* of *correction* would be a far more ſalutary proviſion, than any ſupply from our table; and *confinement to labour*, a much more beneficial charity, than the liberality of the purſe.

We ſhould remember, and *they* ſhould be taught, that the law ordained by the court of heaven, is, *If a man will not work, neither ſhall he eat*. If then we contribute to ſupport them in idleneſs, do we not *counteract* and fruſtrate this wiſe regulation, eſtabliſhed by the great SOVEREIGN of the univerſe?—Is it not alſo a *wrong* to the deſerving poor, if we ſuffer theſe wens on the body politic to draw off the nouriſhment, which ought to circulate amongſt the valuable and uſeful members?—Money or victuals beſtowed on theſe worthleſs wretches, is not real beneficence, but the *earneſt-penny* of ſloth. It hires them, to be good for nothing; and pays them, for being public nuiſances.

Let us then unanimouſly join, to ſhake off theſe *dead weights* from our wheels, and diſlodge theſe *ſwarms* of *vermin* from our ſtate. Let us be deaf to their moſt important clamours; and aſſure ourſelves, that, by this determined inflexibility, we do GOD, we do our *community*, we do *them*, the moſt ſubſtantial ſervice.—Should they implore by the *injured* name of *JESUS*; for the honour of the *LORD JESUS*, let us reſolutely with-hold our alms. Their meaning is,—"I cannot go on in my preſent ſhame-"ful and iniquitous courſe; I can no longer continue to act the "*wicked and ſlothful ſervant*; unleſs you will adminiſter ſome "kindly pernicious aſſiſtance. For *CHRIST*'s ſake, therefore, "aſſiſt me to diſhonour my Chriſtian name, and to live more in-"famouſly than the vileſt beaſts. For *CHRIST*'s ſake, help me "to be a reproach and burden to my native country; and to per-"ſiſt in the way which leads to eternal deſtruction."—This is the *true import* of their petitions. And whether the ſanction of that moſt venerable name, added to *ſuch* a requeſt, ſhould move our commiſeration, or excite our abhorrence, let every thinking perſon judge.

I truſt, the reader will be ſo candid, as to excuſe this long digreſſive note; and do me the juſtice to believe, that I am not pleading againſt, but for the *real* poor; not to *harden* any one's heart, but rather to *direct* every one's hand.—Give, out of gratitude to *CHRIST*, out of compaſſion to the needy, and be for ever bleſſed: but give not to incorrigible vagrants; to maintain impiety, and pamper indolence; leſt it be demanded one day, *Who hath required this at your hand?* leſt, by ſupporting diſſolute creatures in that abandoned ſloth, which is the nurſe of all vice, we become partakers of their guilt, and acceſſary to their ruin.

† If. xxxiv. 11.

frequent

frequent the ſolitary avenues. No needy ſteps, with cheerful expectations, beſiege the once bountiful gate. But all is a miſerable, forlorn, hideous pile of rubbiſh.

Since riches ſo often take to themſelves wings, and fly away; ſince houſes, great and fair, reel upon their foundations, and ſo ſoon tumble into duſt; how wiſe, how ſalutary, is our divine MASTER's advice! *Make to yourſelves friends with the mammon of unrighteouſneſs; that, when the world fails around you*, when the ſprings of nature *fail* within you; *they*, as witneſſes of your charity, and vouchers for the ſincerity of your faith, *may receive you into everlaſting habitations* *.——This is to lay up treaſure *for ourſelves* †: whereas, whatever elſe we amaſs, is for our heirs, for our ſucceſſors, for we know not who.—— This wealth is truly and emphatically called *our own* ‡: it is an advowſon; we have the perpetuity. Whereas, whatever elſe we poſſeſs, is ours only for a *turn*, or in *truſt*.

See the dreadful, dreadful ravages of *divil diſcord!* Where-ever that infernal fury ſtalks, ſhe marks her ſteps in blood, and leaves opulent cities a ruinous heap ‖.—— What thanks then, what ardent and ceaſeleſs thanks, are due to that all-ſuperintending, ever-gracious LORD, who has daſhed the torch from her hand; has broke her murderous weapons; and driven the baleful peſt from our *iſland!*—May the ſame almighty goodneſs ſhortly baniſh the accurſed monſter from all lands! baniſh the monſter, with her hated aſſociate rapine, and her inſatiable purveyor ambition, to the deepeſt hell. Branded with everlaſting infamy, and bound in adamantine chains, *there* let them gnaſh their teeth, and bite the inevitable curb!—While *Peace*, deſcending from her native heaven, bids her olives ſpring amidſt the joyful nations; and *Plenty*, in league with Commerce, ſcatters bleſſings from her copious horn. While *Gladneſs* ſmiles in every eye; and *Love*, extenſive, univerſal love, levelling the partition-wall of bigotry, cements every heart in brotherly affection.

Near thoſe heaps of havock, lies the ſpot, ever-memorable and ſtill revered, on which an obſtinate and fatal battle was fought.——The huſbandman, as he breaks his fallow land, or rends the graſſy turf, often diſcovers the horrid implements, and the more horrid effects, of that bloody conflict. He ſtarts to hear his coulter ſtrike upon the boſſes of a ruſty buckler, gride over the edge of a blunted ſword. He turns pale, to ſee human bones thrown up before his plough; and ſtands aghaſt to think, that, in cutting his *furrow*, he opens a *grave*.—— The grey-headed ſire often relates to his grandſons, hanging with eager attention on the tale, and trembling for the event; relates the diſmal, the glorious deeds of that important day.——How the fields, now covered with waving crops, were then loaded with mangled and ghaſtly corpſes. How the paſtures, now green with herbage, were then drenched and incrimſoned with human gore.

"On *that* extended common," he ſays, "where the "buſy ſhepherd is erecting his hurdled citadel, the tents "were ſpread, and the banners diſplayed; the ſpears "briſtled in air, and the burniſhed helmets glittered to "the ſun.—On *yonder* riſing ground, where the friſking "lambs play their harmleſs frolics, ſtood the martial files, "clad in mail, and ranged in battle array; ſtood war, "with all its collected horrors, like ſome portentous "cloud, ready to burſt into an immediate ſtorm. On the "*nearer* plain, where the quiet ſteed grazes in ſafety, "and thoſe ſober oxen chew the juicy herb, the fierce "encounter mixed. There, the javelins, launched from "nervous arms, and aimed by vengeful eyes, flew and "reflew, whizzing with death. The arrows lightened * "from the ſtrings; and drenched their keen points, and "dipped their feathery wings in blood.—Soon as this "ſhower of miſſive ſteel ceaſed, inſtantly outſprung "thouſands of flaming ſwords. They claſh on the bra"zen ſhields; they cut their way through the riven ar"mour; and ſheath their blades in many a gallant "dauntleſs heart.—Here, on this diſtinguiſhed level, the "proud preſumptuous enemy, confident of victory, and "boaſting of their numbers, poured in like a flood.— "There, a bold determined battalion, of which myſelf "was a part, planted themſelves like a rock, and broke "the fierce attack.

"Then," adds the brave old warrior, "then the cow"ard herd fled before the vengeance of our conquer"ing arms. Then, theſe hands ſtrewed the plains "with a harveſt, different far from their preſent pro"ductions. Then *the fathers*, ſmitten with inexpreſ"ſible dread, *looked not back on their children* †; though

* Luke xvi. 9. † Matth. vi. 20. ‡ Luke xvi. 12.

‖ The effects of what *Virgil* calls *bella, horrida bella*, were never diſplayed in colours that *glow*, and with figures that *alarm*, like thoſe which are uſed by the prophet *Jeremiah*, chap. iv. 19, &c.—As this is perhaps the greateſt maſter-piece of the kind, the reader will permit me to enrich the notes with a tranſcript of the paſſage.

First we *ſee*, or rather we *feel*, the effects of war on the *human mind*: the keeneſt anguiſh, and the deepeſt diſmay. *My bowels! my bowels! I am pained at my very heart. My heart maketh a noiſe in me; I cannot hold my peace: becauſe thou haſt heard, O my ſoul, the ſound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.—Deſtruction upon deſtruction is cried; for the land is ſpoiled. Suddenly are my tents ſpoiled, and my curtains in a moment.—How long ſhall I ſee the ſtandard, and hear the ſound of the trumpet?*

Then we ſee the diſmal devaſtations of war; and who does not ſhudder at the ſight? the whole country laid in ruins! deprived of all its ornaments, and all its inhabitants! reduced to a *ſolitude*, and a *chaos*. *I beheld the earth, and lo! it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light.—I beheld the mountains, and lo! they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly.—I beheld, and lo! there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled.—I beheld, and lo! the fruitful place was a wilderneſs, and all the cities thereof were broken down, at the preſence of the LORD, and by his fierce anger.*

If, after all this profuſion of imagery, *bold* and *animated* even to aſtoniſhment, we can have any reliſh for the cold correctneſs of a *Heathen* genius, we may find ſomething of the ſame nature in *Horace*, lib. II. Od. 1.

* *Hab.* iii. 11. ברק חניתך literally tranſlated, preſents us with that beautifully bold figure, *the lightening of thy ſpear*.—Which, with innumerable other graces of ſpeech, that give dignity and ſpirit to our modern compoſitions, are borrowed from the language of *Zion*, are tranſplanted from the ſchool of the prophets.—If we ſtart into a pleaſing amazement, at *Homer*'s δουρι μαιμαιτι; have we not equal reaſon to be charmed and ſurpriſed at *Nahum*'s ברחבות תתהלכן ? every chariot *raged* with violence and impetuoſity; was eager, was even *mad* to deſtroy. Nah. ii. 5.

† For this very ſtriking, and moſt terrific image, we are obliged to the prophet *Jeremiah*: who, in a few words, but with all the pomp of horror, deſcribes the din of approaching war, and the conſternation of a vanquiſhed people. *At the noiſe of the ſtamping of the hoofs of his ſtrong horſes, at the ruſhing of his chariots, and at the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers ſhall not look back unto their children, for feebleneſs of hands.* Jer. xlvii. 3.

Not to mention the thunder-like ſound of the diction; and that in a language much leſs ſonorous than the original; I appeal to every reader, whether the *laſt* circumſtance does not awaken the idea of ſo tremendous a ſcene, and ſo horrible a dread, as no words can expreſs. *Virgil* has imitated the prophet's manner, in that very delicate deſcriptive touch; where, repreſenting the prodigious alarm, excited by the yell of the infernal fury, he ſays,

Et trepidæ matres preſſere ad pectora natos.

That is, *Each frighted mother claſped the infant to her fluttering boſom.*

No one, I believe, need be informed, that the panic is painted, with a very ſuperior energy, by the poet of heaven. In the *Pagan*'s draught, the effect of fear *reſults* from the conſtitution, and coincides with the bias of humanity. Whereas, in the *prophet*'s picture, it *counteracts*, it *ſuſpends*, it entirely *overbears*, the tendereſt workings and

ſtrongeſt

" ſhuddering at the lifted ſpear, or ſcreaming under the " brandiſhed ſword. *The fathers looked not back on their " children*, though they fell among the ſlain; gaſhed with " deadly wounds; or lay expiring, in groans of agony, " under our feet."

We leave the warrior, to repeat his ſhocking ſtory, and enjoy his ſavage ſatisfaction. For calmer ſcenes, and ſofter delights, we willingly leave him.——The eye is pleaſed with the elegant gaiety of the parterre; the ear is ſmoothed with the warbling melody of the grove; but *grand* objects, and the *magnificence* of things, charm and tranſport the whole man. The mind, on ſuch occaſions, ſeems to *expand* with the proſpect and ſecretly exults in the conſciouſneſs of her greatneſs.——Intent upon theſe large and excurſive views, our friends ſcarce advert to the minuter beauties, which addreſs them on every ſide. The *ſwan*, with her ſnowy plumes, and loftily-bending head; notwithſtanding all her ſuperb air, and lordly ſtate; rows by, without exciting admiration, or obtaining notice.——Equally unnoticed is both the array, and the action of the *duck*; her gloſſy neck, and finely-chequered wings; her diving into the deep, or her darting up into day.—The *ſwallow*, ſkimming the air in wanton circle, or dipping her downy breaſt in the flood, courts their obſervation in vain.——Nor could the *finny ſhoals* attract their regard, though they played before the boat in ſportive chace; or, glancing quick to the ſurface, ſhewed their pearly coats, bedropt with gold.——Thus they, engaged in ſublime, neglect inferior ſpeculations. And if the ſons of religion overlook the *diminutive*, *tranſient*, *deluſory* forms of pleaſure, which float on the narrow ſtream of time, or flit along the ſcanty bounds of ſenſe; it is only to contemplate and enjoy a happineſs in their GOD, which is *elevated*, *ſubſtantial*, and *immortal*.—Compared with which, whatever the eye can ſurvey, from pole to pole, from the riſing to the ſetting ſun, is a cockle-ſhell, a butterfly, a bubble.

From this open and enlarged ſcene, they enter the ſkirts of a vaſt, umbrageous, venerable *foreſt*.—On either ſide, the ſturdy and gigantic ſons of earth, rear their aged trunks, and ſpread their branching arms. Trees, of every hardy make, and every majeſtic form, in agreeable diſorder, and with a wild kind of grandeur, fill the aereal regions. The huge, expanſive, roaming boughs unite themſelves over the current, and diffuſe " their umbrage, " broad and brown as evening."——The timorous *deer* ſtart at the claſhing of the waves. Alarmed with the unuſual ſound, they look up, and gaze for a moment: then fly into covert, by various ways, and with precipitate ſpeed; vaniſhing, rather than departing, from the glade.

How *awful* to reflect, as they glide along the ſhelving ſhores, and the moſs-grown banks; as they ſail under the pendent ſhades of quivering poplar, of whiſtling fir, and the ſolemn-ſounding foliage of the oak,—how awful to reflect; " Theſe were the lonely haunts of the " *Druids*, two thouſand years ago! Amidſt theſe duſky " mazes, and ſympathetic glooms, the penſive ſages " ſtrayed. Here, they ſought, they found, and, with all " the ſolemnity of ſuperſtitious devotion, they gathered " their *miſletoe* *. Here the viſionary recluſes ſhunned " the tumultuous ways of men, and traced the myſteri- " ous paths of Providence. Here they explored the ſe- " crets of nature, and invoked their fabled gods."

Sometimes wrapt in a ſudden reverie of thought, ſometimes engaged in converſation on the ſolemn appearance of things, the voyagers ſcarce perceive their progreſs. Before they are aware, this venerable ſcene is loſt; and they find themſelves advanced upon the borders of a *beautiful lawn*. The foreſt, retiring to the right hand, in the ſhape of a creſcent, compoſed what *Milton* ſtyles, " a " verdurous wall of ſtatelieſt aſpect;" and left, in the midſt, an ample ſpace for the flouriſhing of herbage.

Here, ſaid *Theron*, if you pleaſe, we will alight; and leave the bearer of our *floating ſedan*, to purſue his ceaſeleſs courſe,—to enrich the boſom of other valleys, and lave the feet of other hills,—to viſit cities, and make the tour of counties,—to reflect the image of many a ſplendid ſtructure, which adorn his banks; and, what is far more amiable, to diſtribute, all along his winding journey, innumerable conveniencies both for man and beaſt: acquiring, the farther he goes, and the more benefits he confers, a deeper flow, and a wider ſwell; to the remarkable confirmation of that beneficent maxim, *There is that ſcattereth, and yet increaſeth* *.

Theron and *Aſpaſio*, walking acroſs the ſpacious amphitheatre, ſeated themſelves at the extremity of the bend. Before them, lay a verdant area, quite even; perfectly handſome; but far from gay. *Green* was all the dreſs, without any mixture of gaudy flowers, or glittering colours. Only, now-and-then, a gentle breeze, ſkimming over the undulating mead, impreſſed a varying wavy gloſs on its ſurface. The whole ſeemed to reſemble the decent and ſober ornaments of *maturer age*, when it has put off the trappings, and bid adieu to the levities of youth.——The broad, tranſparent ſtream, ran parallel with the lips † of the channel; and drew a line of circumvallation, as it were, to guard the calm retreat. It appeared, where ſhaded with boughs, like a barrier of poliſhed ſteel; where open to the ſun, like a mirror of flowing cryſtal.——The eaſtern edges of the river, were barricaded with a kind of mountainous declivity; on whoſe rude and rocky ſides, the timorous rabbit burrowed, and the bearded goat browzed.——Not far from the ſummit, two or three fountains guſhed: which uniting their currents, as they trickled down the ſteep, formed a natural *caſcade*: here it was loſt in the ruſhy dells, or obſcured by the twiſting roots; there it burſt again into view, and playing full in the eye of day, looked like a ſheet of ſpouting ſilver.

In this romantic retirement, ſaid *Theron*, we are quite ſequeſtered from ſociety. We ſeem to be in a world of our own; and ſhould almoſt be tempted to forget, that we are encompaſſed with a kindred ſpecies; did not the *muſic* of thoſe ſilver-tongued *bells*, poured from a diſtant ſteeple, and gliding along the gentle ſtream, bring us news of human kind.

Eſcaped from man, and his buſy walks, methinks, we are come to the houſe of tranquillity. Such a deep, undiſturbed compoſure reigns all around! It is as if ſome auguſt perſonage was making his entrance, or

ſtrongeſt propenſities of nature; though inſtigated, on one hand, by the moſt importunate calls of exquiſite diſtreſs; and ſtimulated on the other, by all the ſolicitations of the moſt yearning compaſſion.

* If the reader pleaſes, he may ſee thoſe pompous ſolemnities deſcribed, in VANIERII *Præd. Ruſt.* pag. 125, &c. Where the curious narrative of *Pliny* is embelliſhed with the harmonious numbers of *Virgil*.——With regard to the reflections occaſioned by this account; the compliments laviſhed on the *French*, their *religion*, and their *monarch*; I believe, the judicious *Proteſtant* will confeſs with me, that as our charming author has copied the language, and entered into the ſpirit of the ancients; he has alſo catched a tincture of their ſuperſtition; imbibing, together with *all* their elegancies and graces, *ſome* of their fanciful and legendary levities.

Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
Offendar maculis. HOR.

* Prov. xi. 24.

† The *Greek*, which is above all languages happy, in its beautiful variety of *compound* words, very neatly expreſſes this appearance by —ισοχειλης τη γη.

ſome

ſome majeſtic being was upon the point to ſpeak, and all nature ſtood fixed in attentive expectation. No place better fitted to cheriſh, or to inſpire a *contemplative ſedateneſs*.

Obſerve the ſimplicity and grandeur of thoſe ſurrounding trees; the noble plainneſs of their verdure, and the prodigious ſtateline ſs of their aſpect. What a *ſpark* are our gardens, and what a mere *dwarf* are our groves, compared with theſe vaſt plantations?—Here is none of your nice exactneſs, but all is irregularly and wildly great. Here are no traces of the ſhears, nor any footſteps of the ſpade, but the handy-work of the DEITY is apparent in all.—Give *me* the ſcenes, which diſdain the puny aſſiſtance of art, and are infinitely ſuperior to the low toils of man. Give *me* the ſcenes, which ſcorn to *bribe* our attention, with a little borrowed ſpruceneſs of ſhape; but, by their own native dignity, *command* our regard. I love the proſpects, which, the moment they are beheld, ſtrike the ſoul with veneration, or tranſport it with wonder; and cry aloud in the ear of reaſon, *Aſcribe ye greatneſs to our GOD*.—Such, I think, in a very eminent degree, is the foreſt;

——High waving o'er the hills,
Or to the vaſt horizon wide diffus'd,
A boundleſs deep immenſity of ſhade.

Aſp. Solomon's refined genius ſeems to have been fond of the ſame ſituation, and delighted with the ſame objects. Therefore, at a great expence, and in the moſt curious taſte, he built *the houſe of the foreſt*.—*Iſaiah*'s divine imagination was charmed with the ſame grand ſpectacle. More frequently, than any of the prophets, he derives his illuſtrations from it. One compariſon I particularly remember. Speaking of the *Aſſyrian* king, and his military forces, he likens them to ſuch an aſſemblage of trees: *numerous*, as their amazing multitudes; *ſtrong*, as their maſſy trunks. Yet, numerous and potent as they were, they ſhould all be brought low, and laid in the duſt. *For behold the LORD, the LORD of hoſts ſhall lop the bough with terror, and the high ones of ſtature ſhall be hewn down, and the haughty ſhall be humbled; and he ſhall cut down the thickets of his foreſt with iron, and Lebanon ſhall fall by a mighty one.**

Then he paſſes, by a moſt beautiful tranſition, to his darling topic, the redemption of ſinners. He gives us, together with one of the fineſt contraſts † imaginable, a view of the MESSIAH and his great ſalvation. When thoſe lofty cedars are levelled with the ground, *there ſhall come a rod*, a twig ſhall ſpring *from the ſtem of Jeſſe, and a branch ſhall grow out of his roots:* ‡ which, notwithſtanding its mean original, and unpromiſing appearance, ſhall rear its head to the ſkies, and extend its ſhade to the ends of the earth.

Ther. You do well, *Aſpaſio*, to recal my roving thoughts. This magnificent ſolitude had captivated my imagination, and I was giving a-looſe to the uſual ſallies of my fancy. But, with willing compliance, I turn to a more excellent ſubject.—Only I muſt aſſure you, that your remark awakens a painful idea in *my* mind, though a joyful one in your own. For my hopes, which were once high and lifted up, are now too much like that devoted proſtrate foreſt.

Aſp. My dear *Theron*, give me leave to ſay, they were never rightly founded. They were, what *Shakeſpear* calls, *the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion*. Now the ſhadowy and tranſient hopes are demoliſhed, that ſolid and everlaſting joys may ſucceed. Let them reſt on *CHRIST*, the infinitely-glorious REDEEMER, and they ſhall never be overthrown, never be removed any more.

Caſt a look upon yonder ivy. What can be more feeble? It has not ſtrength enough to withſtand the ſlighteſt blaſt. Nay, if left to itſelf, its own weight would cruſh it to the earth. Yet, by twining around the oak, how high it riſes, and how firm it ſtands! An emblem of our ſtate, and a pattern for our imitation.—Thus let us, who in ourſelves are nothing, of ourſelves can do nothing, let us fly to *CHRIST*; rely on *CHRIST*; and, as *Barnabas* (that true ſon of conſolation) ſpeaks, *cleave to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, with full purpoſe of heart.** Let us determine to know nothing, to deſire nothing, to depend on nothing, but *JESUS CHRIST* and him crucified. Let this be the motto for our faith, this the language of our ſouls, *CHRIST is all*. Then ſhall our virtues, though hitherto ſmitten with a blaſt, revive as the corn; then ſhall our hopes, though in themſelves weaker than the ivy, mount like the cedars.

Ther. You can hardly imagine, how a ſenſe of guilt and unworthineſs oppreſſes my mind. I am often diſcouraged, and cannot bring myſelf to be ſtedfaſt in faith, or joyful through hope.

Aſp. You cannot bring yourſelf, but GOD Almighty's power and grace can bring to paſs theſe deſirable effects. And hear what the prophet ſays farther, upon the charming topic which introduced our diſcourſe.—Whenever the eloquent *Iſaiah* undertakes to diſplay a truth, he gives it all the energy, all the beauty, and every heightening touch, which it is capable of receiving.—This humble ſhoot, ſpringing from the ſtem of *Jeſſe*, ſhall riſe to ſuch a pitch of elevation, that it ſhall be conſpicuous far and near, and *ſtand for an enſign of the people*. It ſhall be ſeen, not like a beacon upon the top of an hill, by the *Iſraelites* only, or the natives of a ſingle territory; but like the great luminaries of heaven, ſhall be viſible in every country, and by the whole inhabited world.—*To it ſhall the Gentiles ſeek*; not only from the remoteſt, but from the moſt barbarous and idolatrous climes. Theſe, even theſe perſons, though ſavage in their nature, and deteſtable in their manners, ſhall be freely admitted, and find reſt under his ſhadow. Nay, the refreſhment which he yields, and the comfort which they receive, ſhall be not ſeaſonable only, but of ſovereign efficacy; *his reſt ſhall be glorious*. †

From this we learn, that all the bleſſings of *CHRIST*'s mediation are deſigned for *Gentiles*; for the moſt abandoned and abominable ſinners.—That they are ſo full and conſummate, as to create a calm of tranquillity; *a glorious reſt*, in the moſt troubled, afflicted, guilty conſciences.—And I dare challenge even my *Theron*'s miſgiving mind, to ſpecify any want which is not ſupplied, any grievance which is not redreſſed, by the righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*. I formerly encountered your *objections*, let me now combat your *ſcruples*.

Ther. Sometimes I have a deep and diſtreſſing conviction of my extreme ſinfulneſs.—'Tis like a ſore burden, too heavy for me to bear.—'Tis like the vileſt filth, and renders me odious to myſelf; how much more loathſome to the all-ſeeing eye?—It appears like a debt of ten thouſand talents, and I have nothing, no, not any thing to pay.—Then I experience, what the *pſalmiſt* ſo pathetically laments; *My ſins have taken ſuch hold upon me, that I am not able to look up: yea, they are more in number than the hairs of my head*, and my heart is ready to fail; my hopes are upon the point to expire.

Aſp. Then, *Theron*, fly to that juſt and righteous ONE, who is the ſtrength of our hearts; the life of our hopes; and our portion for ever.

* If. x. 33, 34.

† This fine contraſt, and that artful tranſition are, by the injudicious diviſion of the two chapters, very much obſcured, if not quite loſt, to many readers. The chapters, I think, ſhould by no means be ſeparated; but the tenth and the eleventh, as a continuation of the ſame prophecy, ſhould be *united*.

‡ If. xi. 1.

* Acts xi. 23. † If. xi. 10.

If ſin is a ſore *burden*; look unto *CHRIST*, who bore it all, in his own body on the tree; and removed, entirely removed that tremendous load, which would otherwiſe have ſunk the whole world into the nethermoſt hell.—If ſin renders us *filthy*; let us have recourſe to that blood of ſprinkling, which cleanſes, not from a few ſtains only, but from all guilt. By which the moſt defiled tranſgreſſors become fair as the faireſt wool, nay whiter than the virgin ſnows.*——If ſin is a *debt*;† ſubjecting us to wrath, and binding us over to puniſhment; let us confide in that gracious SURETY, who has taken the debt upon himſelf, and made it all his own: and not only ſo, but has paid it; paid it to the uttermoſt farthing, to the very laſt mite: ſo that juſtice itſelf can demand no more.

Let me confirm and illuſtrate this comfortable truth by a ſcriptural ſimilitude. No ſimilitudes are more exact, and none ſo ſtriking. *I have blotted out as a thick cloud your tranſgreſſions, and as a cloud your ſins.*‡ A little while ago, the whole expanſe of yonder ſky was covered with clouds. Nothing could more ſtrongly repreſent a multitude of corruptions beſieging the heart, and a multitude of iniquities overſpreading the life.——But where is, now, that immenſe arrangement of gloomy vapours? The ſun has ſhone them, and the wind has ſwept them, clean away. There are none, neither great nor ſmall, remaining. From one end of the wide-extended hemiſphere to the other, we ſee nothing but the clear and beautiful blue of the firmament. *So*, ſaith the SPIRIT of GOD to the true believer, *ſo totally* is your guilt, however horrid and enormous, done away through the dying *JESUS*.

Ther. It is not poſſible to conceive, nor will the whole creation afford, a more exquiſitely-fine compariſon. Perhaps nothing can ſo emphatically deſcribe the moſt prodigious multitude, entirely obliterated, without the *leaſt trace* of their former exiſtence.—But I am not only chargeable with *paſt* iniquities; I am alſo liable to daily miſcarriages. I relapſe into ſin; and when I would do good, evil is preſent with me.——Nay, my beſt hours are not free from ſinful infirmities, nor my beſt duties, from ſinful imperfections; which, like a worm at the core of the fruit, eat away the vigour of my graces, and tarniſh the beauty of my ſervices.

Aſp. Becauſe, through the frailty of your mortal nature, you cannot always ſtand upright; becauſe even the *juſt man falleth* daily, and daily contracteth defilement; therefore *a fountain is opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs*.§ The blood and atonement of *CHRIST* are compared to a heavenly fountain. In which polluted ſinners may waſh daily, waſh hourly; and be conſtantly, perfectly clean.——A *ciſtern* may fail; may be broken or exhauſted. But it is the property of a real fountain, never to be dried up, always to yield its waters. Such is the efficacy of *CHRIST*'s death; not to be diminiſhed by univerſal and by inceſſant uſe. It *removes the iniquity of the land.*‖ *It takes away the ſin of the world.*¶ It is new, for our application, every morning; new, for this bleſſed purpoſe, every moment.—On which account, it makes complete proviſion for our cleanſing, our reſtoration, and our comfort.—Eſpecially, as it is not only ſovereign in itſelf, and always free for our reproach, but is ever pleaded by a great HIGH PRIEST in our behalf. Therefore the inſpired caſuiſt directs us to *this* ſource of conſolation, under all the upbraidings of conſcience, and all the remains of inbred depravity. *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the FATHER, JESUS CHRIST the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins.**

We; St *John* reckons himſelf in the number of thoſe frail offending creatures, who ſtand in need of *CHRIST*, as a perpetual Interceſſor. This is written, not to encourage us in the commiſſion of ſin; but that we may be the leſs diſcouraged, under a ſenſe of our infirmities. —We *have*; not we poſſibly may, but we actually have. A ſoul burdened with guilt, cannot be ſatisfied, cannot be eaſed, with a bare *perhaps*. It is therefore poſitively affirmed, as a matter of eſtabliſhed certainty, of which we ſhould not admit a doubt.—We have for our advocate, not a *mean* perſon, but HIM who received an illuſtrious teſtimony from the moſt excellent glory, *This is my beloved SON.*†——Not a *guilty* perſon, who ſtands in need of pardon to himſelf; but *JESUS CHRIST the righteous.*——Not a mere petitioner, who relies purely upon liberality; but one who has *merited*, fully merited whatever he aſks; *he is the propitiation for our ſins*, has paid our ranſom, and purchaſed our peace. ——In conſequence of which, he *claims* rather than aſks our renewed, our irrevocable forgiveneſs.——This he claims, not from an *unrelenting* Judge, but from his FATHER and our FATHER.——And can ſuch a plea meet with a repulſe? Can ſuch an advocate miſcarry in his ſuit?——If the prophets of old were reckoned *the chariot of Iſrael, and the horſemen thereof*;‡ becauſe, like their anceſtor *Jacob*, they had power with GOD, and prevailed in prayer; O! what a defence! what a ſecurity, is the divinely-excellent, and ever-prevailing interceſſion of *JESUS CHRIST!*

"Your graces," you complain, "are ſullied, and your "ſervices defective."——Then, my dear friend, renounce them in point of confidence; and gladly receive, cordially embrace, the all-perfect righteouſneſs of your LORD. So ſhall your juſtification be *complete*; and your ſervices, though deficient in themſelves, be "*ac*-"*cepted* in the BELOVED."——I have ſomewhere ſeen, painted upon a flat ſurface, an awkward and diſagreeable countenance; in which was nothing regular, nothing graceful, but every feature diſproportionate. Yet this very face, reflected from a cylindrical mirror, has put off its deformity; the lineaments became well adjuſted; ſymmetry connected every part, and beauty ſmiled throughout the whole.——Like the *former* our virtues appear, when compared with the immaculate purity of GOD, or the ſublime perfection of his law. But they acquire the amiableneſs of the *latter*, when preſented to the FATHER by our divine MEDIATOR, and recommended by his inconceivably-precious oblation. §

Milton,

* Pſal. li. 7.

† By theſe three images, the *pſalmiſt* diſplays the horrible and deſtructive malignity of ſin, together with the free nature and invaluable worth of evangelical forgiveneſs. *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion*, as an inſupportable load, (נשוי) *is bore* or *taken away*; *whoſe ſin*, as being the moſt abominable filth, (נסוי) *is covered*; *unto whom the LORD imputath not* (לא יחשוב) that moſt ruinous of all debts, *iniquity*.——It is pleaſing to obſerve the vehemence and ardour, with which the royal penitent ſpeaks on this favourite topic. He breaks out with a kind of holy *abruptneſs*, and pours his ſoul in a *variety* of warm expreſſions; as one who thought, he could not poſſibly enter upon the ſubject *too ſoon*, or dwell upon it *too long*, Pſal. xxxii. 1, 2.

‡ Iſ. xliv. 22. § Zech. xiii. 1. ‖ Zech. iii. 9.

¶ John i 29.

* 1 John ii. 1. † 2 Pet. i. 17.

‡ 2 *Kings* ii. 12. xiii. 14. There is a peculiar beauty, and moſt appoſite ſignificancy, in this *proverbial* ſaying, as uſed by the ancient *Iſraelites*. *Horſes* and *chariots* were deemed, in thoſe ages, the principal ſtrength of the battle, the moſt formidable apparatus of war. Of theſe the *Iſraelites* were entirely deſtitute. Their GOD had expreſsly forbidden them to multiply horſes; and we never read of their bringing any conſiderable number of cavalry into the field.—But, ſo long as they enjoyed the preſence of their prophets, they wanted not this arm of fleſh. They had more than an equivalent for chariots and horſes, in the *fervent*, the *effectual* prayers of thoſe holy men of GOD.

§ *They*, the perſons and performances of frail men, *ſhall come up with acceptance on mine altar, ſaith the LORD*, Iſaiah lx. 7.

—Which

Milton, taking his hint from the revelations of St *John*, represents our great HIGH PRIEST in this glorious and delightful attitude; represents him offering up the supplications and penitential duties of our first parents; mixing with them the incense of his own merits; and thus interceding before the throne.

See, FATHER! what first fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in man! These sighs
And prayers, which, in this golden censer mix'd
With incense, I thy PRIEST before thee bring.
—Now therefore bend thine ear
To supplication; hear his sighs though mute!
Unskilful with what words to pray, let ME
Interpret for him; ME his advocate
And propitiation. All his works on ME,
Good, or not good, ingraft: MY merit these
*Shall perfect; and for these MY death shall pay**.

The poet's words are very *emphatical*. Yet words can no more express the *prevalence* of our *LORD*'s negotiation, than the picture of the sun can diffuse its splendor, or convey its warmth.

Ther. My spiritual wants are many. I have many duties to discharge, and many temptations to withstand; many corruptions to mortify, and many graces to cultivate, or rather to acquire. Yet have I no stock, and no strength of my own.

Asp. I rejoice, that my *Theron* is sensible of his own indigence. The good *LORD* keep us both, in this respect, as little children; whose whole dependence is upon their nurse's care, or their parent's bounty! Then may we, having such a sense of our poverty, and having a great *HIGH PRIEST* over the house of *GOD*, come boldly to the throne of grace. We may apply, through the righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*, for all needful succour, and for every desirable blessing.—If *Solomon* could say, *LORD, remember David, and all his trouble.* If *Moses* could say, *LORD, remember Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob thy servants.* How much more confidently may we say, "*LORD*, remember *JESUS*, the "Son of thy love! remember *JESUS*, and all his suf-"ferings; *JESUS*, and all his merits. Shall *they* be "sent empty-away, who have their *SAVIOUR's* obedi-"ence to plead?"—No verily. Though they are altogether unworthy in themselves, yet worthy is the *LAMB* that was slain, for whose sake their petitions should be granted, and their every necessity supplied.

Let me repeat to you a most beautiful and encouraging portion of scripture; which you may look upon, under all your wants, as a *charte blanche* put into your hand by GOD all-sufficient: *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of JESUS, by a new and living way which he has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an HIGH PRIEST over the house of GOD; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith* †.

The apostle, in this place, and throughout this whole epistle, alludes to the *Mosaic* ordinances, in order to shew, that the privileges of the *Christian* dispensation were typified by, yet are greatly superior to, those of the *Jewish*.—Among the *Jews*, none but the *high priest* was permitted to set a foot within the holy of holies; and he, only on the solemn day of expiation. Whereas *all Christians* are allowed to enter into the immediate presence of the most high *GOD*; may have the nearest access to *HIM*, who dwells in the heaven of heavens; and this, not once in the year only, but at all times, and on all occasions.—The high priest never made that awful approach, but with the blood of a *slaughtered* animal. We have blood of infinitely-richer value, to atone for our failings, and recommend our addresses; even the blood of the *crucified JESUS*.—*Aaron* entered through the veil of the temple; a way, which was soon to become antiquated, and for ever to be abolished. *We* enter by a far more noble way; by the flesh of our blessed *REDEEMER*; given as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins. Which way is both *new* and *living*; such as never waxes old, will subsist to the end of time, and leads to eternal life.—Trusting in this sacrifice, and entering by this way, which are consecrated on purpose for our use, we may not only draw near, but draw near *with boldness*, with an humble filial confidence; and present our supplications with *faith*,—with *assurance* of faith,—with *full* assurance of faith.

How strong is the contrast, and how fine the gradation! how precious the doctrine, and how free the privilege! What shall we fear, if we believe this doctrine? what can we lack, if we improve this privilege? —And why should we not believe the former, why should we not improve the latter? Since they both are founded, not on any excellent endowments, not in any recommending actions of our own, but *purely, solely, entirely* on the blood of *JESUS CHRIST*.

Ther. There may come seasons of *desertion*, when all graces are languid, if not dead; when the light of *GOD's* countenance is suspended, if not turned into darkness; and the man is more like a lifeless log than a zealous *Christian*. These frames of mind I have heard mentioned, and I begin to know something of them by experience.

Asp. Then, *Theron*, when you *walk in darkness, and see no light* of sensible comfort, *trust in the name*, the unchangeable grace, *of the LORD; and stay upon* the righteousness, the consummate righteousness, of *your GOD**. This is not barely my advice, but the direction of an infallible guide.—This agrees also with the character of a real *Christian*, as it is most exactly drawn by an unerring pen; *We rejoice in CHRIST JESUS, and have no confidence in the flesh* †; no reliance on any thing of our own, either for present joy, or future glory.

To rely on the elevation of our spirits, on the enlargement of our devotion, is like building our house upon the *ice*; which may abide for a season, but, upon the first alteration of weather, ceases to be a foundation, and becomes "water that runneth apace." Whereas, to derive our consolation from the MEDIATOR's righteousness, and JEHOVAH's faithfulness, is to build our edifice upon the *rock*; which "may not be removed, but standeth fast for ever." The former of these, even amidst all our changes, is invariably the same. The latter, notwithstanding all our unworthiness, is inviolably sure. Therefore the *fruit* of that righteousness is peace, and the *effect* of this

faithfulness

—Which is explained by St *Peter*'s comment; *Ye are an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto GOD by JESUS CHRIST*, 1 Pet ii. 5. and still farther ascertained by St *Paul*'s practice; who, when he addresses the MAJESTY of heaven with any petition, or presents the tribute of praise, presumes not to do either the one or the other, but in the blessed MEDIATOR's name: because, secluded from this grand recommendation, they would be *offensive* to the awful JEHOVAH, "as smoke in his nostrils;" accompanied with it, they are *acceptable*, "as the sweet-smelling incense."

* Par. Lost, book XI. l. 22. *&c.*

† Heb. x. 19. 20. 21. 22.

* Is. l. 10.

† *Phil.* iii. 3. *Exactly drawn*—Perhaps there is no where extant a finer, a more complete, or so lively a *picture* of the true Christian. 'Tis in *miniature*, I own; but it comprehends all the *master*-lines and every *distinguishing* feature. *We are they, who worship GOD in the spirit*; with the spiritual homage of a renewed heart; with faith, love, resignation. *And rejoice in CHRIST JESUS*; in him look for all our acceptance with GOD; from him derive all the peace of our minds; and on him place all the hope of our final felicity. *And have no confidence in the flesh*; renouncing ourselves, in every view, as unprofitable servants; disclaiming all our own works and attainments, as defective services.

faithfulneſs is, if not rapturous joy, yet *quietneſs and aſſurance for ever* *.

So that, when it is winter in my ſoul, and there ſeems to be a dearth on all my ſenſible delights, I would ſtill ſay with the pſalmiſt, "*Why art thou ſo diſquieted, O my* "*ſoul? CHRIST* is the ſame amidſt all thy derelictions. "*He is a green fir-tree* †, which never loſes its verdure. "Under his ſhadow thou mayeſt always find repoſe. "His merit and atonement are ſtill mighty to ſave; "they conſtitute an everlaſting and infinite righteouſ- "neſs. The promiſes of GOD, through his mediation, "*are yea, and amen* ‡; are unqueſtionably and unalien- "ably thine."

Ther. 'Tis very probable, I may meet with *afflictions*; death in my family, or diſeaſe in my perſon. Diſappointments may fruſtrate my deſigns. Providence may wear a frowning aſpect, as though the *LORD* had a controverſy with his ſinful creature, and was making him to poſſeſs the iniquities of his youth. And what will be ſufficient to ſupport and to chear, in ſuch a gloomy hour ‖?

Aſp. The righteouſneſs of CHRIST.—Nothing is ſo ſovereign, to calm our fears, and remove all apprehenſions of the divine wrath. Apprehenſions of the divine wrath would draw the curtains of horror around our ſick beds, and throw upon our languiſhing eye-lids the ſhadow of death ⊥. But a believing improvement of *CHRIST*'s ſatisfaction for our offences, *clears up* the mournful ſcene, and *takes away* the ſting of tribulation.

Attending to this great propitiation, the ſufferer ſees his ſins forgiven, and his *GOD* reconciled. From whence he concludes, that the ſevereſt afflictions are only fatherly corrections; ſhall not exceed his ability to bear; and ſhall aſſuredly obtain a gracious iſſue. He can fetch comfort from that chearing word, *I will be with him in trouble*; and expect the accompliſhment of that moſt conſolatory promiſe, *I will deliver him, and bring him to honour* —+.—Theſe ſupports have enabled the ſaints, to kiſs the rod, and bleſs the hand, which chaſtiſed them; to poſſeſs their ſouls, not in patience only, but in thankfulneſs alſo. While they have *looked inward*, and diſcerned their abſolute need of theſe bitter but ſalutary medicines; have *looked upward*, and beheld the cup in a moſt wiſe and tender *PHYSICIAN*'s hand; have *looked forward*, with a joyful hope, to that better world; where *GOD* will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there ſhall be no more ſorrow, nor any more pain.

Ther. The laſt occaſion of need is the trying hour of *death*, and the tremendous day of *judgment*. Will this righteouſneſs carry us, with ſafety, through the darkſome valley, and preſent us, with acceptance, at the dreadful tribunal?

Aſp. It will; it will.—This ſilences all the curſes of the law, and diſarms death of every terror. To believe in this righteouſneſs, is to meet death at our *SAVIOUR*'s ſide; or rather, like good old *Simeon*, with the *SAVIOUR* in our arms.—*They overcame*, ſays the beloved diſciple, they overcame the laſt enemy, not by natural fortitude, or philoſophic reſolution, but *by the blood of the LAMB* ++; by a believing application of the victorious *REDEEMER*'s merit.—*I know*, adds the heroic apoſtle, *whom I have believed* *; I am aſſured, that my JESUS is infinitely faithful, and will not deſert me; that his ranſom is abſolutely ſufficient, and cannot deceive me. Therefore, with a holy bravery, he bids defiance to death; or rather, triumphs over it, as a vanquiſhed enemy; *Thanks be to GOD who giveth us the victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST* †!—Nay, through the wonderful efficacy of CHRIST's propitiation, *death is ours* ‡; not our foe, but our friend and deliverer. We may number it among our treaſures; and reſt ſatisfied, that *to die, is gain*.

What? though our fleſh ſee corruption; though this body, vile at preſent, be made viler ſtill, by dwelling amidſt worms, and mouldering in the duſt? yet through HIS righteouſneſs, who is the reſurrection and the life, it ſhall ſhake off the diſhonours of the grave; it ſhall riſe to a new and illuſtrious ſtate of exiſtence; it ſhall be made like the *glorious* and *immortal* body of our triumphant LORD.—If the body be ſo refined, ſo exalted; what will be the dignity, what the perfection, of the ſoul? or rather, of ſoul and body both, when they are happily and indiſſolubly united, at the reſurrection of the juſt?—Shall they have any thing to fear, when the judgment is ſet, and the books are opened? 'Tis probable there will be no accuſation, 'tis certain *there is no condemnation, to them that are in* CHRIST JESUS ‖. Who ſhall lay any thing to their charge? *It is GOD*,—not man, or angel, or any creature, but *GOD—that juſtifies* them. The *GOD* whoſe law was broke, the *GOD* to whom vengeance belongeth, he himſelf pronounces them *innocent*, becauſe their iniquities have been laid upon CHRIST; he himſelf pronounces them *righteous*, becauſe they are intereſted in the obedience of their REDEEMER: on theſe accounts, he himſelf pronounces them *bleſſed*, and gives them an *abundant entrance* into the joy of their LORD.

But what can expreſs, or who can imagine their happineſs, when they take up their abode, in the palaces of heaven, amidſt the choirs of angels, and under the light of GOD's countenance! when they poſſeſs *the hope of righteouſneſs* ⊥; when they wear *the crown of righteouſneſs* —+; and receive that great, that eternal ſalvation, which is an adequate recompence for the humiliation and agonies of JESUS CHRIST *the righteous* ++.

Come then, my dear *Theron*, let us henceforth be as branches, ingrafted into the heavenly VINE; derive all our ſap, all our moiſture, all our conſolation, from his fulneſs. Let us live upon our all-ſufficient REDEEMER, as the *Iſraelites* ſubſiſted on their manna from heaven, and their waters from the rock, and not wiſh for *other*, as we cannot poſſibly enjoy *better* ſuſtenance.

Ther. Is this the meaning of our LORD's exhortation, when he ſhews the neceſſity of *eating his fleſh*, and *drinking his blood?*

Aſp. 'Tis the very ſame. A repeated and inceſſant application of our SAVIOUR's merits, for all the purpoſes of piety and ſalvation, is the kernel of this nut, the meaning of this metaphor.—*When* we habitually advert to JESUS CHRIST, as dying for our ſins, and riſing again for our juſtification; performing all righteouſneſs, that we may be entitled to an eternal crown; and interceding in heaven, that we may be filled with all the fulneſs of GOD: *then* we eat his fleſh, and drink his blood: then we derive a life of ſolid comfort, and real godlineſs, from his mediatorial offices; juſt as we derive the continuance of our natural life, from the daily uſe of alimentary recruits.

* Iſa. xxxii. 17. † Hoſ. xiv. 8. ‡ 2 Cor. i. 20.

‖ The ſufficiency of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs, to anſwer all theſe important and delightful ends, is excellently diſplayed in Mr. RAWLIN's ſermons, on *CHRIST the righteouſneſs of his people*. In which the public have ſeen the grand and amiable eſſentials of the goſpel, delivered in maſculine language; defended by nervous reaſoning; and animated with a lively devotion.

⊥ Alluding to that deſcription of tribulation and anguiſh, which, I believe, no perſon of ſenſibility can read without ſhuddering; *My face is foul with weeping, and on my eye-lids is the ſhadow of death*, Job xvi. 16.

—+ Pſal. xci. 15. ++ Rev. xii 11.

* 2 Tim. i. 12. † 1 Cor. xv. 57. ‡ 1 Cor. iii. 22.

‖ Rom. viii. 1. ⊥ Gal. v. 5.

—+ 2 Tim. iv. 8. ++ 1 John ii. 1.

Ther.

Ther. Your diſcourſe brings to my remembrance that magnificent and beautiful paſſage in ſcripture, where *CHRIST* is called THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. Your doctrine ſets the compariſon in a very advantageous light; gives it the utmoſt force, and the greateſt propriety.——The righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, according to your account, is as extenſively uſeful in the *Chriſtian* life, as the beams of that grand luminary are in material nature.——The ſun fills the *air*; where it diffuſes light, and creates day.——The ſun penetrates the *ocean;* from whence it exhales vapours, and forms the clouds.—In the *vegetable* creation, the ſun raiſes the ſap, and protrudes the gems; unfolds the leaves, and paints the bloſſom; diſtends the fruit, and concocts the juices.—Turn we to the *animal* world; the ſun delights the eye, and gladdens the heart. It awakens millions of inſects into being; and imparts that general joy, which every ſenſible creature feels. Indeed *there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.*

Aſp. Thus the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, that true and only *Sun of Righteouſneſs*, *ariſes* on his people *with healing in his wings* *. So various, ſo efficacious, and ſo extenſive, are his influences. Like a *ſun*, he enlightens and enlivens; like *wings*, he cheriſhes and protects; like a remedy, he *heals* and reſtores: and all, by virtue of his righteouſneſs, on account of his *righteouſneſs*.—Nor can we doubt, nor need we wonder, if we conſider its nature and its author. Its *nature:* it is conſummately excellent, has every kind, and every degree of perfection. Its *author;* it is the righteouſneſs and obedience of that incomparable *PERSON*, in whom *dwells all the fulneſs of the GODHEAD.*

It muſt therefore,—you will permit me to ſum up in a word, what has been diſplayed at large,—it muſt be fully anſwerable to the *demands* of the *law*, even in its higheſt purity, and utmoſt exactneſs.—It is infinitely ſuperior to the *demerit* of *ſin*, and entirely abſolves from all guilt, entirely exempts from all condemnation.—It is a moſt valid and never-failing plea, againſt the *accuſations* of *Satan*, and the challenges of conſcience.—It eſtabliſhes an undoubted *title* to *every* bleſſing, whether in time or in eternity, whether of grace or of glory.—It is a ſure ſupport for the Chriſtian, in an hour of *deſertion*, and in the agonies of *death*. Caſting anchor on this bottom, he may diſmiſs every fear, and ride out every ſtorm. Leaning upon this ſtaff, he may go down to the repoſe of the grave; and neither be appalled at the ſolemn harbingers of diſſolution, nor terrified at its far more awful conſequences.—The merit of this righteouſneſs, and the power of its *DIVINE AUTHOR*, will unſeal the tomb; will bring forth the ſleeping duſt from the chambers of putrefaction; and build up the whole man into immortality and glory. By this he will be preſented *without ſpot* *; preſented *faultleſs* †; yea, be preſented *perfect* ‡, and with *exceeding joy*, before the throne.

What a gift then is the *righteouſneſs of CHRIST!*——Bleſſed be GOD, for all the indulgent diſpenſations of Providence! Bleſſed be GOD, for all the beneficial productions of nature! But above all, bleſſed be GOD, for the tranſcendent and unſpeakable gift of *CHRIST*,—for the unſearchable and infinite treaſures of HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

* Mal. iv. 2.

* Eph. v. 27. † Jude 24. ‡ Col. i. 28.

ASPASIO VINDICATED.

IN

ELEVEN LETTERS

FROM THE LATE

Rev. Mr HERVEY,

TO THE

Rev. Mr JOHN WESLEY;

CONTAINING

An ANSWER *to that* GENTLEMAN's *Remarks on* THERON *and* ASPASIO.

PUBLISHED FROM THE

AUTHOR's MANUSCRIPT,

LEFT IN THE

POSSESSION OF HIS BROTHER W. HERVEY.

WITH A

PREFACE,

SHEWING THE REASON OF THEIR BEING NOW PRINTED.

I marvel, that ye are ſo ſoon removed from him that called you into the grace of Chriſt, unto another goſpel: which is not another; but there be ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the goſpel of Chriſt. *Gal.* i. 6. 7.

PREFACE.

THE following letters were written by my late brother, in anſwer to a *piece*, which was firſt ſent him from the Rev. Mr *John Weſley*, by way of private letter, containing ſome remarks which that gentleman had made on reading *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*. When my brother had read it over, he thought it beſt to be ſilent, as it contained nothing which could materially affect his judg-

ment

ment in regard to the work it cenſured: for this reaſon, as well as for peace ſake, he laid it by him unanſwered.—Mr *Weſley* then publiſhed a pamphlet, which he entitled, *A preſervative againſt unſettled notions in religion*; in which he printed the above-mentioned letter.

This my brother looked upon as a ſummons to the bar of the Public; and upon this occaſion, in a letter to a friend, dated *June* 23, 1758, writes as follows.

["My dear friend,

"I little thought, when I put Mr *Weſley*'s manuſcript "into your hand, that I ſhould ſee it in print ſo ſoon. I "took very little notice of it, and let it lie by me ſeveral "months, without giving it an attentive conſideration *. "It ſeemed to me ſo palpably weak, dealing only in po"ſitive aſſertions and poſitive denials, that I could not "imagine he would adventure it into the world, with"out very great alterations. But it is now come abroad, "juſt as you received it, in a two ſhillings pamphlet, en"titled, *A preſervative againſt unſettled notions in religion.*— "Of this pamphlet what he has wrote againſt me, makes "only a ſmall part. Now then the queſtion is, Whe"ther I ſhall attempt to anſwer it? Give me your opi"nion, as you have given me your aſſiſtance; and may "the Father of mercies give you an increaſe of know"ledge and utterance, of peace and joy in the Holy "Ghoſt."]

Between this and the *October* following, my brother began the letters contained in this volume, of which he thus ſpeaks in another letter to his friend, dated *October* 24, 1758.

["My dear friend,

"Let me repeat my thanks for the trouble you have "taken, and for the aſſiſtance you have given me, in re"lation to my controverſy with Mr *Weſley*. He is ſo "unfair in his quotations, and ſo magiſterial in his man"ner, that I find it no ſmall difficulty, to preſerve the "decency of the gentleman, and the meekneſs of the "Chriſtian, in my intended anſwer. May our divine "Maſter aid me in both theſe inſtances, or elſe not ſuffer "me to write at all."]

When, in the *December* following, I was ſent for to *Weſton*, in the very laſt period of my brother's long illneſs,—I aſked him (the evening before he died) "what "he would have done with the letters to Mr *Weſley*, whe"ther he would have them publiſhed after his death?" —He anſwered—"By no means, becauſe he had only "tranſcribed about half of them fair for the preſs; but "as the corrections and alterations of the latter part were "moſtly in ſhort-hand, it would be difficult to under"ſtand them, eſpecially as ſome of the ſhort-hand was "entirely his own, and others could not make it out; "therefore," he ſaid, "as it is not a finiſhed piece, I de"ſire you will think no more about it."

As theſe were his laſt orders concerning theſe letters, I thought it right to obey them; and therefore I withſtood the repeated ſolicitations of many of his friends, who wanted to have them printed; alleging the ſervice they might be of to allay the groundleſs prejudices, which the *Preſervative* might occaſion in the minds of many, againſt my brother's other writings, as well as the utility of them in general, as they contained ſo maſterly a defence of "*the truth as it is in* JESUS."

But, notwithſtanding the regard I had for the perſons who ſolicited the publication, I could not be perſuaded to print the letters; and they never had appeared in public with my conſent, had not a ſurreptitious edition of them lately made its way from the preſs, and was I not under a firm perſuaſion *that* will be followed by *more*.

As this is the caſe, I think it my duty to the memory of my late brother, to ſend forth as correct an edition as I poſſibly can; for as to *that* which has appeared (from what editor I know not) it is ſo faulty and incorrect, that but little judgment can be formed from it, of the propriety and force of my brother's anſwers to Mr *Weſley*.

As to the unfairneſs of publiſhing my brother's letters without my conſent, and the injuſtice to his memory, in ſending ſo mangled a performance out under his name, they are too apparent to need any proof: and though the editor, as I have been informed, gave away the whole impreſſion, ſo that it is plain, lucre was not the motive of his proceeding, and I would charitably hope he did it with a view of benefiting his readers; yet it is ſo like *doing evil that good may come*, as, in my opinion, to be quite unjuſtifiable.

However, as the only way now left to remedy in ſome ſort what has been done, and to prevent a further impoſition on the public, from worſe motives than actuated this publiſher, I have called a friend to my aſſiſtance; and, by this means, preſent the reader with as perfect a copy of theſe letters, as can poſſibly be made out from the original manuſcript now in my hands.

That the reader may judge more clearly of the ſtate of the controverſy between my late brother and Mr *Weſley*, I have thought it right to ſubjoin Mr *Weſley*'s letter, word for word, as it ſtands in the *Preſervative*.

* Afterwards he read it again, and gave it, what he calls in the beginning of the firſt letter, "*a careful peruſal.*"

A LETTER to the *Rev. Mr* ——.

DEAR SIR, *Oct.* 15. 1756.

A Conſiderable time ſince I ſent you a few haſty thoughts which occurred to me on reading the dialogues between *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*. I have not been favoured with any anſwer. Yet, upon another and a more careful peruſal of them, I could not but ſet down ſome obvious reflections, which I would rather have communicated, before thoſe dialogues were publiſhed.

IN the firſt dialogue there are ſeveral juſt and ſtrong obſervations, which may be of uſe to every ſerious reader. In the ſecond, is not the deſcription often too laboured, the language too ſtiff, and affected? Yet the reflections on the creation (in the 52d and following pages,) make abundant amends for this. (I cite the pages according to the *Dublin* edition, having wrote the rough draught of what follows, in *Ireland* *.)

P. 128. Is *juſtification* more or leſs, than GOD's pardoning and accepting a ſinner through the merits of *Chriſt!* That GOD herein "reckons the righteouſneſs and obedience which *Chriſt* performed *as our own*;" I allow, if by that ambiguous expreſſion, you mean only, as you here explain it yourſelf, "they are as effectual for obtaining our ſalvation, *as if they were our own* perſonal qualifications." P. 128.

* The pages in this edition refer to thoſe of THERON and ASPASIO, inſerted in the preceding part of this work. And the reader, by comparing the quotations with Mr *Hervey*'s own words, will eaſily ſee, that Mr *Weſley* has, in moſt caſes, quoted very unfairly.

P. 129.

P. 129. "WE are not ſolicitous, as to any *particular* ſet of *phraſes*. Only let men be humbled, as repenting criminals, at *Chriſt*'s feet; let them rely as devoted penſioners, on his merits; and they are undoubtedly in the way to a bliſsful immortality." Then for *Chriſt*'s ſake, and for the ſake of the immortal ſouls which he has purchaſed with his blood, do not diſpute for that *particular phraſe, the imputed righteouſneſs of* Chriſt. It is not ſcriptural; it is not neceſſary. Men who ſcruple to uſe, men who never heard the expreſſion, may yet "be humbled, as *repenting criminals*, at his feet, and rely, as *devoted penſioners*, on his merits."——But it has done immenſe hurt. I have had abundant proof, that the frequent uſe of this unneceſſary phraſe, inſtead of "furthering men's progreſs in vital holineſs," has made them ſatisfied without any holineſs at all; yea and encouraged them to work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs.

Ibid. "To aſcribe pardon to *Chriſt*'s *paſſive*, eternal life to his *active* righteouſneſs, is fanciful rather than judicious. His univerſal obedience, from his birth to his death, is the one foundation of my hope."

THIS is unqueſtionably right. But if it be, there is no manner of need, to make the imputation of his *active* righteouſneſs, a ſeparate and laboured head of diſcourſe. O that you had been content with this plain ſcriptural account, and ſpared ſome of the *dialogues* and *letters* that follow!

THE third and fourth dialogues contain an admirable illuſtration and confirmation of the great doctrine of *Chriſt*'s ſatisfaction. Yet even here I obſerve a few paſſages, which are liable to ſome exception.

P. 132. "SATISFACTION was made to the divine law." I do not remember any ſuch expreſſion in ſcripture. This way of ſpeaking of the law as a *perſon injured* and to be *ſatisfied*, ſeems hardly defenſible.

P. 137. "THE *death* of *Chriſt* procured the *pardon* and *acceptance* of believers, even before he came in the fleſh." Yea, and ever ſince. In this we all agree. And why ſhould we contend for any thing more?

P. 151. "ALL the benefits of the new covenant are the *purchaſe of his blood.*" Surely they are. And after this has been fully proved, where is the need, where is the uſe, of contending ſo ſtremuouſly, for the *imputation of his righteouſneſs*, as is done in the fifth and ſixth dialogues?

P. 151. "IF he was our ſubſtitute as to *penal ſufferings*, why not as to *juſtifying obedience?*"

THE former is expreſsly aſſerted in ſcripture. The latter is not expreſsly aſſerted there.

P. 158. "As ſin and miſery have *abounded* through the firſt *Adam*, mercy and grace have *much more abounded* through the ſecond. So that none can have any reaſon to complain." No, not if the ſecond *Adam* died for all. Otherwiſe all for whom he did not die, have great reaſon to complain. For they inevitably *fall* by the firſt *Adam*, without any *help* from the ſecond.

Ibid. "THE whole world of believers" is an expreſſion which never occurs in ſcripture; nor has it any countenance there: the *world* in the inſpired writings being conſtantly taken either in an univerſal or in a bad ſenſe; either for the whole of mankind, or for that part of them who know not GOD.

P. 159. "IN *the* LORD *ſhall all the houſe of* Iſrael *be juſtified.*" It ought unqueſtionably to be rendered, *by* or *through the* LORD:" this argument therefore proves nothing. "*Ye are complete in him.*" The words literally rendered are, *Ye are filled with him.* And the whole paſſage, as any unprejudiced reader may obſerve, relates to ſanctification, not juſtification.

Ibid. "THEY are accepted *for* Chriſt's *ſake*; this is juſtification through *imputed righteouſneſs.*" That remains to be proved. Many allow the former, who cannot allow the latter.

P. 159. *Theron.* "I SEE no occaſion for ſuch *nice diſtinctions and metaphyſical ſubtilties.*

Aſp. You oblige us to make uſe of them, by confounding theſe very different ideas, that is, *Chriſt*'s active and paſſive righteouſneſs."

I ANSWER, We do not *confound* theſe: but neither do we *ſeparate* them. Nor have we any authority from ſcripture, for either thinking or ſpeaking of one ſeparate from the other. And this whole debate on one of them ſeparate from the other, is a mere *metaphyſical ſubtilty.*

Ibid. "THE righteouſneſs which juſtifies us, is already *wrought out.*"——A crude, unſcriptural expreſſion! "It was *ſet on foot, carried on, completed.*"——O vain philoſophy! The plain truth is, *Chriſt* lived and *taſted death for every man;* and through the merits of his life and death, every believer is juſtified.

P. 160. "WHOEVER perverts ſo glorious a doctrine, ſhews he never believed." Not ſo. They who *turn back as a dog to the vomit*, had once *eſcaped the pollutions of the world by the knowledge of* Chriſt.

Ibid. "THE goodneſs of GOD leadeth to repentance." This is unqueſtionably true. But the *nice, metaphyſical* doctrine of *imputed righteouſneſs*, leads not to repentance, but to licentiouſneſs.

Ibid. "THE believer *cannot but* add to his faith, works of righteouſneſs." During his firſt love, this is often true. But it is not true afterwards, as we know and feel by melancholy experience.

Ibid. "WE no longer obey, *in order* to lay the foundation for our final acceptance." No; that foundation is already laid in the merits of *Chriſt*. Yet we obey, *in order* to our final acceptance thro' his merits. And in this ſenſe, by obeying we *lay a good foundation, that we may attain eternal life.*

Ibid. "WE *eſtabliſh the law;* we provide for its honour, by the perfect obedience of *Chriſt.*" Can you poſſibly think, St *Paul* meant this? that ſuch a thought ever entered into his mind? The plain meaning is, We eſtabliſh both the true ſenſe, and the effectual practice of it: we provide for its being both underſtood and practiſed in its full extent.

P. 161. "On thoſe who reject the atonement, juſt ſeverity." Was it ever poſſible for them, not to reject it? If not, how is it juſt, to caſt them into a lake of fire, for not doing what it was impoſſible they ſhould do? Would it be juſt (make it your own caſe) to caſt *you* into hell, for not touching heaven with your hand?

Ibid. "JUSTIFICATION is *complete* the firſt moment we believe, and is incapable of *augmentation.*"

NOT ſo: there may be as many *degrees* in the *favour* as in the *image* of GOD.

P. 178. "ST PAUL often mentions *a righteouſneſs imputed:* (Not *a* righteouſneſs; never once; but ſimply *righteouſneſs.*) "What can this be, but *the righteouſneſs of* Chriſt?" He tells you himſelf, *Rom.* iv. 6. *To him that believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly*, faith *is imputed for righteouſneſs.* "Why is *Chriſt* ſtyled *Jehovah our righteouſneſs?*" Becauſe we are both juſtified and ſanctified through him.

Ibid. "My death, the cauſe of their forgiveneſs; my righteouſneſs, the ground of their acceptance."

How does this agree with P. 129. "To aſcribe pardon to *Chriſt*'s *paſſive*, eternal life to his *active* righteouſneſs, is fanciful rather than judicious?"

P. 171. "HE commends ſuch kinds of beneficence *only*, as were exerciſed to a diſciple as ſuch." Is not this a ſlip of the pen? Will not our LORD then commend, and reward eternally, all kinds of beneficence, provided they flowed from a principle of loving faith? Yea, that which was exerciſed to a Samaritan, a Jew, a Turk, or an Heathen? Even theſe I would not term "tranſient bubbles," though they do not *procure* our juſtification.

P. 172.

P. 172. "How must our righteouſneſs exceed that of the ſcribes and Phariſees? Not only in being ſincere, but in poſſeſſing a *complete* righteouſneſs, even that of *Chriſt*." Did our LORD mean this? Nothing leſs. He ſpecifies in the following parts of his ſermon, the very inſtances wherein the righteouſneſs of a Chriſtian exceeds that of the ſcribes and Phariſees.

Ibid. "HE brings this ſpecious *hypocrite* to the teſt." How does it appear, that he was an *hypocrite?* Our LORD gives not the leaſt intimation of it. Surely he *loved him*, not for his hypocriſy, but his ſincerity!

YET he loved the world, and therefore could not keep any of the commandments in their ſpiritual meaning. And the keeping of theſe is undoubtedly the *way* to, though not the *cauſe* of, eternal life.

P. 173. "*By works his faith was made perfect*; appeared to be true." No: the natural ſenſe of the word is, *By* the grace ſuperadded while he wrought thoſe *works*, *his faith was* literally *made perfect*.

Ibid. "HE *that doth righteouſneſs is righteous*,—manifeſts the truth of his converſion." Nay; the plain meaning is, *He* alone *is* truly *righteous*, whoſe faith worketh by love.

Ibid. "ST JAMES ſpeaks of the *juſtification of our faith*." Not unleſs you meant by that odd expreſſion, our *faith* being *made perfect*: for ſo the apoſtle explains his own meaning. Perhaps the word *juſtified* is once uſed by St *Paul* for *manifeſted*.—But that does not prove, it is to be ſo underſtood here.

Ibid, "WHOSO *doth theſe things ſhall never fall* into total apoſtaſy." How pleaſing is this to fleſh and blood! But *David* ſays no ſuch thing. His meaning is, *Whoſo does theſe things* to the end, *ſhall never fall* into hell.

THE ſeventh dialogue is full of important truths. Yet ſome expreſſions in it I can't commend.

P. 177. "ONE *thing thou lackeſt*, the imputed righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*." You cannot think, this is the meaning of the text. Certainly the *one thing* our LORD meant was, the love of GOD. This was the thing he lacked.

P. 179. "Is the *obedience* of *Chriſt* inſufficient to *accompliſh* our juſtification?" Rather I would aſk, Is the *death* of *Chriſt* inſufficient to *purchaſe* it?

P. 180. "THE ſaints in glory aſcribe *the whole* of their ſalvation to the *blood* of the Lamb." So do I: and yet I believe he "obtained for all a *poſſibility* of "ſalvation."

Ibid. "THE terms of acceptance for *fallen* man were a *full ſatisfaction* to the divine juſtice, and a *complete conformity* to the divine law." This you take for granted; but I cannot allow.

THE *terms* of acceptance for fallen man are *repentance* and *faith*. *Repent ye, and believe the goſpel.*

Ibid. "THERE are but two methods whereby any can be juſtified, either by a *perfect obedience* to the law, or becauſe *Chriſt* hath kept the law in our ſtead." You ſhould ſay, "or by *faith* in *Chriſt*." I then anſwer, This is true. And fallen man is juſtified, not by *perfect obedience*, but by *faith*. What *Chriſt* has done is the *foundation* of our juſtification, not the *term* or *condition* of it.

IN the eighth dialogue likewiſe there are many great truths, and yet ſome things liable to exception.

P. 187. "DAVID GOD himſelf dignifies with the *moſt exalted* of all characters." Far, very far from it. We have more exalted characters than *David*'s,-both in the Old Teſtament and the New. Such are thoſe of *Samuel*, *Daniel*, yea and *Job*, in the former; of St *Paul* and St *John* in the latter.

"BUT GOD ſtyles him *a man after his own heart*." This is the text which has cauſed many to miſtake: for want of conſidering, firſt, that this is ſaid of *David* in a *particular reſpect*, not with regard to his *whole character*: Secondly, the time, at which it was ſpoken. When was *David a man after* GOD's *own heart? When* GOD *found him following the ewes great with young*, when *he took him from the ſheep-folds*, *Pſal.* lxxviii. 71. It was in the 2d or 3d year of *Saul*'s reign, that *Samuel* ſaid to him, *The* LORD *hath ſought him a man after his own heart, and hath commanded him to be captain over his people*, 1 *Sam.* xiii. 14. But was he *a man after* GOD's *own heart* all his life? or in all particulars? So far from it, that we have few more exceptionable characters, among all the men of GOD recorded in ſcripture.

P. 109. "THERE *is not a juſt man upon earth that ſinneth not.*" *Solomon* might truly ſay ſo, before *Chriſt came*. And St *John* might, after he came, ſay as truly, *Whoſoever is born of* GOD *ſinneth not.* "But *in many things we offend all.*" That St *James* does not ſpeak this of himſelf, or of real *Chriſtians*, will clearly appear to all who impartially conſider the context.

THE ninth dialogue proves excellently well, that we cannot be *juſtified by* our *works*.

BUT have you thoroughly conſidered the words which occur in the 192d page?

"O CHILDREN of *Adam*, you are *no longer* obliged, to love GOD with all your ſtrength, nor your neighbour as yourſelves. *Once* indeed, I inſiſted upon abſolute purity of heart: *now* I can diſpenſe with ſome degrees of evil deſire. Since *Chriſt*"—has fulfilled the law *for you*, 'you need not fulfil it. I will *connive* at, yea accommodate my demands to your weakneſs."

I AGREE with you, that "this doctrine makes the holy One of GOD a miniſter of ſin." And is it not your own? Is not this the very doctrine which you eſpouſe throughout your book?

I CANNOT but except to ſeveral paſſages alſo in the tenth dialogue. I aſk, firſt,

P. 198. "DOES the *righteouſneſs of* GOD ever mean" (as you affirm) "*the merits of* Chriſt?" I believe not once in all the ſcripture. It often means, and particularly in the epiſtle to the *Romans*, GOD's *method of juſtifying* ſinners. When therefore you ſay,

Ibid. "THE righteouſneſs of GOD means, ſuch a righteouſneſs as may juſtly challenge his acceptance," I cannot allow it at all: and this capital miſtake muſt needs lead you into many others. But I follow you ſtep by ſtep.

Ibid. "IN order to entitle us to a reward, there muſt be an imputation of righteouſneſs." There muſt be an intereſt in *Chriſt*. And then *every man ſhall receive his own reward, according to his own labour.*

Ibid. "A REBEL may be *forgiven*, without being reſtored to the dignity of a *ſon*." A rebel againſt an earthly king may; but not a rebel againſt GOD. In the very ſame moment that GOD forgives, we are the ſons of GOD. Therefore this is an idle diſpute. For *pardon* and *acceptance*, though they may be *diſtinguiſhed*, cannot be *divided*. The words of *Job* which you cite are wide of the queſtion. Thoſe of *Solomon* prove no more than this, (and who denies it?) that juſtification implies both *pardon* and *acceptance*.

P. 199. "GRACE *reigneth through righteouſneſs into eternal life*;"—That is, The free love of GOD brings us, through juſtification and ſanctification, to glory. *Ibid.* "*That they may receive forgiveneſs, and a lot among the ſanctified*:" that is, that they may receive pardon, holineſs, heaven.

Ibid. "Is not the ſatisfaction made by the death of *Chriſt*, ſufficient to obtain both our full pardon and final happineſs?" Unqueſtionably it is, and neither of the texts you cite proves the contrary.

Ibid. "IF it was requiſite for *Chriſt* to be baptized, much more to fulfil the moral law."

I CANNOT prove that either the one or the other was requiſite *in order* to his *purchaſing* redemption for us.

Ibid. "BY *Chriſt*'s ſufferings alone, the law was

not ſatisfied." Yes it was; for it required only the alternative, Obey or die. It required no man to obey and die too. If any man had perfectly obeyed, he would not have died. *Ibid.* "Where ſcripture aſcribes *the whole* of our ſalvation to the death of *Chriſt*, a *part* of his humiliation is put for the *whole*." I cannot allow this without ſome proof. *He was obedient unto death*, is no proof at all; as it does not neceſſarily imply any more, than that *he died in obedience* to the Father. In ſome texts there is a *neceſſity* of taking a part for the whole. But in theſe there is no ſuch *neceſſity*.

P. 200. "CHRIST *undertook* to do every thing neceſſary for our redemption;" namely, in a *covenant* made with the Father. 'Tis ſure, he *did* every thing neceſſary: but how does it appear, that he *undertook* this, before the foundation of the world, and that by a poſitive *covenant* between him and the Father?

YOU think this appears from four texts. 1. From that, *Thou gaveſt them to me*. Nay, when any believe, *the Father gave them* to *Chriſt*. But this proves no ſuch previous contract. 2. GOD *hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all*. Neither does this prove any ſuch thing. 3. That expreſſion, *The counſel of peace ſhall be between them*, does not neceſſarily imply any more, than that both the father and the Son would concur in the redemption of man. 4. *According to the counſel of his will*,—that is, in the way or method he had choſen. Therefore neither any of theſe texts, nor all of them, prove what they were brought to prove. They do by no means prove, that there ever was any ſuch covenant made between the Father and the Son.

P. 201. "THE *conditions* of the covenant are recorded. *Lo, I come to do thy will*." Nay here is no mention of any *covenant*, nor any thing from which it can be inferred. "The recompence ſtipulated in this glorious *treaty*."—But I ſee not one word of the treaty itſelf. Nor can I poſſibly allow the exiſtence of it without far other proof than this. *Ibid.* "Another copy of this grand *treaty* is recorded *Iſaiah* xlix. from the firſt to the ſixth verſe." I have read them, but cannot find a word about it, in all thoſe verſes. They contain neither more nor leſs than a prediction of the ſalvation of the *Gentiles*.

Ibid. "BY the covenant of works, man was bound to obey *in his own perſon*." And ſo he is under the covenant of grace; though not in order to his juſtification. "The obedience of *our Surety* is accepted inſtead of *our own*." This is neither a ſafe nor a ſcriptural way of ſpeaking. I would ſimply ſay, *We are accepted through the Beloved. We have redemption through his blood.*

Ibid. "THE ſecond covenant was not made with *Adam*, or any of his poſterity, but with *Chriſt*, in thoſe words, *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the ſerpent's head*." For any authority you have from theſe words, you might as well have ſaid, it was made with the Holy Ghoſt. Theſe words were not ſpoken *to Chriſt*, but *of* him, and give not the leaſt intimation of any ſuch *covenant* as you plead for. They manifeſtly contain, if not a covenant made with, a promiſe made to *Adam* and all his poſterity.

Ibid. "CHRIST, we ſee, *undertook* to execute the conditions." We ſee no ſuch thing in this text. We ſee here only a promiſe of a Saviour, made by GOD to man.

Ibid. "'Tis true, I cannot fulfil the conditions." 'Tis not true. The conditions of the new covenant are, *Repent* and *believe*. And theſe you can fulfil, through *Chriſt* ſtrengthening you. 'Tis equally true, this is not required at my hands." It is *equally* true, that is, abſolutely falſe, and moſt dangerouſly falſe. If we allow this, Antinomianiſm comes in with a full tide. "*Chriſt* has performed all that was *conditionary for me*." Has he *repented* and *believed for you?* You endeavour to evade this by ſaying, "He performed all that was *conditionary* in the *covenant of works*." This is nothing to the purpoſe; for we are not talking of that, but of the *covenant of grace*. Now, he did not perform all that was *conditionary* in this covenant, unleſs he repented and believed. "But he did unſpeakably more." It may be ſo. But he did not do this.

P. 203. "BUT if *Chriſt's perfect obedience* be ours, we have no more need of pardon than *Chriſt* himſelf." The conſequence is good. You have ſtarted an objection which you cannot anſwer. You ſay indeed, "Yet we do need pardon; for *in many things we offend all*." What then? If his *obedience* be *ours*, we ſtill *perfectly obey in him*.

Ibid. "BOTH the branches of the law, the *preceptive* and the *penal*, in the caſe of guilt contracted, muſt be ſatisfied." Not ſo. "*Chriſt* by his death alone, (ſo our church teaches) fully ſatisfied for the ſins of the whole world." The ſame great truth is manifeſtly taught in the 31ſt article. Is it therefore fair, is it honeſt, for any one to plead the articles of our church in defence of abſolute predeſtination? Seeing the 17th article barely *defines* the term, without either affirming or denying the thing: whereas the 31ſt totally overthrows and razes it from the foundation.

Ibid. "BELIEVERS who are notorious tranſgreſſors *in themſelves*, have a ſinleſs obedience *in Chriſt*." O ſyren ſong! pleaſing ſound, to *James Wheatley! Thomas Williams! James Reily!*

I KNOW not one ſentence in the eleventh dialogue, which is liable to exception: but that grand doctrine of Chriſtianity, original ſin, is therein proved by irrefragable arguments.

THE twelfth likewiſe is unexceptionable, and contains ſuch an illuſtration of the wiſdom of GOD, in the ſtructure of the human body, as I believe cannot be parallelled, in either ancient or modern writers.

THE former part of the thirteenth dialogue is admirable. To the latter I have ſome objection.

P. 243. "*Elijah* failed in his reſignation, and even *Moſes* ſpake unadviſedly with his lips." It is true: but if you could likewiſe fix ſome blot upon venerable *Samuel* and beloved *Daniel*, it would prove nothing. For no Scripture teaches, that the holineſs of *Chriſtians* is to be meaſured by that of any *Jew*.

Ibid. "Do not the beſt of men frequently feel diſorder in their affections? Do not they often complain, *When I would do good, evil is preſent with me?*" I believe not. You and I are only able to anſwer for ourſelves. "Do not they ſay, *We groan being burthened*,—with the workings of inbred corruption?" You know, this is not the meaning of the text. The whole context ſhews, the cauſe of that groaning was their longing *to be with* Chriſt.

Ibid. "THE cure" of ſin "will be perfected in heaven." Nay ſurely, in paradiſe, if no ſooner. "This is a noble prerogative of the beatific viſion." No: it would then come too late. If ſin remains in us till the day of judgment, it will remain for ever. "Our preſent bleſſedneſs does not conſiſt in being *free from ſin*." I really think it does. But whether it does or no, if we are not *free from ſin*, we are not Chriſtian believers. For to all theſe the apoſtle declares, *Being made free from ſin, ye are become the ſervants of righteouſneſs*, Rom. vi. 18.

Ibid. IF we were perfect in piety (St *John*'s word is, *perfect in love*) *Chriſt*'s prieſtly office would be ſuperſeded." No: we ſhould ſtill need his Spirit, (and conſequently his intereeſſion) for the continuance of that love from moment to moment. Beſide, we ſhould ſtill be encompaſſed with infirmities, and liable to miſtakes; from which words or actions might follow, even though the heart was all love, which were not exactly right. Therefore, in all theſe reſpects, we ſhould ſtill have need of *Chriſt*'s prieſtly office: and therefore as

as long as he remains in the body, the greateſt ſaint may ſay,

Every moment, LORD, I need
The merit of thy death.

The text cited from *Exodus* aſſerts nothing leſs than, that *iniquity* "cleaves to all *our holy things* till death."

Ibid. "SIN remains, that the righteouſneſs of faith may have its due honour." And will the righteouſneſs of faith have its due honour no longer than ſin remains in us? Then it muſt remain, not only on earth and in paradiſe, but in heaven alſo—"And the ſanctification of the Spirit its proper eſteem." Would it not have more eſteem, if it were a perfect work?

P. 244. "IT (ſin) will make us lowly in our own eyes." What, will pride make us lowly? Surely the utter deſtruction of pride would do this more effectually. *Ibid.* "It will make us compaſſionate." Would not an entire renewal in the image of GOD make us much more ſo? "It will teach us to admire the riches of grace." Yea, but a fuller experience of it, by a thorough ſanctification of ſpirit, ſoul, and body, will make us admire it more. "It will reconcile us to death." Indeed it will not: nor will any thing do this, like perfect love.

Ibid. "IT will endear the blood and interceſſion of *Chriſt*." Nay, theſe can never be ſo dear to any, as to thoſe who experience their full virtue, who are *filled with the fulneſs of* GOD. Nor can any "feel their continual need" of *Chriſt*, or "rely on him," in the manner which theſe do.

DIALOGUE 14. P. 246. "THE claims of the law are all anſwered." If ſo, Count *Zinzendorf* is abſolutely in the right: neither GOD nor man can claim my obedience to it. Is not this Antinomianiſm without a maſk?

P. 247. "YOUR ſins are expiated through the death of *Chriſt*, and *a righteouſneſs given you*, by which you have free acceſs to GOD." This is not ſcriptural language. I would ſimply ſay, *By him we have acceſs to the Father.*

THERE are many other expreſſions in this dialogue, to which I have the ſame objection, namely, 1. That they are unſcriptural; 2. That they directly lead to Antinomianiſm.

THE firſt letter contains ſome very uſeful heads of ſelf-examination. In the ſecond,

P. 255, 6. I READ, "There is *a righteouſneſs* which ſupplies all that the creature needs. To prove this *momentous* point, is the deſign of the following ſheets."

I HAVE ſeen ſuch terrible effects of this unſcriptural way of ſpeaking, even on thoſe *who had once clean eſcaped from the pollutions of the world*, that I cannot but earneſtly wiſh, you would ſpeak no otherwiſe than do the oracles of GOD. Certainly this *mode of expreſſion* is not *momentous*. It is always *dangerous*, often *fatal*.

LETTER III. p. 256. "*Where ſin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as ſin had reigned unto death, ſo might grace*—the free love of GOD—*reign through righteouſneſs*, through our juſtification and ſanctification, *unto eternal life*, Rom. v. 20, 21. This is the plain natural meaning of the words. It does not appear, that one word is ſpoken here about *imputed righteouſneſs*; neither in the paſſages cited in the next page, from the common-prayer and the article. In the homily likewiſe that phraſe is not found at all, and the main ſtreſs is laid on *Chriſt's ſhedding his blood*. Nor is the *phraſe* (concerning the *thing* there is no queſtion) found in any part of the homilies.

P. 258. "IF the fathers are not explicit with regard to the imputation of *active* righteouſneſs, they abound in paſſages which evince the *ſubſtitution* of *Chriſt* in our ſtead: paſſages which diſclaim all dependence on any duties of our own, and fix our hopes wholly on the *merits* of our Saviour. When this is the caſe, I am very little ſolicitous about any *particular forms of expreſſion*." O lay aſide then thoſe queſtionable, dangerous forms, and keep cloſely to the ſcriptural.

LETTER IV. p. 259. "The authority of our church and of thoſe eminent divines," does not touch thoſe *particular forms of expreſſion*: neither do any of the texts which you afterward cite. As to the doctrine we are agreed.

Ibid. "THE *righteouſneſs of* GOD ſignifies, the righteouſneſs which God-man wrought out." No. It ſignifies GOD's method of juſtifying ſinners.

P. 260. "THE victims figured the *expiation* by *Chriſt*'s death, the cloathing with ſkins, the *imputation* of his righteouſneſs." That does not appear. Did not the one rather figure our juſtification, the other, our ſanctification?

Ibid. ALMOST every text quoted in this and the following letter, in ſupport of that *particular form of expreſſion*, is diſtorted above meaſure from the plain, obvious meaning, which is pointed out by the context. I ſhall inſtance in a few, and juſt ſet down their true meaning, without any farther remarks.

Ibid. To *ſhew unto man his uprightneſs*. To convince him of GOD's juſtice, in ſo puniſhing him.

P. 261. HE *ſhall receive the bleſſing*—pardon—*from the* LORD, *and righteouſneſs*—holineſs—*from the* GOD *of his ſalvation*,—the GOD who ſaveth him both from the guilt and from the power of ſin.

Ibid. I WILL *make mention of thy righteouſneſs only.*—— Of thy *mercy*. So the word frequently means in the Old Teſtament. So it unqueſtionably means in that text, *In* (or by) *thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted.*

P. 262. ZION *ſhall be redeemed with judgment*—after ſevere puniſhment—*and her converts with righteouſneſs*—— with the tender mercy of GOD, following that puniſhment.

Ibid. IN (or *through*) *the* LORD *I have righteouſneſs and ſtrength*, juſtification and ſanctification. P. 69. *He hath clothed me with the garments of ſalvation*,—ſaved me from the guilt and power of ſin: both of which are again expreſſed by, *He hath covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs.*

Ibid. MY *righteouſneſs*——my mercy——*ſhall not be aboliſhed.*

P. 263. To *make reconciliation for iniquity*—to atone for all our ſins,—*and to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs*, ſpotleſs holineſs into our ſouls. And this righteouſneſs is not *human*, but *divine*. It is the gift and the work of GOD.

Ibid. THE LORD *our righteouſneſs*—The author both of our juſtification and ſanctification.

P. 266. "WHAT righteouſneſs ſhall give us peace at the laſt day, inherent or imputed?" Both. *Chriſt* died for us and lives in us, *that we may have boldneſs in the day of judgment.*

LETTER V. p. 267. *That have obtained like precious faith through the righteouſneſs*—the mercy—*of our* LORD. *Seek ye the kingdom of* GOD *and his righteouſneſs*—the holineſs which ſprings from GOD reigning in you.

Ibid. THEREIN *is revealed the righteouſneſs of* GOD—GOD's method of juſtifying ſinners.

P. 268. "WE *eſtabliſh the law*, as we expect no ſalvation without a perfect conformity to it—namely, by *Chriſt*." Is not this a mere quibble? and a quibble, which, after all the laboured evaſions of *Witſius* and a thouſand more, does totally *make void the law?* But not ſo does St *Paul* teach. According to him, *Without holineſs*, perſonal holineſs, *no man ſhall ſee the* LORD. None who is not *himſelf* conformed to the law of GOD here, *ſhall ſee the* LORD in glory.

THIS is the grand, palpable objection to that whole ſcheme. It directly *makes void the law*. It makes thouſands content to live and die *tranſgreſſors of the law*, becauſe *Chriſt* fulfilled it *for them*. Therefore

though

though I believe, he hath *lived* and *died* for me, yet I would ſpeak very tenderly and ſparingly of the former, (and *never*, ſeparately from the latter) even as ſparingly as do the ſcriptures, for fear of this dreadful conſequence.

P. 268. "THE *gift of righteouſneſs* muſt ſignify a righteouſneſs not their own." Yes, it ſignifies the righteouſneſs or holineſs, which GOD gives to and works in them.

P. 269. "THE *obedience of one* is *Chriſt*'s actual performance of the whole law." So here his paſſion is fairly left out! Whereas his *becoming obedient unto death*, that is, dying for man, is certainly the chief part, if not the whole which is meant by that expreſſion.

Ibid. "THAT *the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us*—That is, by our repreſentative in our nature. Amazing! But this, you ſay, "agrees with the tenor of the apoſtle's arguing. For he is demonſtrating we cannot be juſtified by our own conformity to the law." No: not here. He is not ſpeaking here of the *cauſe* of our juſtification, but the *fruits* of it. Therefore that unnatural ſenſe of his words does not at all "agree with the tenor of his arguing."

Ibid. "I TOTALLY deny the criticiſm on δικαιοσυνη and δικαιωμα, and cannot conceive on what authority it is founded. O how deep an averſion to inward holineſs does this ſcheme naturally create?

P. 270. "THE righteouſneſs they attained could not be any perſonal righteouſneſs." Certainly it was. It was *implanted* as well as *imputed*.

Ibid. "FOR *inſtruction in righteouſneſs*, in the righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*." Was there ever ſuch a comment before? The plain meaning is, *For training up in holineſs* of heart and life.

P. 271. *He ſhall convince the world of righteouſneſs*—That I am not a ſinner, but innocent and holy.

Ibid. "THAT *we might be made the righteouſneſs of* GOD *in him*. Not intrinſically, but imputatively." Both the one and the other. GOD, *through him*, firſt *accounts* and then *makes* us *righteous*. Accordingly,

P. 272. THE *righteouſneſs which is of* GOD *by faith*, is both *imputed and inherent*.

P. 273. "MY faith fixes on both the *meritorious life* and *atoning death* of *Chriſt*." Here we clearly agree. Hold then to this, and never talk of the former without the latter. If you do, you cannot ſay, "Here we are expoſed to no hazard." Yes, you are to an exceeding great one; even the hazard of living and dying without holineſs. And then we are loſt for ever.

THE ſixth letter contains an admirable account of the earth and its atmoſphere, and comprizes abundance of ſenſe in a narrow compaſs, and expreſſed in beautiful language.

P. 279. GEMS have "a ſeat on the virtuous fair one's breaſt." I cannot reconcile this with St *Paul*. He ſays, *Not with pearls*; by a parity of reaſon, not with diamonds. But in all things I perceive, you are too favourable, both to *the deſire of the fleſh* and *the deſire of the eye*. You are a gentle caſuiſt as to every ſelf-indulgence which a plentiful fortune can furniſh.

P. 280, 1. "OUR Saviour's obedience"—O ſay, with the good old Puritans, our Saviour's *death* or *merits*. We ſwarm with Antinomians on every ſide. Why are you at ſuch pains to increaſe their number?

P. 284. MY *mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy righteouſneſs and thy ſalvation*.—Thy mercy which brings my ſalvation.

THE eighth letter is an excellent deſcription of the ſupreme greatneſs of *Chriſt*. I do not obſerve one ſentence in it, which I cannot chearfully ſubſcribe to.

THE ninth letter, containing a deſcription of the ſea, with various inferences deduced therefrom, is likewiſe a maſter-piece, for juſtneſs of ſentiment, as well as beauty of language. But I doubt whether "mere *ſhrimps*," P. 214. be not too low an expreſſion; and whether you might not as well have ſaid nothing of "*cod*, the ſtanding repaſt of *Lent*;" or concerning "the exquiſite reliſh of *turbot*, or the deliciouſneſs of *ſturgeon*," p. 299. Are not ſuch obſervations beneath the dignity of a miniſter of *Chriſt*? I have the ſame doubt concerning what is ſaid (p. 303, 4.) of "delicately-flavoured *tea*, finely-ſcented *coffee*; the *friendly bowl*, the pyramid of *Italian* figs, and the *piſtacia*-nut of *Aleppo*." Beſide that the mentioning theſe in ſuch a manner is a ſtrong encouragement of luxury and ſenſuality. And does the world need this? the *Engliſh* in particular?—*Si non inſaniunt ſatis ſua ſponte, inſtiga.*

LETTER 10. P. 306. "Thoſe treaſures which ſpring from the imputation of *Chriſt*'s *righteouſneſs*." Not a word of his *atoning blood*? Why do ſo many men love to ſpeak of his righteouſneſs, rather than his atonement? I fear, becauſe it affords a fairer excuſe for their own unrighteouſneſs. To cut off this, is it not better to mention both together? at leaſt never to name the former without the latter?

P. 310. "FAITH is a perſuaſion that *Chriſt* has ſhed his blood *for me*, and fulfilled all righteouſneſs *in my ſtead*." I can by no means ſubſcribe to this definition. There are hundreds, yea thouſands of true believers, who never once thought, one way or the other, of *Chriſt*'s fulfilling all righteouſneſs *in their ſtead*. I perſonally know many who to this very hour have no idea of it; and yet have each of them a divine evidence and conviction, *Chriſt loved me and gave himſelf for me*. This is St *Paul*'s account of faith: and it is ſufficient. He that *thus* believes, is juſtified.

Ibid. "IT is a *ſure* means of purifying the heart, and *never fails* to work by love." It *ſurely* purifies the heart —if we *abide in it*: but not if we *draw back to perdition*. It *never fails* to work by love, while it continues; but if itſelf fail, farewell both love and good works.

"FAITH is the hand which receives all that is laid up in *Chriſt*." Conſequently, if we *make ſhipwreck of the faith*, how much ſo ever is laid up in *Chriſt*, from that hour we receive nothing.

LETTER 11. P. 311. "FAITH in *the imputed righteouſneſs* of *Chriſt*, is a fundamental principle in the goſpel." If ſo, what becomes of all thoſe who think nothing about *imputed righteouſneſs*? How many who are full of faith and love, if this be true, muſt periſh everlaſtingly?

P. 314. "THY hands muſt urge the way of the deadly weapon, through the ſhivering fleſh, till it be plunged in the throbbing heart." Are not theſe deſcriptions far too ſtrong? may they not occaſion unprofitable reaſonings in many readers?

Ne puerum coram populo Medea trucidet.

Ibid. "How can he *juſtify* it to the world?" Not at all. Can this then *juſtify his faith* to the world?

P. 316. "YOU take the certain way to obtain comfort; the righteouſneſs of *Jeſus Chriſt*." What, without the atonement? Strange fondneſs for an unſcriptural, dangerous *mode of expreſſion*!

Ibid. "So the merits of *Chriſt* are derived to all the faithful." Rather the fruits of the Spirit: which are likewiſe plainly typified by the oil in *Zechariah*'s viſion.

P. 317. "HAS the law any demand? It muſt go to him for ſatisfaction. Suppoſe, "Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf." Then *I* am not obliged to love my neighbour. *Chriſt* has ſatisfied the demand of the law *for me*. Is not this the very quinteſſence of Antinomianiſm?

P. 218. "THE righteouſneſs wrought out by *Jeſus Chriſt*, is wrought out for *all his people*, to be *the cauſe* of *their* juſtification, and *the purchaſe* of their ſalvation. *The righteouſneſs* is the cauſe, the purchaſe." So the *death* of *Chriſt* is not ſo much as named! "For *all his* people." But what becomes of *all other people*? They *muſt inevitably* periſh for ever. The die was caſt or

ever they were in being. The doctrine to *pass them* by, has

Consign'd their unborn souls to hell;
And damn'd them from their mother's womb!

could sooner be a Turk, a Deist, yea an Atheist, than could believe this. It is less absurd to deny the very being of GOD, than to make him an almighty tyrant.

P. 319. "THE whole world and all its seasons, are rich with our Creator's goodness. His tender mercies are over all his works." Are they over the bulk of mankind? Where is his goodness to the non-elect? How are his tender mercies over *them*? "His temporal blessings are given *to them*." But are they to them blessings at all? Are they not all curses? Does not GOD *know* they are? that they will only increase their damnation? Does not he *design* they should? And this you call *goodness*! this is *tender mercy*!

P. 320. "MAY we not discern pregnant proofs of goodness, in each individual object?" No; on your scheme, not a spark of it, in this world or the next, to the far greater part of the work of his own hands!

P. 324. "Is GOD a generous benefactor to the meanest animals, to the lowest reptiles? And will he deny my friend what is necessary to his present comfort, and his final acceptance?" Yea, will he deny it to any soul that he has made? Would you deny it to any, if it were in your power?

But if you *lov'd* whom GOD abhorr'd,
The servant were above his LORD.

P. 325. THE *wedding garment* here means holiness.

Ibid. "THIS is his tender complaint, They *will not come* unto me!" Nay, that is not the case; they *cannot*. He himself has *decreed*, not to give them that grace without which their coming is impossible!

P. 326. "THE grand end which GOD promises in all his favourable dispensations to fallen man, is to demonstrate the sovereignty of his grace." Not so: to impart happiness to his creatures, is his grand end herein. "Barely to demonstrate his sovereignty," is a principle of action fit for the great Turk, not the most high GOD.

Ibid. "GOD hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants. He is a boundless ocean of good." Nay, that ocean is far from boundless, if it wholly passes by nine-tenths of mankind.

Ibid. "YOU cannot suppose GOD would enter into a fresh covenant with a rebel." I both suppose and know he did. "GOD made the new covenant with *Christ*, and charged him with the performance of the conditions." I deny both these assertions, which are the central point wherein Calvinism and Antinomianism meet. "*I have made a covenant with my chosen.*" —Namely, with *David my servant*. So GOD himself explains it.

P. 332. "HE will wash you in the blood which atones, and invest you with the righteousness which justifies." Why should you thus continually put asunder, what GOD has joined.

P. 360. "GOD himself at the last day pronounces them righteous, because they are interested in the obedience of the Redeemer." Rather, because they are washed in his blood, and renewed by his Spirit.

UPON the whole, I cannot but wish, that the plan of these dialogues had been executed in a different manner. Most of the grand truths of Christianity are herein both explained and proved with great strength and clearness. Why was any thing intermixed, which could prevent any serious Christian's recommending them to all mankind? any thing which must necessarily render them exceptionable, to so many thousands of the children of GOD? In practical writings I studiously abstain from the very shadow of controversy. Nay, even in controversial, I do not knowingly write one line, to which any but my opponent would object. For *opinions* shall I destroy the work of GOD? then am I a bigot indeed. Much more, if I would not drop any *mode of expression*, rather than offend either Jew or Gentile, or the church of GOD. I am,

With great sincerity,
Dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother and servant,
J. W.

I have but one thing more to add, which is, concerning the *seasonableness* of the following publication. It may, perhaps, be thought a needless revival of a dispute, which happened long ago, and which is now probably forgotten. In answer to which, I can assure the reader, that the above is printed from an edition of the *Preservative*, now on sale at the *Foundary*. The *seasonableness* of this publication is therefore apparent; for though my brother died *December* 25, 1758, the controversy did by no means die with him, but still subsists in the daily publication and sale of the *Preservative*, which also comes with a special * recommendation from Mr *Wesley*, into the hands of all his preachers, to be by them first "*carefully read, then to be recommended and explained to the several societies where they labour.*" So that the controversy is, in the most effectual manner, daily and hourly kept alive by Mr *Wesley* himself. This proves very sufficiently the *seasonableness*, and, as things have happened, the *expediency*, of the present appearance of the following letters in public. How pertinent an answer they contain to Mr *Wesley*'s objections, is now to be left to the consideration of the candid reader.

Miles's-Lane,
December 5, 1764.

W. HERVEY.

* See the last paragraph of a tract, entitled, *Reasons against a separation from the church of* England. Printed also in the *Preservative*, p. 237.

LETTERS to the Rev. Mr JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER I.

REV. SIR,

I Received the letter you mention, containing remarks on the dialogues between *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*. As, after a careful peruſal, I ſaw very little reaſon to alter my ſentiments, I laid aſide your epiſtle without returning an anſwer, in hopes that my ſilence (which it ſeems you miſtook for obſtinacy) would moſt emphatically ſpeak my advice; which, had it been expreſſed more plainly, would have been delivered in the apoſtle's words, *That ye ſtudy*, or make it your ambition, *to be quiet* *.

Since you have, by printing theſe remarks, ſummoned me, though reluctant, to the bar of the public, it ſhould ſeem, that I ought not to diſcredit *the truth once delivered to the ſaints*, by a timid ſilence; and I am the more willing to anſwer for myſelf, as I have now the privilege of an unprejudiced judge, and an impartial jury.——If my defence ſhould be loſt on my opponent, it may poſſibly make ſome uſeful impreſſions on the court, and candid audience. However, I will not abſolutely deſpair of convincing Mr *Weſley* himſelf, becauſe it is written, *Give admonition to a wiſe man, and he will yet be wiſer* †. On ſome very momentous and intereſting points, I may probably be a little more copious than the ſtrict laws of argument demand, in order to exhibit ſome of the great truths of the goſpel, in ſo *clear* a light, that *he may run who readeth them*; in ſo *amiable* and *inviting* a light, that the believer may rejoice in them, and the ſinner may long for them. For ſuch digreſſions, I promiſe myſelf an eaſy pardon, both from yourſelf and the reader.

Thus you open the debate; "In the ſecond dialogue, "is not the deſcription often too laboured, the language "too ſtiff and affected?" I muſt confeſs, Sir, this animadverſion ſeems to be as juſt, as the praiſe which you have here and elſewhere beſtowed, appears to be laviſh: the former, if not more pleaſing, may be no leſs ſerviceable than the latter. For both I acknowledge myſelf your debtor; and if ever I attempt any thing more in the capacity of an author, I will be ſure to keep my eye fixed on the caution you have given.

I am ſorry that the next words bring on a complaint, ſo cloſe to my acknowledgment. "You cite the pages "according to the *Dublin* edition, having wrote the "rough draught of what follows in *Ireland*." But ſhould you not, in complaiſance to your readers on this ſide the water, have referred to the pages of the *Engliſh* edition? For want of ſuch reference, there is hardly diſtinction enough, in ſome places, to know which are your words, and which are *Aſpaſio*'s.——Should you not alſo, in juſtice to the author, before you tranſcribed the rough draught for the preſs, have conſulted the *laſt* edition of his work? Which you well knew was not the copy, from which the *Iriſh* impreſſion was taken, yet might reaſonably ſuppoſe to be the leaſt inaccurate.

When I read your next paragraph, I am ſtruck with reverence, I am aſhamed and almoſt aſtoniſhed, at the littleneſs of the preceding obſervations. Stiffneſs of ſtyle, and a thouſand ſuch trifles, what are they all compared with juſtification before the infinite and immortal GOD? This is a ſubject that commands our moſt awful regard, a bleſſing that ſhould engage our whole attention. As this is the grand article to come under our conſideration, I would deſire to maintain an inceſſant dependance on the divine SPIRIT, that my thoughts may be influenced, and my pen guided by the wiſdom which cometh from above; that I may neither pervert the truth, by any erroneous repreſentations, nor diſhonour it by an unchriſtian temper. It would be eaſy to make uſe of bitter ſatire, and diſdainful irony, the contemptuous ſneer, or the indignant frown.——And indeed, Sir, you have laid yourſelf open to every attack of this kind; but theſe are not the weapons of a Chriſtian's warfare.

—— —— *Non defenſoribus iſtis.*

We are to give a reaſon of the hope that is in us, *with meekneſs and fear*; *meekneſs*, with regard to thoſe who interrogate or oppoſe us; *fear*, with regard to HIM, whoſe cauſe we plead, and whoſe eye is ever upon us. "Is juſtification," you ſay, "more or leſs, than GOD's "pardoning and accepting a ſinner, through the merits "of CHRIST?" I ſomewhat wonder, Sir, that you ſhould aſk this queſtion, when it is profeſſedly anſwered by *Aſpaſio*, who has preſented you with a very circumſtantial definition of juſtification, explaining it, eſtabliſhing it, and obviating ſeveral objections advanced againſt it. If you would animadvert with ſpirit and force, or indeed to any conſiderable purpoſe, ſhould you not lay open the impropriety of this definition, ſhewing from reaſon and ſcripture, that it is neither accurate nor orthodox?

At page 128. the reader may ſee *Aſpaſio*'s account of juſtification, and find the words imputation and righteouſneſs of CHRIST, particularly explained; the latter denoting, "all the various inſtances of his active and paſ-"ſive obedience;" accordingly it is affirmed (page 128.) "The puniſhment we deſerved, he endures; the obe-"dience which we owed, he fulfils."——What *Aſpaſio* here profeſſes to underſtand by the righteouſneſs of CHRIST, the reader is particularly requeſted to bear in his memory, that he be not miſled by Mr *Weſley*, who often forgets it, and complains when the righteouſneſs of CHRIST is mentioned, that his penal ſufferings are quite omitted. I would not wiſh, Sir, to have a plainer proof, that you do not diſcard the active, than *Aſpaſio* has hereby given, that he never excludes the paſſive.

By your queſtion, you hint a diſlike, yet without informing us what it is, or wherein *Aſpaſio*'s illuſtrations and proofs are deficient. You propoſe, and *only* propoſe, another definition. Well then, to differ from you as little as poſſible, nay, to agree with you, as far as truth will permit, ſince you are ſo loath to admit of our repreſentation, we will accede to yours; eſpecially if it be ſomewhat explained, and a little improved. For indeed the words, in their preſent form, are rather too vague to conſtitute any definition. *Pardoning* and *accepting* may happen to be only diverſified expreſſions of the ſame idea. The *merits of* CHRIST will certainly comport, either with *Popiſh* or *Socinian* notions. It abounds in writers of the former ſort, and it is to be found in the latter. Therefore, to be more

* 1 Theſſ. iv. 11. Φιλοτιμεισθαι, a beautiful word, rich with meaning, and not adequately tranſlated by *Make it your ambition*, ſtill more inadequately by our common verſion.

† Prov. ix. 9. The orginal phraſe is only מן *Give*, which may ſignify, *Give admonition*, as well as (what our verſion has ſuppoſed) *inſtruction*.

more explicit,—by *pardoning*, I mean, GOD's acquitting a ſinner from guilt of every kind, and of every degree. By *accepting*, I mean ſtill more, GOD's receiving him into full favour, conſidering and treating him as righteous, yea perfectly and glorioufly righteous.——By the *merits of* CHRIST, I would always be ſuppoſed to ſignify, his active and paſſive obedience, all that he wrought, and all that he ſuffered, for the ſalvation of mankind *. Intereſted in all this, the believer enters into the divine preſence, and ſtands before the divine MAJESTY.—— Not like *David*'s ambaſſadors, ſtealing themſelves into *Jericho*; ſafe indeed, but with the marks of *Ammonitiſh* inſults on their perſons: he rather enters like that illuſtrious exile, *Joſeph*, into the preſence of *Pharaoh*, when his priſon-garments were taken from him, and he was arrayed in *veſtures of fine linen*, meet for the ſhoulders of thoſe who appear before kings. With this explication I am content that *your* definition take place of mine †. I would farther obſerve, that you have dropt the word *imputed*, which inclines me to ſuſpect, you would caſhier the thing. But let me aſk, Sir, how can we be juſtified by the merits of CHRIST, unleſs they are imputed to us? Would the payment made by a ſurety, procure a diſcharge for the debtor, unleſs it was placed to his account? It is certain, the ſacrifices of old could not make an atonement, unleſs they were imputed to each offerer reſpectively. This was an ordinance ſettled by JEHOVAH himſelf ‡. And were not the ſacrifices, was not their imputation typical of CHRIST, and things pertaining to CHRIST? the former prefiguring his all-ſufficient expiation, the latter ſhadowing forth the way whereby we are partakers of its efficacy. The righteouſneſs (not the righteouſneſs and obedience, *Aſpaſio* ſpeaks otherwiſe) which CHRIST performed is reckoned by GOD as our own. This you call an ambiguous expreſſion; but, if conſidered in conjunction with the foregoing and following enlargements, I ſhould think it can hardly deſerve the charge. *Aſpaſio* all along labours to be underſtood. In this place he more fully opens his meaning, by giving another view of the nature, and by ſpecifying the effects of imputation. The *nature*,—it being the ſame as placing to our account ſomething not our own ‖. The *effects*,—CHRIST's righteouſneſs, thus placed to our account, being as effectual for obtaining our ſalvation, as if it was our own perſonal qualification §. To the latter you expreſsly agree, to the former you make no objection: to the whole doctrine, thus explained, you elſewhere declare your aſſent.

If in all this we may depend upon you, Sir, muſt we not feel an alarming ſhock at your adjuration in the next paragraph?

"For CHRIST's ſake do not." What? ſurely nothing leſs can excite or juſtify this vehement exclamation, but the obtruſion of ſome doctrine, that is moſt glaringly falſe and abſolutely damnable. Shall we have ſuch a ſolemn firing, ſuch a thunder of exploſion, only to ſilence a particular phraſe? In another perſon this would look like profane levity; in Mr *Weſley*, the ſofteſt appellation we can give it, is idle pomp.——All this clamour merely againſt words! words too, the explication of which, and the doctrine contained in them, yourſelf allow. Dear Sir, what is a word or a phraſe? Can it do either good or harm, but as conveying right or wrong ſentiments? Will the mere pronouncing or hearing of a word (be it *abracadabra*, or *higgajon ſelah*, or *imputed*) without its idea, poiſon the principles of men, and induce them to work *all uncleanneſs with greedineſs*? As you have been firing without an enemy, (*Aſpaſio* is owned for an ally,) ſo you ſeem to be triumphing without a victory. *Aſpaſio*'s charity for thoſe who are diſguſted at the expreſſion, and have no explicit knowledge of the doctrine, is guarded by the words immediately following—"yet live under the belief of the truth, and "in the exerciſe of the duty," as well as by the annexed deſcription of the perſons, and their temper; who are far enough from fancying, that if they may but be pardoned for the ſake of CHRIST, they can obtain the divine favour, and a title to future happineſs, by their own good behaviour. Hence it will appear, that he has been too cautious, to part with the very thing for which he is contending. And this is more abundantly evident from the cloſe of his charitable paragraph, wherein, though he allows ſuch people to be ſafe; yet he laments their embarraſs, and their deficiency in light, ſtrength, and conſolation. "The phraſe is not ſpiritual." Suppoſe it were not, this would afford but a ſlight reaſon, for ſo paſſionate an outcry: however, this is certain, St *Paul* uſes the phraſe, GOD *imputeth* *, and *that righteouſneſs might be imputed* †. Now, is it poſſible, that there ſhould be righteouſneſs imputed, yet not an imputed righteouſneſs? To aſſert this muſt argue either a wonderful ſubtile refinement, or an exceeding ſtrong prejudice. "It is not neceſſary."——Perhaps ſo. But is it not neceſſary Mr *Weſley* ſhould either inform us, what ſenſe of the phraſe it is, which he apprehends ſo likely to miſlead men, or elſe, inſtead of exclaiming againſt *Aſpaſio*, ſhould join all his force with him, in defending that ſenſe which they both eſpouſe? "It has done im-"menſe hurt."——When we are made ſenſible of the immenſe, or indeed of any real, hurt done by the phraſe, *imputed*; when we ſee thoſe who diſlike it, cordially warm for the ſentiment expreſſed in other words, we will then conſent to reſign it for its equivalent, *reckoned as our own,—placed to our account,—as effectual as if our own perſonal qualification.* Till then we muſt guard the caſket for the ſake of the jewel. We prefer the word *imputed*, becauſe it ſays more at once, than any other term we know; and becauſe we are aware of a common practice uſed in all ages, by the oppoſers of ſound doctrine.—— They pretend a zeal only againſt the phraſe, that by bringing *this* into diſuſe, they may cauſe *that* to be forgotten. Shall we not then diſpute for *imputed* righteouſneſs? Yes, Sir, we muſt diſpute, both for the doctrine and for the phraſe, ſince there are perſons who openly ſtrike at the one, and we fear with a view to ſupplant the other. Shall we not diſpute for *imputed* righteouſneſs,—though the words are a grand peculiarity of the ſcriptures, and the thing the very ſpirit and eſſence of the goſpel? Not diſpute for that which is better to us ſinners than all worlds, better than our hearts could wiſh, or our thoughts conceive; which in ſhort is the beſt, the

* The *merits of* CHRIST is certainly an ambiguous phraſe, and what I can by no means admire; but as it occurs in Mr *Weſley*'s letter, and in many valuable writers, I have, led by their example, uſed it in the following debate, ſtill underſtanding it, and ſtill uſing it, in the ſenſe explained above.

† To gratify Mr *Weſley*, I have admitted his phraſe, "the *merits of* CHRIST," though, as it is a phraſe of dubious import, and what almoſt any ſect or hereſy will ſubſcribe, I ſhould much ſooner chuſe to abide by *Aſpaſio*'s language. And why ſhould we not all ſpeak with the ſcriptures? Why ſhould we not uſe the expreſſions of the apoſtle? He ſays, *juſtified by the blood of* CHRIST; he ſays, made righteous *by the obedience of* CHRIST. When therefore we ſay, Sinners are pardoned and accepted through the blood, and through the obedience of CHRIST, we have a warrant for our doctrine, which is indiſputable; and a precedent for our language, which is unexceptionable.

‡ *Lev.* vii. 18. *If any of the fleſh of the ſacrifice of his peace-offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it ſhall not be accepted, neither ſhall it be imputed unto him that offereth it.* It ſhall not be *accepted*. Why? for this reaſon, becauſe it ſhall not be *imputed*. A plain indication, that the latter is the cauſe of the former. That without *imputation*, whether it be of the typical or real ſacrifice, the blood of the beaſt, or the death of CHRIST, there is no acceptance.

‖ *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, p. 128. § Ibid.

* Rom. iv. 6. † Rom. iv. 11.

nobleſt,

nobleſt, the completeſt gift, that GOD himſelf can beſtow.

When ſuch a gift, and ſuch a righteouſneſs is the ſubject of diſputation, we muſt not give place, no, *not for an hour*: we muſt maintain its matchleſs excellency, ſo long as we have any breath, or any being. We muſt ſay, in direct oppoſition to your fervent but unadviſed zeal, "*For* CHRIST's *ſake*," let us contend earneſtly for imputed righteouſneſs; becauſe it is the brighteſt jewel in his mediatorial crown. "*For the ſake of immortal* "*ſouls*," let us hold faſt and hold forth this precious truth; becauſe it yields the ſtrongeſt conſolation to the guilty conſcience, and furniſhes the moſt endearing, as well as the moſt prevailing inducement to univerſal obedience.

"To aſcribe pardon to CHRIST's *paſſive*, eternal life "to his *active* obedience, is fanciful rather than judici- "ous." The remark is juſt; not ſo the quotation; *Aſpaſio* is ſomewhat diſfigured by your diſtortion of his features; he limps a little, by your diſlocation of a limb. There is, in his language, guard enough to check every attempt, either to diſſolve the union, or ſever the coagency, of the different parts of our LORD's righteouſneſs.

But let us give *Aſpaſio* a fair hearing. Thus he expreſſes himſelf, "To divide them (the *active* and *paſſive* righte- "ouſneſs) into detached portions, independent on each "other, ſeems to be fanciful rather than judicious." To divide into detached portions, is more than to diſtinguiſh between the one and the other. The latter *Aſpaſio* practiſes, the former he diſavows. "Independent of "each other,"—do theſe words ſtand for nothing? Have they no meaning, that here your ſhew them no regard, and never recollect them throughout your whole epiſtle? Had you honoured them with any degree of notice, ſeveral of your objections muſt have been precluded; and if the more candid reader pleaſes to bear them in memory, ſeveral of your objections will, at the very firſt view, fall to the ground. Beſides, the perſon who tells us, the caſe *ſeems* to be ſo, is not ſo peremptory, as he who roundly affirms it to *be* ſo; the former is all that *Aſpaſio* has advanced. Though I am willing that you ſhould correct his ſtyle, yet I muſt beg of you, Sir, not to make him quite ſo poſitive; let him have the ſatisfaction of being modeſt, even where he has the misfortune, in your opinion at leaſt, to be erroneous.

"CHRIST's univerſal obedience from his birth to "his death, is the one foundation of my hope," ſays *Aſpaſio*. To which you aſſent, and with a laudable vehemence, reply, "This is unqueſtionably right." I wiſh, Sir, you would ponder your words before you ſpeak, at leaſt before you print, that there may be ſomething fixed and certain, on which *we* may depend, and by which *you* will abide. One would think, after this acknowledgment, pronounced with ſuch an air of ſolemnity, you could never ſo far forget yourſelf, as to open your mouth againſt the obedience, the univerſal obedience of CHRIST, which ſurely muſt include both what he *wrought*, and what he *ſuffered*. You confeſs it to be your *foundation*,—the foundation of your *hope*, the *only* foundation of your hope; can you then, without the moſt amazing inconſiſtency, either wiſh to ſecrete the doctrine, or offer to diſcountenance the expreſſion?

"There is no manner of need to make the imputa- "tion of CHRIST's active righteouſneſs a ſeparate head "of diſcourſe."—No manner of need, even though you declare, that this active righteouſneſs, together with the expiatory death, is the only foundation of your hope! Can you think it poſſible to treat of *ſuch* a topic too particularly, too diſtinctly, too minutely?——*Aſpaſio* has ſhewn the need, or aſſigned the reaſon for this method of handling the ſubject; becauſe it ſets the fulneſs of our LORD's merit in the cleareſt light, and gives the completeſt honour to GOD's holy law.—Have you alleged any thing to diſprove, or ſo much as to invalidate his plea? Ought not this to have been done before your aſſertion can be valid, or even decent?

Beſides, are there not perſons in the world, who fondly imagine, that if they can but have pardon through CHRIST, they ſhall by their own doings ſecure eternal life? When ſuch perſons are in danger of overlooking the active obedience of the REDEEMER, why ſhould you not for their ſakes allow us to make the imputation of his righteouſneſs "a ſeparate head of diſ- "courſe?" That, ſeeing the tranſcendent perfection of CHRIST's work, they may ceaſe from confiding in their own *; leſt it be ſaid to them another day, *I will declare thy righteouſneſs, and thy works, that* for the grand purpoſe of juſtification *they ſhall not profit thee* †.

We muſt therefore take leave to dwell upon the active righteouſneſs of our LORD; we muſt diſplay its perfection, in oppoſition to all the vain pretenſions of human qualifications, endeavours, or attainments; we muſt demonſtrate, that as the heavens are higher than the earth, ſo is this divine obedience higher than all the works of the children of men; yea, ſo tranſcendent in itſelf, and abſolutely perfect, as to be incapable of any augmentation. All the good deeds of all the ſaints, could they be added to it, would not increaſe in any degree its juſtifying efficacy; it is like all the other works of GOD, concerning which we are told, *nothing can be added to them*. This brings to my remembrance a moſt beautiful and ſublime repreſentation, which you muſt have read in the evangelical prophet; *Every valley ſhall be exalted, and every mountain and hill ſhall be made low, and the crooked ſhall be made ſtraight, and the rough places plain, and the glory of the LORD ſhall be revealed, and all fleſh ſhall ſee it together*. Here mountains are demoliſhed, valleys are elevated, and the earth is levelled into a ſpacious plain, on purpoſe to accompliſh what Mr *Weſley* ſuppoſes unneceſſary; on purpoſe to give the moſt clear, full, ſtriking view of the great REDEEMER, of his wonderful perſon, and glorious work; that he alone may be diſtinguiſhed and exalted; may walk majeſtic and conſpicuous through the midſt of mankind, as being ſingly and completely ſufficient for the recovery of ſinners. That all fleſh, not Jews only, but Gentiles alſo; not men of reputation only, but the meaneſt of mortals, the moſt infamous of wretches, may together ſee his glory, may on equal ground, without any pre-eminence of one above another, contemplate and partake of his precious death and perfect righteouſneſs, which are the one object of divine complacency, and the ſovereign glory of the LORD REDEEMER. According to the import of this magnificent piece of imagery, all the differences that ſubſiſt between one man and another are aboliſhed; nothing but CHRIST and his complete work are propoſed, as the cauſe of juſtification and the ground of hope. Faith beholds nothing but the divine JESUS; it never inquires, What have I done? what have I ſuffered? but what has that moſt illuſtrious perſonage done, and what ſuffered? What has JEHOVAH manifeſted in our nature, *wrought* for the benefit and redemption of ſinners?——Faith is never weary of viewing or reviewing either the active or paſſive obedience of IMMANUEL. Faith will declare, that neither of theſe points can be ſet forth in too ſtrong or too recommending a light. Faith is ever deſiring to ſee more and more of the SAVIOUR's worthineſs, that the ſoul may rejoice in his excellency, and be filled with all his fulneſs.

May you, dear Sir, abound in this faith, and live under ſuch views of GOD our SAVIOUR; then I flatter myſelf you will be diſſatisfied with your preſent opinion, and not be diſguſted at the freedom of ſpeech, uſed by

Your's, &c.

* Heb. iv. 10. † Iſ. lvii. 12.

LETTER II.

REV. SIR,

I Am particularly pleaſed at my entrance on this epiſtle, becauſe it preſents me with a view of Mr *Weſley* in very good humour. Inſtead of rebuking, he commends. He puts off the frown of cenſure, for the ſmile of approbation. I hope to follow the amiable example; to approve and applaud, where-ever opportunity offers, and truth permits. And though I ſhall be ſometimes obliged to oppoſe or refute; yet I ſhall do both with all the tenderneſs and lenity, which may conſiſt with a proper vindication of the truth.

"The third and fourth dialogues contain an admi-"rable illuſtration and confirmation of the great doc-"trine of *CHRIST*'s ſatisfaction."—This is generouſly acknowledged. Yet even here it ſo unhappily falls out, that complaiſance gets the ſtart of judgment.—Did you advert, Sir, to the ſtate of the controverſy, or ſee the conſequence of *Aſpaſio*'s arguing, you muſt either give up a favourite tenet, or elſe diſſent from his doctrine.

Aſpaſio maintains, that *CHRIST*'s ſufferings were puniſhment; real, proper puniſhment. Now could *CHRIST*, an innocent perſon, be puniſhed, without bearing ſin; the very ſin of others? Could *CHRIST*, a divine perſon, bear the ſin of others, and not do it perfectly away! Or can they whoſe guilt was puniſhed in *CHRIST*, and whoſe ſin is perfectly done away by *CHRIST*, can they periſh eternally? But I forbear. Yourſelf, and the judicious reader will eaſily apprehend my meaning, and diſcern the point, to which theſe queſtions lead. All the benefit I propoſe by this remark, is, to convince Mr *Weſley*, that he is not incapable of miſtake;—that he has tripped a little, in what he *commends*, and therefore may poſſibly make a falſe ſtep, in what he *condemns*.

Unleſs I may be allowed to propoſe this additional advantage, the rectifying an impropriety in ſome people's apprehenſions, concerning our LORD's vicarious ſufferings. It is uſual to ſay, "He bore the puniſh-"ment, not the guilt; the penalty, not the fault." Which ſeems to be a diſtinction more ſcruptilous than judicious; anſwers no other end, but that of derogating from our REDEEMER's grace, and weakening the foundation of our hopes.

The guilt of ſin, I take to be what the apoſtle calls, ανομια the tranſgreſſion of the law. From hence ariſes the obligation to puniſhment. This guilt our LORD *ſo truely* bore, that he was no leſs liable to the arreſt of juſtice, and the infliction of vengeance, than if he himſelf had committed the moſt enormous crimes.——*He bare*, ſays the HOLY GHOST, *the ſin of many*. But puniſhment cannot be reckoned the ſame as ſin, any more than wages can be accounted the ſame as work. If then our LORD bore ſin itſelf, he muſt bear every thing criminal, that is included in it; no circumſtance of demerit aggravation excepted.

He bore the *fault*, therefore he makes us without fault in the ſight of GOD; and will preſent us faultleſs before the throne, with exceeding joy.——He bore the *guilt*;——therefore our LORD's ſufferings were real puniſhment, juſtly inflicted by the ſupreme JUDGE, and, on principles of juſtice, diſcharge us from all puniſhment whatever. He bore the *filth*;——Therefore he felt, what thoſe wretched ſouls endure, who die in their iniquities; his eternal FATHER forſook him, and hid his face from him as from an abominable object.

This renders our SAVIOUR's propitiation great, wonderful, glorious. Seeing this, believing this, we have nothing to fear. Conſcience is ſatisfied, and the accuſer of the brethren is ſilenced. Nothing can be laid to our charge by the righteous law, and nothing remains to awaken the indignation of the righteous JUDGE.——Whereas, if this was not done, we have reaſon to be terribly apprehenſive. If *CHRIST* bore not the guilt, then ſinners muſt bear it in their own perſons; if he took not away the filth, then it muſt lie on tranſgreſſors, and render them loathſome for ever. If the fault was not tranſferred to him, then it muſt abide upon us, and be our everlaſting ruin.

Neither does this doctrine in any degree detract from our SAVIOUR's dignity. It rather gives him the honour due unto his name, *JESUS*. As in the ſcales of a balance, the lower the one deſcends, the higher the other mounts; ſo the deeper our MEDIATOR's humiliation ſinks, to the more exalted height does his glory riſe. The more horrible the condition to which he ſubmitted, the more illuſtriouſly his goodneſs ſhines, and the more clearly the perfection of his work appears.

Satisfaction was made to the divine law, ſays *Aſpaſio*. "I do not remember any ſuch expreſſion in ſcripture," replies Mr *Weſley*.——But do you not remember this expreſſion in the epiſtle to the *Galatians*, CHRIST *was made under the law?* * Why was he made under the law, but to fulfill its precepts, and undergo its penalty? and is not this a ſatisfaction to its demands?

The truth is, the divine law was violated by our ſins. It was abſolutely impoſſible for us to make any reparation; therefore CHRIST in our nature and in our ſtead ſubmitted to its obligations, that he might magnify its injured authority, and render it in the higheſt degree venerable; might make even its tremendous ſanctions and rigorous requirements, the very baſis of grace, mercy, and peace.——Divinely-noble contrivance! unſpeakably-precious expedient! By this means, vengeance and forbearance have met together; wrath and love have kiſſed each other, in the redemption of ſinners. The law ſays, I am fulfilled. Juſtice ſays, I am ſatisfied. While both concur to expedite and aſcertain the ſalvation of a believer.

"This way of ſpeaking of the law, as a perſon in-"jured, and to be ſatisfied, ſeems hardly defenſible." Does not the apoſtle ſpeak of the law as a perſon? a perſon that *liveth*,† to whom ſome are *married*, and to whom others are *dead*? *Aſpaſio* will always think himſelf, and his manner of ſpeaking ſufficiently defenſible, ſo long as he has the apoſtolical practice for his precedent.

Having ſuch a precedent, he wants no other; otherwiſe he might plead the authority of Mr *John Weſley*; who, in his explanatory notes on the *New Teſtament*, ſays, "The law is here ſpoken of (by a common "figure) as a *perſon*, to which as to an huſband, life

* *Gal.* iv. 4. There is, I think, ſomething uncouth in this expreſſion, *made under the law*. Γενομενον 'tis true very well comports with both the clauſes, αι γυναικος ὑπ νομον. But in the *Engliſh* tranſlation, the participle might, not ungracefully, be varied, perhaps in ſome ſuch manner; *The Son of GOD was made of a woman*, and *become ſubject to the law*.

† *Rom.* vii. 1. 4. The word ζη at the end of the firſt verſe is ſpoken of the *law*, not of the *man*, as Mr *Weſley* and others have very juſtly obſerved. It ſhould therefore be tranſlated not *he*, but *it*.

" and death are aſcribed.*" And if the law be an huſband, may not an huſband be *injured?* may not an injured huſband inſiſt upon being ſatisfied?

" All the benefits of the new covenant are the pur-" chaſe of *CHRIST*'s blood;" this is *Aſpaſio's* belief. To this you aſſent, " *Surely they are.*"——With pleaſure I ſhould receive your ſuffrage, was I not afraid that this is your meaning; they are *as* the purchaſe of his blood, as not to have any dependence on, or any connection with, his moſt perfect obedience. I was alarmed by the cloſe of your laſt paragraph, and my ſuſpicions are increaſed by the following negative interrogation; " After this has been fully proved, where is the " need, where is the uſe of contending ſo ſtrenuouſly, " for the imputation of his righteouſneſs?"

Aſpaſio has informed you, Sir, in the ſecond dialogue. He has there ſhewn the advantage of unfolding, circumſtantially and copiouſly, this momentous truth.—To give you farther ſatisfaction, he has quoted the words of an eminent divine, of which the following are a part,——" Whoever rejects the doctrine of the " imputation of our SAVIOUR's righteouſneſs to " man, does, by ſo doing, reject the imputation of " man's ſin to our SAVIOUR, and all the conſequences " of it."——If you are not ſatisfied with Mr *Staynoe's* reaſons, you are remitted to St *Paul*. In *Romans* v. (a chapter of diſtinguiſhed dignity and importance) he teaches mankind, that *CHRIST died* for the ungodly; that we are juſtified through his *blood*, are ſaved from wrath by his *death*. After all this had been fully proved, where was the need, where was the uſe of inſiſting largely upon that obedience of ONE, by which many are made † righteous? or upon that righteouſneſs of ONE, which is imputed to many for juſtification of life? Yet this the inſpired writer evidently does.

Anſwer the foregoing queſtion, in behalf of the apoſtle, and you will anſwer it in behalf of *Aſpaſio*; or if you decline the office, give me leave, Sir, to anſwer it on behalf of them both. The blood of *CHRIST* is never conſidered as independent on, or detached from, the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. They united their bleſſed efficacy in accompliſhing the work of our redemption; we always look upon them as a grand and glorious aggregate, in their agency inſeparable, though in meditation diſtinguiſhable. Being thus diſtinguiſhable, at proper times, we meditate upon each diſtinctly. We diſplay each with all the particularity poſſible, and cannot but contend for the imputation of one, as well as of the other. The farther we dig into either of theſe ſpiritual mines, the greater fund of treaſures we diſcover. The more we glorify the SAVIOUR, the more we ſtrengthen faith, and the greater addition we make to our comfort, our peace, our joy.

Aſpaſio inquires, If *CHRIST* was our ſubſtitute as to penal ſuffering, why not as to juſtifying obedience? You reply,—" The former is expreſsly aſſerted in ſcrip-" ture, the latter is not expreſsly *aſſerted* there." A ſmall inaccuracy here, Sir! the former is no more a ſcripture expreſſion, than the latter; while the latter is no leſs the doctrine and ſenſe of ſcripture than the former.—A little piece of forgetfulneſs likewiſe! ſince you juſt now acknowledged, that " *CHRIST*'s uni-" verſal obedience was the *one* foundation of your hope." But how can his obedience be any foundaton of your hope, if in this capacity he was not your ſubſtitute? Take away the circumſtance of ſubſtitution, and, there is no more ground for your reliance on the obedience of *CHRIST*, than for your reliance on the obedience of *Gabriel*. *We are made the righteouſneſs of GOD*, becauſe we are *IN him*, as our proxy and our head; becauſe he wrought the juſtifying righteouſneſs, not only in our nature, but in our name, not only as our benefactor, but as our repreſentative.

" As ſin and miſery have abounded through the firſt " *Adam*, mercy and grace have much more abounded " through the ſecond. So that now none have reaſon " to complain." Here indeed we have *Aſpaſio's* words, but in a patched and diſfigured condition. One part taken from page 181. and another wrenched from page 177. Let any one read the whole of thoſe paſſages, and judge whether they can be fairly applied to the doctrines of election or predeſtination. Yet Mr *Weſley* is reſolved at all adventures, with or without occaſion, to introduce theſe ſubjects of deep and perplexed diſputation. Therefore he replies, " No, not if the ſe-" cond *Adam* died for all, otherwiſe all for whom he " did not die, have great reaſon to complain."

Here, Sir, do you not force an inference from *Aſpaſio's* words, foreign to his deſign? He is ſpeaking of thoſe who betake themſelves to *CHRIST*, and are recovered through his righteouſneſs. Such perſons he particularly mentions. Of ſuch alone he diſcourſes; without conſidering the caſe of others, who, deſpiſing or neglecting the REDEEMER, reject the counſel of GOD againſt themſelves.——Would it not be as edifying to the reader, and as agreeable to your office, if you ſhould join with *Aſpaſio* in diſplaying the free, ſuperabundant, infinitely-rich grace of our GOD; altogether as becoming this, as to divert his aim, and retard his ſteps, when he is preſſing forwards to this prize of our high calling in *CHRIST JESUS?*

Aſpaſio's words are, " When we betake ourſelves to " *CHRIST JESUS*, we ſhall find, that, as ſin and " miſery have abounded, *&c.*" Pleaſe to obſerve, Sir, how he limits his diſcourſe, conſequently is obliged to defend nothing, but what correſponds with ſuch limitation.

Had the *Iſraelites* any cauſe to be diſſatisfied with the proviſion made for their ſuſtenance and their cure, when the ſerpent of braſs was lifted up on the pole, and when the bread from heaven lay round about their tents? No more have ſinners any cauſe to think themſelves aggrieved, when the ſalvation of GOD is evidently ſet before them in the goſpel; is brought to their very door, in the preaching of the word, and they are allowed, importuned, commanded to receive it by faith. This is enough for me. Enough this for any tranſgreſſors, who want, not to gratify curioſity, but to inherit life.——If they, or you, Sir, chuſe to pry further, and to intrude into the divine ſecrets, I muſt leave you to yourſelves; ſaying, as I depart, *The ſecret things belong unto the LORD our GOD; but thoſe things which are revealed, belong unto us and our children.**

" The whole world of believers."—" This is an ex-" preſſion which never occurs in ſcripture."—It affords me a kind of preſumptive proof, that ſolid objections are not at hand, when ſuch ſhadows are liſted into the ſervice.——I ſhould be under no pain if you could prove your charge, beyond all contradiction. To what would it amount? Why, that *Aſpaſio*, having occaſion to mention a certain topic, happened not to make uſe of the very ſyllables and letters made uſe of in ſcripture. And do you or I, Sir, in all our ſermons, journals, preſervatives, and Chriſtian libraries, undertake to uſe none but ſcriptural expreſſions? Had we done this, one benefit might indeed have accrued to the public. It would conſiderably have reduced our volumes.—But I trifle as well as Mr *Weſley*. You proceed to enforce your remonſtrance, by adding,—" Neither has the ex-" preſſion any countenance from ſcripture." I am really aſhamed to detain our readers any longer upon ſo trivial a point. Therefore what I am going to reply, is only a word to yourſelf. You, Sir, can tell who it is that affirms in a certain hymn;

For ev'ry Man
'Tis finiſh'd, 'tis paſt—

* See Explan. notes, *Rom.* vii. 1.

† Rom. v. 19.

* Deut. xxix. 29.

The world is forgiv'n
For JESUS's sake.

The world forgiven! What, all the world? every child of *Adam*; they who believe not on CHRIST and die in their sins? This you cannot mean; this you dare not assert; this, I think, no mortal can suppose. You yourself therefore, by "the world," must intend "the believing world;" and are you offended at *Aspasio* for commenting on your text? for expressing plainly what is implied in your own words?

In the LORD shall all the house of Israel be justified. This text *Aspasio* quotes, and acquiesces in the common version, upon which you animadvert. "It ought unquestionably to be rendered *by* or *through* the LORD." How hard is *Aspasio*'s lot! If he does not use the exact language of scripture, he is criminal at your bar, witness the preceding objection; if he does use the exact language of scripture, as in the present instance, you indite him for an erroneous translation. So that it is next to impossible to escape your censure.

In the LORD, you affirm, is not the pure language of scripture, it is a wrong translation, "and ought *unquestionably* to be rendered *by* or *through* the LORD." Yet *quisquis adhuc uno partam colit asse Minervam*——Whoever has learned *Hebrew* no more than a month, will assure our *English* reader, that the prefix ב is the very first word in the Bible. Must it there be translated *by* or *through* the beginning?—If our young scholar have only his psalter, he can shew the same particle occurring three times within the first verse. In *the counsel*—in *the way*—in *the seat*.——Twice in the second verse; *His delight is* in *the law*—in *his law will he exercise himself*. Three times more in the remainder of the psalm, *shall bring forth fruit* in *his season*—*shall not stand* in *judgment*. Neither in *the congregation of the righteous*.——Now let the *English* reader judge for himself, whether the *Hebrew* prefix must "unquestionably be rendered" in all these places "*by* or "*through*." By or through his season! by or through the congregation! But I stop, there is no need to apply all the passages. Neither is there any need of critical skill in languages, to determine concerning any *one* of them. Common sense in this case is sufficiently qualified to be our critic and our arbitrator.——I only wish, Sir, you had produced the evidence for the corrected version. Then the public might have seen on which side the balance were likely to turn; and which were the most cogent logic, "*Aspasio*'s doctrine is false, therefore "the translation is wrong; or the translation is fair, "therefore his doctrine is true."

By this time, I believe, the *unlearned reader* will begin to discern, what degree of credit is due to your criticisms upon the original, and to your alteration of the common version, when they are supported by nothing more, than your bare assertion.—I also begin to be apprehensive, that our canvassing the sense of words, and sifting the dead languages, will be no very agreeable entertainment to *any* reader. I will therefore for the future be more concise in the execution of this business; especially as I have here given a specimen of what might be done. I will try if it is not possible, to animate what would otherwise be dull, and to blend godly edifying with critical disquisition.

Ye are complete in him. With this translation also Mr *Wesley* finds fault. "The words literally rendered are, "Ye are filled with him."——I am ready to grant, that places may be found, where the preposition ἐν must be understood according to your sense. But then every one knows that this is not the native, obvious, literal meaning; rather a meaning swayed, influenced, moulded by the preceding or following word. The literal signification of ἐν αὐτῷ is as we have rendered it.——Nor is there the least occasion to depart from the received interpretation; it is suitable to the context, and to the scope of the whole epistle.

However, we will suppose your criticism to be just. Does this destroy or enervate *Aspasio*'s argument? Would you have one meaning contradict or supplant the other? "Ye are filled *with* him, therefore ye are "not complete *in* him?" Does the former sense include or imply the latter? Can you, or I, or any one be filled with every requisite for our recovery and happiness, yet not be complete? It seems, therefore, you get nothing by this criticism, but the satisfaction of doing violence to the phrase, without any improvement of the sense, or any advantage to your cause.

"The whole passage (you affirm) relates to sanctifi-"cation, not to justification." Where is your proof, Sir? This we always expect. This Mr *Wesley* seldom, if ever, condescends to give. "Yes," he says, "any "unprejudiced reader may observe it." A strange kind of proof! reducible to no figure in logic, unless there be a figure styled *presumption*. Was I to answer for the unprejudiced reader, I think he would observe the very reverse. The words of the apostle are not a little forcible against your sense of the passage, as will appear from the transitive adverb *also*. The next and the subsequent verses, we allow, relate to sanctification; if this verse does the same, such is the manner of the apostle's reasoning, "In whom ye are sanctified, in whom also ye "are sanctified." Whereas, if the first clause denotes the justification of the *Colossian* converts through the righteousness of CHRIST, if the following periods describe their sanctification, as a consequence of this most happily operating privilege, then the reasoning is just, and the transition graceful. "In him ye are complete-"ly justified, in him also ye are truly sanctified."

The whole passage is calculated to teach us, that CHRIST is the *fulness of our sufficiency*. In him, and in him alone, there is enough to answer all the purposes of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. ---It is intended likewise to admonish us, that we should rest satisfied with him alone, in opposition to all the fond inventions of men; who would introduce something else for the ground of our confidence, and the cause of our consolation, as though it was said;---

If indeed our LORD JESUS CHRIST had been an ordinary person, or merely a created being, ye might well be offended at my doctrine. Ye might then with some colour of reason seek to the maxims of philosophy for wisdom, or to the works of the law for righteousness. But CHRIST is an immensely-glorious person, for *in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*.—— CHRIST is an incomparably-exalted sovereign,—for *he is the head of all principalities and powers*.——Yea, CHRIST is the supreme incomprehensible JEHOVAH; for *in him dwelleth all the fulness of the* GODHEAD *bodily*. Being therefore transplanted into him by faith, ye are complete. Partakers of him; ye have every blessing and all good. Thought cannot imagine, nor desire crave, any thing farther, greater, higher.

Matchless privilege! exalted felicity! O may the knowledge, the experimental knowledge of it, fill our hearts, as *the waters cover* the abyss of the *sea!* Then will we sing the hymn which once expressed your sentiments, and still expresses mine.

* *Join earth and heav'n to bless*
The LORD *our righteousness.*
The mystery of redemption this,
This the SAVIOUR's *strange design;*
Man's offence was counted his,
Ours his righteousness divine.

* See p. 56. of *Hymns and spiritual songs*. Anonymous indeed, but universally ascribed to Mr *Wesley*. In these excellent lines, how strongly marked are the sentiments of the gospel!

Our

In him complete we ſhine,
His death, his life is mine:
Fully am I juſtified,
Free from ſin, and more than free,
Guiltleſs, ſince for me he died,
Righteous, ſince he liv'd for me.

The text lately quoted from *Iſaiah*, is part of a paragraph eminent for its dignity and uſefulneſs. We then conſidered a fragment of it in a critical view; let us now examine the whole of it with a devotional ſpirit. Thus examined, I truſt it will be no longer a dry bone, but *a feaſt of fat things full of marrow.* Permit me to propoſe a correct tranſlation of the original; to add a ſhort illuſtration of the meaning, and then take my leave for the preſent.

Look unto me and be ſaved all the ends of the earth, for I am GOD, and there is nought elſe. By myſelf have I ſworn, the word of † righteouſneſs goeth out of my mouth, the word ſhall not return. To me every knee ſhall bow, and every tongue ſhall ſwear ‡, ſaying, Surely ‖ in the LORD have I righteouſneſs § and ſtrength. To him ſhall men come, and all that are offended in him, ſhall be aſhamed. In the LORD ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and in him ſhall they glory.*

Here the SON of GOD preſents himſelf in all the glories of his perſon, and all the riches of his grace; preſents himſelf as the object of faith, and the author of ſalvation; to be received by ſinners, without any recommending qualities, or any pre-eminence of one above another.——But hear his gracious words.

Look unto me, wretched ruined tranſgreſſors, as the wounded *Iſraelites* looked unto the brazen ſerpent. Look unto me dying on the croſs as your victim, and obeying the law as your ſurety.——Not by doing, but by looking and believing; not by your own deeds, but by my works, *and* my ſufferings, *be ye ſaved.* This is the myſterious but certain way of ſalvation. Thus ſhall ye be delivered from guilt, reſcued from hell, and reconciled to GOD. Who are invited to partake of this ineſtimable benefit? *All the ends of the earth.* People of every nation under heaven; of every ſtation in life; of every condition, and every character, not excepting the chiefeſt of ſinners.

Is it poſſible that the obedience of *one* ſhould ſave innumerable millions? It is not only poſſible, but indubitable. *For I am GOD* infinite in dignity and power; therefore all-ſufficient, yea omnipotent to ſave; to ſave all that come unto me; be the multitudes ever ſo great, or their caſes ever ſo deſperate.——(Is nothing to be done by tranſgreſſors themſelves? Are no conditions to be fulfilled on their part?) None,——*there is nought beſide me.* No perſon can take any ſhare in this great tranſaction. Nothing can in the leaſt degree co-operate with my merits. Should you add to my obedience and death, all that ſaints have performed, and martyrs have endured, it would be like adding a grain to the ſands of the ocean, or a moment to the days of eternity.

Such is my compaſſionate invitation, and this my inviolable decree. *I have* not only ſpoken, but *ſworn*; ſworn by myſelf, and all my incomprehenſible excellencies. *The word of righteouſneſs*, that which relates to the grandeſt of all ſubjects, and moſt important of all intereſts, is planned, adjuſted, and unalterably determined. Now, even now, *it goes out of my mouth*, is declared with the utmoſt ſolemnity, and eſtabliſhed by veracity itſelf. The word ſhall not return, either to be repealed by me, or fruſtrated by any other—What is the decree confirmed by this moſt awful oath? We are all attention to hear it. *To me every knee ſhall bow.* Every ſoul of man, who deſires to inherit eternal life, ſhall ſubmit to my righteouſneſs, and as an unworthy creature, as an obnoxious criminal, obtain the bleſſing wholly through my atonement.—*To me every tongue ſhall ſwear.* Be man's ſuppoſed virtues ever ſo various, or ever ſo ſplendid, all ſhall be diſclaimed, and my worthineſs alone ſhall ſtand. Renouncing every other truſt, they ſhall repoſe the confidence of their ſouls on me alone, and make public confeſſion of this their faith before the whole world.—But we, O LORD, are ignorant, we cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs.——This then ſhall be the form of your oath, ſuch the tenor of your confeſſion.

Surely——It is a moſt wonderful, yet a moſt faithful ſaying, extremely comfortable and equally certain. *Only*——not in myſelf, not in a poor frail creature, but *in* the incarnate JEHOVAH alone, in his divinely-excellent deeds, and unutterably-meritorious ſufferings, *I have righteouſneſs*, a righteouſneſs without ſpot, without defect, and in all reſpects conſummate; ſuch as ſatisfies every requirement of the law, and moſt thoroughly expiates all my iniquities; ſuch as renders me completely accepted before my judge, and entitles me to everlaſting life. From the joyful knowledge, the perſonal appropriation, and the perpetual improvement of this ineſtimable privilege, I have *ſtrength* for my ſanctification. Now do I indeed delight myſelf in the LORD, who, perfectly reconciled, and infinitely gracious, has done ſo great things for me. Now do I cordially love my neighbour; and being ſo happy myſelf, unfeignedly long for his eternal happineſs, that he may be a partaker with me of this great ſalvation.

To this ſovereign decree, the prophet ſets, as it were, his ſeal, or elſe, in a tranſport of joy, he foretels the accompliſhment of it. Yes, my brethren, *to him*, even to this gracious REDEEMER, *ſhall men come.* I ſee them flying as clouds for multitude, as doves for ſpeed. They believe the report of his goſpel, and receive of his fulneſs.——Whereas, *all they that are offended in him*, that cannot away with his doctrine, which

pour

Our offences ſo fully imputed to CHRIST, as to be accounted his. His righteouſneſs ſo fully imputed to us, as to be accounted ours. In him we are *complete*, becauſe his moſt obedient life, and his all-atoning death are ours. We are guiltleſs, not through our repentance, or reformation, but becauſe he has died for us. We are righteous, not on account of any graces or attainments of our own, but becauſe he has lived for us. To theſe truths I moſt cordially ſubſcribe. This is that good old wine that once made Mr *Weſley*'s heart glad. He has ſince taſted new; but I hope he will be brought to ſay, "*The old is better.*"

* *None elſe*—אין זולתי exactly rendered, ſignifies *there is not beſides.* Not any perſon, nor any thing. *No perſon*, able to lend an helping hand. *No thing* capable of yielding the leaſt aſſiſtance.

† *The word of righteouſneſs*, דבר צדקה I apprehend is equivalent to St *Paul's* λογος δικαιοσυνης, and ſignifies, if not the whole goſpel, that precious doctrine, which is the goſpel in epitome. For the vindication of this verſion, ſee *Vitringa in loc.*

‡ *Shall ſwear.* Our tranſlation ſeems to diſcontinue the divine ſpeech here; which weakens the force, and diminiſhes the dignity of the paſſage. I apprehend JEHOVAH is ſtill ſpeaking, and in the following words, preſcribes the form of the confeſſion, or dictates the words of the oath, in which ſinners ſhall teſtify their allegiance,—even the allegiance of faith. Agreeably to this ſuppoſition, I would tranſlate the word לאמר *ſaying*. It will then denote not *one*, or a few, but every tongue mentioned in the foregoing verſe, תשבע I am aware is of the feminine gender, but every reader knows how often the *Hebrews* neglect the nicety of grammatical conſtruction, and every reader ſees that the idea of לשון or of a *perſon*, is comprehended in the word *tongue.*

‖ The prophet's אך *ſurely*, is ſomething like the apoſtle's αλλα μενουνγε, *yea*, doubtleſs, *Phil.* iii. 8. The HOLY GHOST teaches believers to ſpeak with vehemence upon this point, to ſignify their ſtedfaſt and reſolute affiance in the glorious REDEEMER, together with the mighty and matchleſs importance of this faith. I have taken in this idea, becauſe it is ſuggeſted by the *Engliſh* tranſlation, though I prefer the *excluſive* ſenſe *only*; as implying an abſolute and total renunciation of every other confidence.

§ *Righteouſneſs.* This is the preciſe ſignification of צדקות, which being in the plural number, ſeems to denote *completeneſs.* A righteouſneſs, perfect, entire, and lacking nothing; having every thing neceſſary for our pardon, our acceptance, our everlaſting juſtification.

pours contempt upon all human excellency, and will allow no righteouſneſs to avail but that which is divine; who refuſe to come unto him, poor, and miſerable, and ſtript of every recommendation; all they *ſhall be aſhamed*. The fig-leaves of their own duties, or their own endowments, ſhall neither adorn them for glory, nor ſcreen them from wrath,---but ſhall abandon them to vengeance, and cover them with double confuſion. While, on the other hand, *all the ſeed of Iſrael*, every true believer, ſhall be juſtified in the LORD. Againſt theſe perſons no accuſation ſhall be valid; no condemnation ſhall take place: ſo magnificent is the majeſty, ſo ſurpaſſingly-efficacious are the merits of their SAVIOUR, that in him they ſhall not only confide, *but glory*: not only be ſafe, but triumphant; clothed with his incomparable righteouſneſs, they ſhall challenge every adverſary, and defy every danger.

To this portion of ſcripture I have led back your thoughts, that I might not cloſe with any diſguſting ſentiments; but might leave a ſweet ſavour on your mind, on the reader's mind, and on the mind of

REV. SIR,

Your's, &c.

LETTER III.

REV. SIR,

LET me, now, reſume my obſervations on your epiſtle. Which I do, not for the ſake of diſputing, but for the cauſe of truth.

The goſpel contains many ſublime and glorious truths. But there is *one*, which, beyond all others, characterizes its nature, its import, and deſign; which makes it moſt eminently to differ from every other form of religion, profeſſed or known in the world. I mean the doctrine of *free juſtification*, through the righteouſneſs of CHRIST. This is to the religion of *JESUS*, what the particular features and turns of countenance are to each individual perſon.

I have ſometimes amuſed myſelf, with ſtanding by a painter, and obſerving him at his work. Here I have been ſurpriſed to ſee, how much a very little ſtroke would alter the aſpect of his draught; would turn the gay into a melancholy, or the compoſed into a frantic countenance. Several of Mr *Weſley*'s touches are to appearance ſmall; but, I fear, they will be found to diſfigure more than a little the heavenly portrait; and give a new, not the native, air, to *the truth as it is in JESUS*.---But I proceed; my buſineſs being to prove, not to blame.

Sinners who betake themſelves to the all-ſufficient SAVIOUR for redemption, are fully accepted by GOD, for his beloved SON's ſake. This is juſtification through imputed righteouſneſs, ſays *Aſpaſio*.---"That remains to be proved," anſwers Mr *Weſley*.---I think, it is pretty largely, and, I would hope, it is ſatisfactorily proved, through the whole book.---Nay, I find My *Weſley* himſelf ere long acknowledging, that "as to the doctrine we are agreed." Either therefore you have received the proof, which you demand; or elſe you can ſubmit without conviction, and agree without cauſe of agreement.---Not to take advantage of ſuch ſlips, I would rather enlarge upon what may be uſeful.

I would aſk Mr *Weſley*; In what other way ſinners can be juſtified or accepted, ſave only through imputed righteouſneſs?---Through their own good *deeds*, and holy *temper*? This ſuppoſes the fruits to be good, while the tree is corrupt; and would make ſalvation to be of works, not of grace.---Through their *own faith*, ſtanding in the law? Then they are juſtified before a perfect GOD, by an imperfect endowment; and life eternal is obtained, by the exerciſes of their own mind, not by the merits of *JESUS CHRIST*.---Are they juſtified *without any* righteouſneſs, either wrought by themſelves, or received * from another? This is an unworthy thought; this were an unſufferable practice; JEHOVAH himſelf being judge, *He that juſtifieth the wicked is an abomination*.†

Say not, GOD is a free agent, and not bound to obſerve his own law. Say rather, the rule of righteouſneſs revealed in the law, is his moſt ſtedfaſt will; unchangeable as his nature.---Conſider alſo, what this law requires. A ſatisfaction for ſin, not defective, but completely ſufficient; a performance of the command, not ſincere only, but abſolutely perfect.---Will GOD, in juſtifying a ſinner, diſregard, contradict, overthrow his own law? In no wiſe. Since then it inſiſts upon what no mortal can yield; muſt not all fleſh periſh for ever?

This would be the unavoidable conſequence, if matters reſted on human abilities. But here the bleſſed goſpel comes to our relief; ſhewing us, that GOD, in his immenſe mercy, and unſearchable wiſdom, has found out a way, at once to ſatisfy the unalterable law, and ſave inſolvent man; to juſtify even the chief of ſinners; yet without the leaſt violation of juſtice, truth, or holineſs.---What is this way? His own SON accompliſhes the great work.---How? By relaxing the precepts of the law, that we may perform them? by diſannulling the ſentence of the law, that we may eſcape it? Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, before any ſuch diſhonourable expedient takes place. On the contrary, he gives ſatisfaction to the ſentence, by ſuffering the tremendous puniſhment denounced; and he fulfils the precept, by yielding the ſinleſs obedience required.---Becauſe this was to be finiſhed in the nature which had tranſgreſſed, therefore he was made man. Becauſe this was to be truly, or rather infinitely meritorious, therefore the man was one perſon with the GODHEAD.

Still it may be inquired, How the obedience of another can relieve my diſtreſs? How indeed! But by GOD's transferring my guilt to him, and imputing his obedience to me. By this method, the thing is clearly and completely effected. In this method, I ſee a propriety and an efficacy, that ſilence my doubts, and comfort my heart. Accordingly, it is written, in the ſcriptures, *GOD was in* CHRIST *reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them*.---GOD; the work was too arduous to be performed by a created agent. Therefore God himſelf was in CHRIST. None leſs than the almighty LORD could execute the buſineſs. But if HE undertake it, how ſucceſsfully muſt it be carried on, and how glorioufly finiſhed!---*Reconciling the world*: not ſetting poor tranſgreſſors to reconcile themſelves, but himſelf contriving all, providing all, doing and ſuffering all, that was needful for this great purpoſe; being himſelf the creditor, the ſponſor, and payer of the debt.---How was all this brought to paſs? By *not imputing our treſpaſſes unto us*; but taking them all upon himſelf;

* Οι λαμβανοντες, *They who receive the gift of righteouſneſs*. Rom. v. 17.

† *Prov.* xvii. 15. This is an invariable maxim. It is that word of GOD, which endureth for ever. Yet it is no objection to *his* method of juſtifying the ungodly. Becauſe he firſt imputes his SON's righteouſneſs unto them; thereby renders them truly and perfectly righteous: then pronounces them ſuch; and, as ſuch, receives them to pardon, to favour, and eternal life.—does not the text, thus conſidered, afford an inconteſtable argument for the neceſſity of an imputed righteouſneſs?

bearing them all, in his own body, upon the tree; and ſuſtaining the vengeance due to all our crimes.—Thus was the holy ONE and the juſt *made ſin for us; that we*, ſinful duſt and aſhes, *might*, in the very ſame manner, *be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him.* The former could be only by imputation; and ſo only can be the latter.

If men talk of being accepted for *CHRIST*'s ſake, yet reject the imputation of righteouſneſs, they muſt have very inadequate notions concerning the relation which *CHRIST* bears to his people, and the nature of his mediatorial undertaking.—Does this ſeem obſcure? I explain myſelf.——A perſon may conduct himſelf ſo honourably and excellently, as, on account of his worthy deeds, to obtain favour in behalf of another; and this, without being his ſurety, or any thing like his proper righteouſneſs. Witneſs the famous inſtance of the two brothers, *Amyntas* and *Eſchylus*. The former was a gallant hero; who expoſed his life, and loſt his arm, in defence of his country. The latter was an abandoned and infamous profligate; whoſe crimes had brought him to the bar of public juſtice. The hero, on the day of trial, appeared as an advocate for his brother. He ſpoke nothing, but only lifted up to view the maimed and diſmembered arm. This ſilent oratory ſtruck the aſſembly; and pleaded ſo powerfully, that the criminal was unanimouſly acquitted.——Here was an acquittal of one, in conſideration of the merits of another. But then the obnoxious party had no ſpecial intereſt in thoſe merits. They were not acquired or exerciſed, with a particular reference to his good. He could not ſay, they are mine. Neither did they make him, in any degree, or in any ſenſe, righteous.—Whereas, the reverſe of all this is true, with regard to *JESUS CHRIST*, and juſtified ſinners. This you and I, Sir, have aſſerted. Let us never retract the good confeſſion. But, as it is the truth of the goſpel, let us ſtill and for ever ſay,

In HIM complete we ſhine,
Becauſe
Ours is righteouſneſs divine.

Theron, ſpeaking of the terms *inherent* and *imputed*, calls them nice diſtinctions and metaphyſical ſubtilties. Mr *Weſley* makes *Aſpaſio* apply the depretiating remark to the active and paſſive righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. Whereas he ſays no ſuch thing. He means no ſuch thing. He is treating of a ſubject totally different. And was he to maintain ſuch a ſentiment, every one muſt obſerve, it would entirely overthrow his whole ſcheme.

"You oblige us to make uſe of metaphyſical ſubtil-"ties, by confounding theſe very different ideas, that "is, *CHRIST*'s active and paſſive righteouſneſs."—— I could hardly believe my eyes, for ſome time; though both of them atteſted, that this was produced as a quotation from page 159. In which page, and for a conſiderable ſpace, before and after, the ſubject of debate is the difference between inherent and imputed righteouſneſs.——I was, I own, quite vexed to ſee *Aſpaſio* ſo maltreated; his diſcourſe ſo miſrepreſented; and ſo little regard paid to literary juſtice. And glad I am, that I did not give vent to my thoughts, juſt at that inſtant. I might have been too warm, and not have ſpared the rod. But, upon cooler conſideration I began to recover, and the preſcription of *Horace* was of ſervice,

Amara lento temperat riſu.

I began to call your conduct, not artifice or ſleight of hand, but incogitancy or thought miſapplied. As you had been thinking ſo long upon the other topic, it dwelt upon your imagination; kept this from your attention; and led you both to miſtake and to miſcall things. Like a certain preacher, who having loſt his fortune in the bubbles of the year 1719, and having occaſion to mention the deliverance of the *Iſraelites* from *Egypt*, told his audience, that *Pharaoh* and his hoſt were all drowned in the *South* ſea——Poor man! he meant the *Red* ſea.

Mr *Weſley* proceeds: "We do not confound the "active and paſſive righteouſneſs."——Does *Aſpaſio*, Sir? he that conſiders them particularly and diſtinctly? he that examines each with a critical and minute exactneſs? If this be to confound, order and confuſion have changed their nature.

"Neither do we ſeparate them." It is ſomewhat difficult to underſtand, what you mean by ſeparating the active and paſſive righteouſneſs of our LORD.—— Separating them, as to their influence? Then you muſt be ſenſible, this is never done by *Aſpaſio*. You cannot but know, that he diſclaims ſuch a refinement. He proteſts againſt ſuch a practice.——Do you mean, treating them as things really diſtinct, though always uniting their agency? Then I am at a loſs to reconcile Mr *Weſley* with himſelf. For, in the very next paragraph, he thus expreſſes himſelf. "Through the merits of "his life and death, every believer is juſtified." Are not the merits of his life here *diſtinguiſhed* from the merits of his death? Does not the former expreſſion denote his active, the latter his paſſive obedience? Or would you be underſtood to mean, "through the merits of "his life, which are nothing elſe but the merits of his "death?" If you would not ſpeak in this manner, ſo unworthy of your better judgment, you do the very thing which you blame.——This is done ſtill more apparently, in one of your hymns. Where we ſee, not only a ſeparation, but a diſtinct uſe and application of the ſeparated ſubjects.

Grant this, O LORD; for thou haſt dy'd,
That I might be forgiven;
Thou haſt the righteouſneſs ſupply'd,
For which I merit heaven.

I could eaſily excuſe Mr *Weſley*, for being a little inconſiſtent with himſelf; did he not alſo venture to confront the apoſtle, by the following aſſertion. "Neither have we any authority from ſcripture, for either "thinking or ſpeaking of one ſeparate from the other." ——Does not St *Paul*, in one paſſage, ſpeak of the obedience? in another, of the death of CHRIST? Does he not, in one place, enlarge upon the righteouſneſs? in another upon the blood of CHRIST? If ſo, we have an authority from ſcripture, we have the example of the chiefeſt apoſtle, for this way of thinking and ſpeaking.

We have alſo a concurrent teſtimony from the genius and import of the original language. Do not δικαιωμα and δικαιοσυνη ſignify ſomewhat different from αιμα and δικαιος? Are there any approved writers who uſe theſe words promiſcuouſly? as ſo many ſynonymous and convertible terms? If not, the voice of grammar will vindicate the propriety of our conduct, while we aſſign a ſeparate diſcourſe to each ſubject, and exhibit them ſeverally in the moſt diſtinct view.

Are not light and heat always united in the ſun? Is the naturaliſt to blame, who conſiders them diſtinctly; and examines each property, in a ſeparate treatiſe? You would commend this practice in the philoſopher, as the way to enter thoroughly into the knowledge of his ſubject. And why ſhould you explode or cenſure it, in the Chriſtian divine? Are not theological truths as worthy of a circumſtantial and accurate inveſtigation, as philoſophical? Will they not as amply reward our diligence, and yield as rich advantage to the ſerious inquirer?

The righteouſneſs which juſtifies ſinners, is already *wrought out*, ſays *Aſpaſio*.——"A crude unſcriptural expreſſion," replies Mr *Weſley*.—It may be ſo. But if the expreſſion is plain and true, I will ſit down content. This, however, you will allow me to obſerve, that it is no new one, and is not far from ſcriptural. *Worketh righteouſneſs*, you know, is a ſcriptural phraſe.—— Does the word *out* ſpoil it, or the word *already*? I ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe, the latter may be moſt offenſive. Yet you ſpeak, in this very paragraph, of being "juſtified by the "merits of CHRIST's life and death." Are not theſe matters already tranſacted? is not the merit of them already perfect? or can any language expreſs theſe things more clearly, and affirm them more ſtrongly, than thoſe emphatical words in one of your own hymns?

Let us for this faith contend,
Sure ſalvation is its end:
Heav'n already is begun,
Everlaſting life is won.

Pardon me then, Sir, if I ſtill ſuſpect, that the doctrine and its conſequences, rather than the expreſſion and its crudity, awaken your jealouſy. If this doctrine be admitted, if the juſtifying righteouſneſs be already wrought, it muſt abſolutely overturn all your pre-requiſites, qualifications, and conditions; conditions of repentance, obedience, and I know not what beſides. We muſt ſay to every one of them, as *Jehu* ſaid to the meſſengers of *Joram: What haſt thou to do with* the grand article of juſtification? *Get thee behind me. Could* they be fulfilled, they would come a day too late; like the ſickle, when the harveſt is reaped. Could they be fulfilled in *all* their imaginary dignity, they would in this relation, be needleſs; like a propoſal for augmenting the ſplendour of the ſun.

"The righteouſneſs which juſtifies ſinful man, was "*ſet on foot*, when GOD ſent forth his SON, from the "habitation of his holineſs and glory, to be born of a "woman, and made ſubject to the law.—It was *carried* "*on*, through the whole courſe of our SAVIOUR's life; "in which he always did ſuch things, as were pleaſing "to his heavenly FATHER.—It was *completed*, at that "ever memorable, that grand period, when the bleſſed "IMMANUEL bowed his dying head; and cried, "with a ſtrong triumphant voice, IT IS FINISHED."

"—Upon this extract from *Aſpaſio*'s diſcourſe, Mr *Weſley* "exclaims, O vain philoſophy!"——Philoſophy! *this* philoſophy, Sir! Never did I hear, till this moment, ſuch doctrines aſcribed to philoſophy. But this I have heard, and this I believe, that *the world*, even the learned and philoſophic world, *by* their boaſted *wiſdom knew not* GOD; nor GOD's method of ſalvation, by the ſufferings of an innocent, and the obedience of a divine perſon. Their philoſophy prejudiced them againſt it; puffed them up with a vain conceit of their own ſufficiency; and ſet them at the greateſt diſtance from ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of GOD.

I wiſh, Sir, you would ſhew me, in which of the philoſophers I might find theſe ſacred ſentiments; or a grain, or a ſpice, or a ſavour of them. I have, for a conſiderable time, laid aſide my *Plato*, and have no more inclination to turn over my *Seneca*: becauſe I can ſee nothing like this divinely-precious truth, adorning and enriching their pages. But if you will diſcover this golden vein in their works, I will immediately renew my acquaintance with them; and will do the philoſophers a piece of juſtice, which Mr *Weſley* denies them. I will not call their philoſophy vain, but *the wiſdom of* GOD, *and the power of* GOD.—A righteouſneſs wrought out, and a redemption obtained for us! the former divine! the latter eternal! theſe, rightly underſtood, make us, beyond all the treaſures of literature, *wiſe*.—— Theſe, habitually enjoyed, will, more effectually than all the delineations of morality or exhortations to virtue, render us *holy*.

A divine righteouſneſs (pardon me for dwelling on my favourite topic) already wrought! A great redemption perfectly finiſhed! And this by the abaſement, the ignominy, the indignities; by the cries, the agonies, the blood of our SAVIOUR. Yea, of our GOD, *in faſhion as a man*; in the form of a ſervant, a ſlave, an execrable malefactor.—What, like this, did a thouſand philoſophers teach? What, like this, do a thouſand of their volumes contain? to ſtab our pride; to tame our fury; and to quench our luſt? to kindle our benevolence; to inflame our devotion; to make us, in a word, *wiſe unto ſalvation*?

"The plain truth is, CHRIST lived and taſted death "for every man."——To be ſure then, ſince every man is not ſaved by him, he lived and died only to make their ſalvation poſſible——From this and other hints, I gueſs your opinion to be, that CHRIST, by his life and death, obtained only a poſſibility of ſalvation. [Which ſalvation is to become our own, upon performing terms and conditions, bringing with us pre-requiſites and qualifications.]——If I miſtake you, Sir, in this caſe, you have nothing more to do, than ſimply to deny my ſuppoſition. This exculpates you at once. I ſhall rejoice to hear you ſay, "As CHRIST made us, and not we "ourſelves; in like manner he ſaves us, and not we "ourſelves. No human endowments, no human per-"formances, but CHRIST alone is *the author of eternal* "*ſalvation*.

Should you reply, True—CHRIST is the author of eternal ſalvation, but *to thoſe* only *who obey him*;——I muſt then aſk, what obedience CHRIST requires? The law ſays, "Do and live." CHRIST, the end of the law, ſays, "Believe in ME, and live. Be verily perſuaded, "that I am ſufficient for thy ſalvation, without any "working of thine at all. Is not the SON, the SON of "the moſt high GOD, given unto thee in the divine "record? Be ſatisfied with *his* doing and ſuffering, "without wiſhing for, or thinking of, any thing more, "to procure thy final acceptance."——Let no one account lightly of this obedience. It is the obedience of faith. The obedience ſuited to the name JESUS.—— Obedience to the firſt and great command of the goſpel. Beyond all other expedients, it excludes boaſting; and, at the ſame time, produces that genuine love, that filial fear, which the law of works requires in vain.

Only to make a thing poſſible, and to effect it, are widely different. When our king fits out a fleet, and gives his admiral a commiſſion, to haraſs the *French* coaſts, and deſtroy the *French* ſhipping, he makes the thing poſſible. But to carry this deſign into execution; to accompliſh the enterprize, now become practicable; is a far more arduous taſk, and a far more honourable achievement. How ſtrangely do thoſe writers derogate from the dignity and glory of the REDEEMER, who would aſcribe to him, what correſponds with the former; and attribute to man, what bears a reſemblance to the latter!

If CHRIST only made our ſalvation poſſible, then *we* are to execute the plan. We are to face the enemy, to ſuſtain the charge, and ſilence the battery: we are to climb the ſteep, to enter the breach, and bring off the ſtandards. And ſo, in all reaſon, the honour and praiſe muſt be our own.——Whereas, the goſpel gives all the honour to the Captain of our ſalvation. He bore the heat and burthen of the dreadful day. He made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs. So that all our officious attempts, like a pinnace arriving after the victory, ſhould be told, *It is finiſhed*; the great ſalvation is already wrought. And inſtead of being diſſatisfied or diſappointed, methinks, we ſhould rejoice, unfeignedly rejoice, in the accompliſhment of the glorious work.

If it ſhould occur to the reader's mind, that the Chriſtian life is repreſented as a warfare; and that we ourſelves are commanded to fight, though under the banner of our divine leader; to this doubt I would anſwer, ——*The Canaanite is ſtill in the land*; and we fight, not to gain the country, but only to ſubdue the rebels.

"Whoever perverts ſo glorious a doctrine, ſhews he "never believed."——This may be the ſubſtance of what *Aſpaſio* maintains; though not repreſented ſo fully or ſo clearly, as he has expreſſed himſelf. However, ſuch a ſmall wrong we will readily excuſe. It was done with no ſiniſter intention, but for the ſake of brevity.

To

To this position Mr *Wesley* replies; "Not so."—That is; they did really and truly believe. But, after their belief, they apostatized, and fell from the faith. They were, some time, the members of *CHRIST*, and temples of the HOLY GHOST; but, quickly severed from their divine head, they became the slaves of the devil, and brands for the everlasting burning. Their names were, indeed, written in heaven. But, it seems, the heavenly records were less faithful than the parish-register. They were quickly erased, and their place in the book of life knew them no more.

Or thus—They did as really and truly believe, as those who are now in the mansions of glory. But, after their true *knowledge of the name of the* LORD JESUS; after their full conviction of his sufficiency and faithfulness for their salvation; even such as inclined and enabled them, to *put their trust in him alone*, for their acceptance with GOD; they were disappointed. Though *CHRIST* called them *his sheep*, as thus *hearing his voice*; yet he did not *give unto them eternal life*, according to his promise; but suffered Satan to *pluck them out of his hand*.

These sentiments have no very probable, much less have they a pleasing or recommending aspect. Let us inquire whether they comport with St *John*'s determination of the case. Speaking of such backsliders, he says, *They went out from us, but they were not of us.* Mr *Wesley*, to be consistent with himself, should say on this occasion; "Not so; they were of you, but they fell away from you."—The apostle proceeds; *For if they had been of us, no doubt, they would have continued with us.* Had they been really converted, they would most undoubtedly have continued in our doctrine and fellowship. Their revolt from our *doctrine*, is a manifest proof, that they never truly received it, nor with their heart believed it. Their departure from our *fellowship*, is an evident indication, that they were, notwithstanding all their professions, still carnal, and never renewed by grace.

Mr *Wesley* produces a text from St *Peter*, with a view to support his objection. They who *turn back as a dog to his vomit, had once escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of CHRIST.* Here and elsewhere I perceive the cannon roar, but without feeling the ball. Before this piece of sacred artillery can be brought to bear upon us, it will be necessary to prove, that the knowledge of *CHRIST*, or even believing in *CHRIST*, always signifies true faith. In some places, it certainly does. In other places, it signifies no such thing.—— *Though I have all knowledge*, says the apostle, yet even with this spacious endowment I may *be nothing*. There is a knowledge, says the same author, which, instead of *edifying*, or establishing the soul in godliness, *puffeth up* with pride. We are likewise assured, that *Simon* the sorcerer, though in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, yet had *knowledge of the things which concerned the kingdom of GOD, and the name of JESUS CHRIST*; nay, that *he also believed*, yet he had neither lot nor portion in the inestimable blessing.

Let us attend to the apostle's manner, and we shall be led to put the same interpretation upon the phrase, as it is used in the passage before us—These people are not described like the true believers, to whom he addresses the epistle. Here is no mention of their being *partakers of a divine nature*; of being *born again by the incorruptible seed*; or of having their *souls purified by the SPIRIT*. They are only said to have escaped the pollutions of the world.——Again; the word expressive of these pollutions is μιασματα, which denotes the grossest excesses, and most scandalous iniquities. Consequently, their abstaining from such abominations, implies no more than what is called a negative goodness, or a mere external reformation. Their lusts had been restrained only, not subdued. Therefore the unhappy wretches were easily overcome by their old corruptions.—It is farther observable, that St *Peter* never considers these persons as new creatures. He calls them by no other name, than the *dog* and the *sow*. Such they were at first; no better, under all their profession of Christianity; and no other, even in their foulest relapses. When they returned again to their vomit, or their filthy practices, they returned to their own.

There is, then, a knowledge of CHRIST, which is only superficial and notional; floats idly on the understanding, but neither penetrates, nor sanctifies the heart. There is also a knowledge of CHRIST, which is wrought by the SPIRIT, and ingrafted into the soul; which receives the gift of righteousness, and brings justification into the conscience. The comfort and joy of which mortify the love of sin, and produce the life of holiness. This knowledge, Sir, may you and I teach; in this knowledge may our hearers and readers abound; and may the *divine* power give us, by means of this knowledge, all things pertaining to life and godliness!

The goodness of GOD leadeth to repentance.——"This is "unquestionably true," says Mr *Wesley*. "But the nice "metaphysical doctrine of imputed righteousness."—— Should you not rather have said, the nice metaphysical *phrase?* since, as to the *doctrine*, we are, according to your own confession, agreed; bound therefore, each of us, equally bound to clear it of the consequences, with which it may be charged, by the author of the Preservative, or by any other objector.—And as to the phrase, I cannot understand, by what authority Mr *Wesley* calls it *metaphysical*. *Theron*, it is true, uses the word, and applies it to the present object. But does not Mr *Wesley* know, that *Theron* often personates an enemy, and speaks the language of unbelief?—Be pleased, Sir, to explain your terms; and shew, in what sense it is compatible with this article of my faith? "I am acquitted and "counted righteous before GOD, only through the im-"putation of my SAVIOUR's obedience and death?" Which is, both in style and sentiment, truly evangelical; but, in no degree, that I can discern, metaphysical.

When Mr *Wesley* adds, "This leads not to repen-"tance, but to licentiousness;" he speaks what we understand, not what we allow.——Will any one say, that speculative reasoning upon the goodness of GOD, or contemplating it barely in our ideas, leadeth to repentance? But, when we taste and enjoy, when we apply and appropriate, his profusely-rich liberality in CHRIST; we are thereby prompted to neglect, abuse, and dishonour our great benefactor? Or shall it be said, the divine goodness, manifested in common providence and inferior instances, tends to awaken love and work godliness? But the same divine goodness, shining forth in the most illustrious manifestation, that men or angels ever knew; shining forth with a glory, a richness, a perfection, sufficient to transport heaven and earth with joy unspeakable: *this* goodness tends to excite contempt of GOD, and to cherish carnal indulgence? Such an insinuation, so depretiatory to the righteousness of the blessed JESUS, I had much rather have heard in a *Jewish* synagogue, than have seen in Mr *Wesley*'s writings.

No, Sir; this and this alone leadeth *a sinner* to repentance. Not all the munificence of the DEITY; neither the rain from heaven, nor fruitful seasons; neither the fatness of the earth, nor the abundance of the seas; can take away the enmity of our nature, and reconcile our affections to GOD. Nothing, nothing but a sense of pardon and acceptance, through the work finished on IMMANUEL's cross.—If you please to review the text, you will not affirm, that the apostle is asserting the efficacious influence of providential goodness on the hearts of men. He is evidently inveighing against the gross and almost general abuse of such bounty. Though it ought, it does not produce gratitude and duty. It would indeed upon upright, but it does not thus operate upon depraved minds. No cause is adequate to this effect, but free justification through JESUS CHRIST. "The

"The believer cannot but add to his faith, works of "righteouſneſs."——"During his firſt love," ſays Mr *Weſley*, "this is often true. But it is not true after-"wards, as we know and feel by melancholy expe-"rience."——How, Sir! do you yourſelf feel this! Where then is your ſinleſs perfection? Can they be perfect, whoſe love ceaſes to glow, and whoſe zeal loſes its activity? Does Mr *Weſley* himſelf make this confeſſion? Let him then ſay with us?—and let us ſay, with invariable ſtedfaſtneſs, and with increaſing gratitude,—Bleſſed be GOD for perfection in *JESUS CHRIST!*

Do you learn, Sir, what is here acknowledged, by obſervations made upon others? Then thoſe others, I apprehend, if they do not exerciſe themſelves in good works, either have no faith, and deceive both you and themſelves,—or elſe they intermit an ddiſcontinue the exertion of their faith. Which neither detracts from the efficacy of the principle, nor diſproves *Aſpaſio*'s opinion. It is not ſaid, the believer never trips, nor falters in the courſe of his obedience; but he always adds to his faith, the duties and works of obedience. Whenever the former act, the latter conſtantly enſue. So long as we live by the faith of the SON of GOD, we ſhall not fail to bring forth thoſe fruits of righteouſneſs, which are through *JESUS CHRIST.*

This is ſtrongly maintained, by *Aſpaſio*, in another place. "It is as impoſſible for the ſun to be in his "meridian height, and not diſſipate darkneſs, or dif-"fuſe light; as for faith to exiſt in the ſoul, and not "exalt the temper, and meliorate the conduct."—— This is very forcibly implied, in our LORD's interrogation to his diſciples; *Where is your faith?* It muſt be dormant and inactive, like the ſap of the trees in winter, or like the faculty of reaſoning in ſleep. Otherwiſe it would baniſh your fears, even amidſt the raging ſtorm; and produce an undaunted confidence in GOD your SAVIOUR.——The deſign of all this is, to evince the wiſdom of the goſpel, which lays ſuch a ſtreſs upon faith; ſo frequently urges the neceſſity of faith, above and before all things; repreſenting it, as the principal work of the divine SPIRIT, and the great inſtrument of receiving ſalvation. Hence it appears, that the ſacred plan is not formed in vain; much leſs is it calculated to ſuppreſs or diſcourage real holineſs.

"We no longer obey, in order to lay the founda-"tion for our final acceptance." Theſe words I read with pleaſure.——"That foundation is already laid "in the merits of *CHRIST*:" Theſe I contemplate with ſtill greater ſatisfaction.—But when I come to the following clauſe, "Yet we obey, in order to our "final acceptance through his merits;" with diſappointment and regret I cry, How is the gold become dim! how is the moſt fine gold changed!

A foundation, *for what?* *Aſpaſio* would reply, For pardon, for reconciliation, and for everlaſting ſalvation; for peace of conſcience, for acceſs to GOD, for every ſpiritual and eternal bleſſing.—A foundation, of *what kind?* In all reſpects perfect; incapable of any augmentation; not to be ſtrengthened, enlarged, or improved by all the duties and all the deeds of prophets, apoſtles, martyrs; becauſe it has omnipotence for its eſtabliſhment.——A foundation *for whom?* For ſinners; for the vileſt and moſt miſerable of ſinners: that all guilty and undone wretches may come; and though ever ſo weary, ever ſo heavy laden, may caſt their burthen upon this Rock of ages; in full aſſurance of finding reſt, and obtaining ſafety.

This is chearing; this is charming. What pity it is, that ſuch an illuſtrious truth ſhould be clouded, ſuch a precious privilege ſpoiled, by that ungracious ſentence! "We obey, in order to our final acceptance."——But is this, Sir, your conſtant profeſſion? I muſt do you the juſtice to own, that you have happier moments, and more becoming apprehenſions.——When you join in public worſhip, this is your humble and juſt acknowledgment; "Although we be unworthy, through our "manifold ſins, to offer unto thee any ſacrifice; yet "we beſeech thee to accept this our bounden duty and "ſervice."——When you criticiſe upon *Aſpaſio*, the note is changed, and this is the purport of your ſtrain; "We beſeech thee to accept us, on account of theſe "our ſervices; for we do them, O LORD, with a "profeſſed view to this end."——To implore acceptance for our duties, confeſſes them to be mean and contemptible. Whereas, to expect acceptance on their account, ſtrongly intimates their excellency; that they are worthy in a very high degree; ſo as to obtain favour, not for themſelves only, but for a miſerable creature alſo, who confeſſes himſelf ſubject to manifold ſins.

I ſaid, "on account of"—For, if you obey, *in order* to your final acceptance; ſurely, you muſt expect final acceptance and eternal life, on account of your own obedience. A poor object diſplays his ſores, and relates his diſtreſs, in order to obtain your alms. Does he not then expect your alms on account of his ſores, his diſtreſs, and his piteous tale?——What a coalition is here between Mr *Weſley* and the ſubjects of the triple crown! I find the whole council of *Trent* eſtabliſhing his ſentiments by their anathematizing decree. Theſe are their words; "If any one ſhall ſay, that the righ-"teous ought not, for their own good works, to ex-"pect the eternal reward, through the merit of *JE-"SUS CHRIST*, let him be accurſed."*——Do you ſpeak of the merit of *CHRIST?* So do they. Do you, in ſome ſenſe, allow *CHRIST* to be the foundation? So do they. Are your works to rear the edifice, and perform the moſt reſpectable part of the buſineſs? So are theirs.

By this time, I believe, the thoughtful reader will gueſs the reaſon, why you oppoſe and decry imputed righteouſneſs. You are ſolicitous, it ſeems, not barely for works of obedience, but for their value and credit in the affair of ſalvation; for their ſignificancy and influence, in winning the good-will of JEHOVAH. Since this is your notion, you may well be offended at *CHRIST*'s imputed righteouſneſs. This will admit of no partner or coadjutor. This, Sir, in the caſe of juſtification, pours contempt upon all your moſt laborious exerciſes, and admired attainments. Yea, this being divine and inconceivably excellent, pours all around a blaze of glory, in which all our puny doings are loſt, as the ſtars in the meridian ſunſhine.

"We obey in order to final acceptance."—Methinks, this diſcovers no more gratitude, than wiſdom. Is it not an officious indignity to that noble goodneſs, which has ſet forth JESUS CHRIST for a propitiation? Is it not a contemptuous diſregard of that heavenly voice, which ſaid, with ſo much ſolemnity, *In him I am well pleaſed* with the children of men?——Does this exalt, does it not degrade the SAVIOUR? Does it mortify, does it not cheriſh the pride of man?——According to this ſcheme, the merits of our LORD are the foundation, not immediately of our acceptance, but of that ſituation only, in which we are ſuppoſed capable of acquiring it ourſelves. They are, in ſhort, no more than a mere pedeſtal; on which human worth, or rather human vanity may ſtand exalted, and challenge the favour of heaven.

Ah, Sir! acceptance with GOD, is an immenſely-rich and glorious bleſſing; a high and tranſcendently-precious privilege; incomparably too high and glorious to be obtained, in any degree, by ſuch mean obedience as yours and mine.——The pardon of rebels againſt

* *Si quis dixerit, juſtos non debere, pro bonis operibus, expectare æternam retributionem, per Jeſu Chriſti meritum, anathema ſit.* De bon. oper. can. xxvi.

the King of kings! the reception of leprous ſinners into the boſom of heaven! ſhall ſuch effects, than which nothing can be greater; ſhall ſuch benefits, than which nothing can be richer; be aſcribed to human obedience? What, but the very diſtraction of our diſeaſe, can have occaſioned or can account for a thought ſo extreme in abſurdity?——[Shall we, ſordid wretches, with our ulcerous ſores, our withered limbs, and a ſtupor over all our faculties; ſhall *we* think ourſelves able to *do ſomething* for HIM, who needeth not the ſervices of angels? nay, to do ſomething conſiderable enough, to found a claim to that tranſcendent honour and happineſs, the light of his countenance?]——Our adorations! our thankſgivings! our praiſes! our prayers! our preaching! our ſacramental duties! what are they all but filthy rags,* compared with his inconceivable holineſs and glory? What part of his work do we attempt, but we debaſe it with our deplorable imperfections, or pollute it with our very touch?—Shame then belongs to us, ſhame and confuſion of face, whenever we look to ourſelves or our own performances. While all our comfort, all our hope, is to be derived from the only righteous one *CHRIST JESUS.*

If we know not enough of our own meanneſs and impotency, let us liſten to the prophet *Iſaiah.*† In order to our acceptance with GOD, he informs us, *Lebanon* with all her ſtately cedars *is not ſufficient to burn; nor all the beaſts*, that range through her extenſive ſhades, *ſufficient for a burnt-offering.* Nations, whole nations, avail no more than ſingle perſons. Should they unite their abilities, and exert all their efforts, to do ſomething which may recommend them to JEHOVAH;‡ all would be mean, ineffectual, deſpicable. Mean, *as the drop of a bucket*, which falls to the ground, and none regards it. Ineffectual, *as the duſt upon the balance*, which wants even that ſmall degree of impetus, neceſſary to turn the moſt nicely poiſed ſcales. Deſpicable, *as the atom that floats* in the air, and has not weight enough to ſettle itſelf on any object.—Should you reply, in all theſe things there is ſome, though very little ſubſtance; the prophet farther declares, that *all nations* in the world, with all their virtues, accompliſhments, and works, would before the infinitely-majeſtic GOD, be as nothing, leſs than nothing, yea, vanity itſelf; incapable, abſolutely incapable of winning his favour, or doing any thing worthy of his notice. §——Bleſſed therefore, for ever bleſſed be divine grace, that we have a great High Prieſt, in whom GOD is pleaſed; is well pleaſed; and his very ſoul delighteth: whoſe ſacrifice, and whoſe work, have merited all the good, that ſinners can want, or the ALMIGHTY can beſtow.

If we are not yet duly humbled, nor willing to profeſs ourſelves beholden to divine grace alone; if we ſtill reſolve to be principals or partners with the one MEDIATOR, in the purchaſe of the ineſtimable jewel, let us fear, leſt *the LORD our righteouſneſs* reſent ſuch a diſhonour done to himſelf; and ſwear in his wrath, that we ſhall have neither lot nor portion in this matter. Of this he has expreſsly warned us by his apoſtle; *If ye be circumciſed, CHRIST ſhall profit you nothing.* What would St *Paul* teach us by this ſolemn proteſtation?——That no *Jew* can be ſaved? Himſelf was an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*; circumciſed the eighth day.——That a Chriſtian would, by receiving circumciſion after his converſion to *CHRIST*, forfeit all his privileges? No; for he himſelf circumciſed *Timothy*, to gain him a fair hearing from the judaizing bigots.—Or is circumciſion here uſed, by way of ſynecdoche, for the ceremonial law? teaching us, that, as the *Moſaic* rites were now aboliſhed, an attempt to continue the obſervance of them, would be an unpardonable oppoſition to the deſigns of Providence? The charitable compromiſe, recorded in the xivth to the *Romans*, leads to a different concluſion. ——Or did thoſe ſeducing teachers, who required this

——*Egregium opus*
Culpa deterere ingeni.

The prophet, ſtruck with the contemplation of a moſt glorious perſonage, cries out, like one tranſported and amazed, *Who?* Never was any thing comparable to him, either exiſting in nature, or imagined by fancy. *Who hath meaſured the waters*, the unfathomable deep, and the boundleſs wave; meaſured them, not in his capacious ciſtern, *but in the hollow of his hand? Who hath meted out heaven*, an expanſe in which worlds revolve, and extended to immenſity; meted it, not with an out-ſtretched line, but *with the ſpan* of his fingers? *Who hath comprehended the duſt of the earth*, all the ſolid contents of this prodigiouſly-large globe, as a little pittance *in the ſmalleſt meaſure? Who hath weighed the mountains*, with all their ponderous ridges, and the hills, with all their maſſy rocks, as a man weigheth an ounce or a dram *in* his *ſcales?* Here I would only obſerve the judicious choice of objects. By far the moſt diſtinguiſhed and magnificent, that the univerſe affords. The abyſs of waters, and the circuit of the ſkies! the dimenſions of the earth, and the elevation of the mountains! Compared with which, the loftieſt groves are leſs than the hyſſop on the wall; and the moſt ample cities are ſmaller than a grain of muſtard ſeed.

Then follows a compariſon, more admirable, if it be poſſible, than this fine deſcription. *Behold!* The nations, whether on the neighbouring continent or in the remoteſt iſles, are, before this exalted Being, as the ſmall drop of a bucket, which is almoſt too ſcanty to deſerve our notice. They are as the ſmaller duſt upon the balance, which is not ſufficient even to turn the hovering ſcale. They are as the ſmalleſt atom, which has not weight enough to reach the ground, nor force enough to reſiſt the ſlighteſt undulations of the air. Yea, all the nations of the earth, amidſt all their pomp and grandeur, with all their boaſted accompliſhments and admired works, are, before this incomprehenſible GOD, as a mere nothing.—Can language go farther? Can imagination take a bolder flight? Yes; the aſtoniſhingly-rich ideas of the prophet add a heightening, a redoubled heightening even to this inimitable picture. The kingdoms of the world, with all their inhabitants, and all their honours, are leſs than nothing; are leſs than vanity itſelf, in the eſtimate of the almighty JEHOVAH.

This, if I am not greatly miſtaken, is one of the moſt highly-finiſhed ſketches of the *beautiful* and *ſublime*, extant in the whole compaſs of letters.—Let us always remember, that the majeſtic perſon, whom it deſcribes, is our atonement and righteouſneſs (ver. 2.) is our ſhepherd and guide (ver. 11.); it will then be one of the moſt conſolatory and delightful truths, in all the book of GOD.—And O! may we never forget, that the ſmall drop of the bucket, the ſmaller duſt on the balance, the volatile atom, and that which is leſs than nothing, are intended to ſhew us, what figure our own endeavours, works, and duties make in the ſight of almighty GOD. We ſhall then have a doctrine, moſt powerful to humble us, to abaſe us, and to teach us to renounce our own righteouſneſs.

conformity

* *If.* lxiv. 6. In ſuch a light, I cannot but look upon the ſervices and works of frail man. In ſuch a light they are repreſented, in various parts of our public devotions. And if we are but humble enough to confeſs ourſelves *ſinners*, in ſuch a light they *muſt* appear to every diſcerning and impartial eye. Since nothing, even in hell itſelf, is more loathſome, or imparts a more horrid defilement, than ſin.—If ſuch ſervices are a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour to GOD, it is owing to that copious incenſe, (θυμιαματα πολλα, *Rev.* viii. 3.) which ariſes from the golden cenſer and the golden altar. (*Rev.* viii. 3.) It is wholly owing to the infinite dignity and all-recommending efficacy of CHRIST's blood, interceſſion, and righteouſneſs.

† If. xl. 15, 16, 17.

‡ Do we want to learn the prophet's aim and deſign in this magnificent paragraph? we may, to our great ſatisfaction, conſult his ſagacious and devout commentator *Vitringa*. *Hic altius ſurgens oratio, non tantum omne meritum abjudicat carni, ſed docet etiam et inculcat, eſſe hæc omnia quæ gentes ad placandum numen finxerunt, merum nihil et inane. Nullum plane pondus afferre in commendatione cauſæ ſuæ apud Deum: imo eſſe* nihilo *ipſo et* inani *inferiora, ſi quid nihilo minus fingi et cogitari poſſit. Non poteſt in natura: ſed fingi poteſt et obtinet in œconomia ſpirituali. Eſt enim ibi quod ita non* prodeſt *ad obtinendam juſtitiam apud Deum, ut ſimul* noceat. *Cujus generis ſunt omnia* αυτοσχεδια *et commenta ſapientiæ carnis. Non tantum Deo non commendant, ſed potius iram et indignationem divinam provocant.*

§ May I be allowed to elucidate the noble paſſage quoted above? Sure I am, the reader will not be diſpleaſed with the digreſſion, unleſs the annotator fails in the execution, and has the misfortune

onformity from the Gentile converts, require them to renounce CHRIST, and relapſe into mere Judaiſm? Neither is this at all ſuppoſable. They only required ſuch a conformity, "in order to their acceptance through his merits;" which they never rejected, but only placed as a foundation for their own.

What then can be meant by, CHRIST *ſhall profit you nothing, if ye be circumciſed?* If ye make circumciſion, or anything whatever, beſides the righteouſneſs of CHRIST, neceſſary to your acceptance with GOD, ye ſhall receive no advantage from all that the REDEEMER has done and ſuffered. This is to halt between works and grace, between CHRIST and ſelf. And ſuch divided regards, he will interpret as an affront, rather than an acceptable homage. Indeed, this is, in Chriſtians, the grand apoſtaſy. By this they deny the ſufficiency of their SAVIOUR's moſt conſummate righteouſneſs. They caſt themſelves entirely out of the covenant of grace, and muſt expect no ſalvation but by doing the whole law.

This is the awful apoſtolic caution. To which let me ſubjoin the plain apoſtolic inſtruction—*Ye are accepted*, ſays St *Paul*, not partially, but entirely; not occaſionally, but finally, *in the* BELOVED. All acceptance, of whatever kind, or whatever date, is wholly in him, not in any thing of our own.——The author to the *Hebrews* affirms, that CHRIST *hath obtained redemption*, not left it to be accompliſhed, either in greater or ſmaller meaſure, by our diligence and duties. No; he himſelf hath obtained, both preſent and final, yea, complete and *eternal redemption for us*. And will you, Sir, aſcribe to your own obedience, what the apoſtle ſo expreſsly aſcribes, and ſo entirely appropriates, to the bleſſed JESUS?——The ſame writer aſſures us, that CHRIST, *by one offering, hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*. Them that are cleanſed with the blood of ſprinkling, he hath not only diſcharged from the guilt of ſin, but rendered them unblameable and unreproveable, before the Majeſty of heaven. He hath done all that is neceſſary for their full, perfect, and everlaſting acceptation. Yes; whether it be in life or death; whether it be at the throne of grace, or the tribunal of judgment; during the ſpan of time, or through the ages of eternity; all that is neceſſary for our perfect acceptation is done: done by an infinitely-better hand, than our own; by an infinitely-better expedient, than any human obedience.

Do I, by theſe remonſtrances, ſet at nought true holineſs? or ſuppoſe a ſalvation ſeparate from holy obedience? You, Sir, cannot entertain ſuch a ſuppoſition; ſince, in your very laſt remark, you was diſſatisfied with my inſiſting on the *inſeparable* connection of a living faith, and works of righteouſneſs.—I honour and prize works of righteouſneſs. I would inceſſantly inculcate, both the indiſpenſable neceſſity, and the manifold utility, of holy obedience. We are redeemed, that we may be zealous of good works. We are created in CHRIST JESUS, that we may be able to do good works. And by good works we are to glorify our FATHER which is in heaven.

Only I would have good works know their proper ſtation, and their proper office. I am far from ſetting at nought the ſervices of the hand or the foot. But I ſhould very much diſapprove their deſign, I ſhould utterly deſpiſe their pretenſions, if they ſhould offer to intrude themſelves on the province of the eye, or act as the organs of ſight. Apply this ſimile to the obedience of man, and juſtification before GOD, or acceptance with GOD, you will then ſee, in what rank I place, in what eſteem I hold, both the one and the other.

As I would have obedience know its proper place, ſo I would have it take a right form. The obedience, which you propoſe, is the obedience of the bond-man, not of the free. A ſlave, bought with our money, obeys in order to be accepted. A ſervant, hired to diſpatch our buſineſs, obeys in order to receive his wages. But the child obeys, becauſe he is beloved; becauſe he is the heir; and all things, which the father hath, are his.

"Obey in order to acceptance!"—— Indeed, Sir, you quite miſtake the principle and ſource of Chriſtian obedience. Nor ſhall I undertake to rectify your miſtaken apprehenſions, leſt you ſhould ſcorn to learn from an inferior. I will refer you to a ſet of teachers, from whom you need not bluſh to receive inſtruction. But as this may demand a very particular conſideration, I ſhall poſtpone it to ſome future opportunity, and aſſign to it a diſtinct epiſtle.

In the mean time, if you ſhould aſk, why I have been ſo copious upon this point? I anſwer, becauſe it is a matter of the utmoſt importance. An error on this ſubject, is as detrimental to our ſpiritual welfare, as a fault in the firſt concoction is to the animal conſtitution. A miſtake concerning acceptance with GOD, muſt ſet in a falſe light every religious truth, and ſhed a malignant influence on every religious ſentiment.

If you aſk, why I have repeated the obnoxious propoſition, almoſt as frequently as the rams horns ſounded the fatal blaſt, on the day when *Jericho* was overthrown? I anſwer, For the very ſame purpoſe. To overthrow, if poſſible ſo pernicious a notion; to lay it as low, as the fortifications of that devoted city. And I hope, neither Mr *Weſley*, nor any other, will attempt to rebuild it, leſt they *lay the foundation thereof*, in the diſhonour of the bleſſed REDEEMER, *and ſet up the gates of it*, in the diſtreſs of precious ſouls. Both which effects, I am perſuaded, are very remote from your intention. That they may be equally remote from your preaching, your writing, and all your doctrine, is the ſincere wiſh of, &c.

LETTER IV.

REV. SIR,

I Had, in the warmth of my concern; almoſt forgot to take notice of a text, which you produce from 1 *Tim.* vi. 17, 18, 19. and, which is ſomewhat ſtrange, produce as a proof, that the apoſtle requires Chriſtians to obey, in order to their final acceptance."

Is *Paul* then become the apoſtate? and do the curſes which he has denounced againſt the ſeducers of the *Galatian* converts, fall at length on his own head? He placed *Timothy* at *Epheſus*, as a bulwark againſt the encroachments of other doctrines. Was it with a reſerve for liberties of this kind, which he himſelf ſhould take? Can we think his mind ſo much altered, ſince he told thoſe very *Epheſians*, that, without ſeeking acceptance through their obedience, *they were* already *accepted in the* BELOVED! Does he now retract the bleſſed truth? adviſing the rich, to raiſe a cloud of golden duſt, that it may cover their ſins, and waft them to the ſkies? at the ſame time, excluding the poor from the fellowſhip of this new goſpel, and the hope of glory. Is he grown aſhamed of that righteouſneſs of GOD, which, he aſſured the *Romans*, was the power of GOD unto ſalvation, only through believing? And are we, Sir, grown weary of that pure doctrine, which was reſtored to us, by our glorious reformers. Are we willing to give up the depoſitum, and return to the more than *Egyptian* darkneſs of friars and monks? with whom

—*Cælum*

——Cælum eſt venale DEUSque!

But to the point.——I ſhall tranſcribe the text, and add a ſhort paraphraſe; which may, perhaps, explain the meaning, and beſt refute the objection. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate; laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation, that they may lay hold on eternal life.* *Charge them*, thoſe believers * among you, *who are rich in this world; that they do good*, that, as members of CHRIST, they ſhew kindneſs, and exerciſe beneficence to others. *That they be rich in good works*, abounding in thoſe works and labours of love, which flow from faith, or a comfortable perſuaſion of their intereſt in CHRIST. *Ready to diſtribute*, on all proper occaſions, with chearfulneſs and delight; as counting it more bleſſed to give, than to receive. *Willing*, even without ſolicitation, *to communicate*; and not only embracing, but ſeeking every opportunity of relieving the neceſſitous. Lightly eſteeming all that is called wealth here below; and *laying up in ſtore for themſelves* another kind of treaſure, [even CHRIST, who is the pearl of price, and the true riches.] This will be *a good foundation* of hope, of comfort, and joy: *againſt the time to come*, whether it be the trying ſeaſon of ſickneſs, the awful hour of death, or the more trememdous day of judgment: That, placing their affections on him, and having their treaſure in him, they may be found wiſe merchants: not graſping uncertainties and ſhadows, but *laying faſt hold on* † ſure and ſubſtantial poſſeſſions; even *on eternal life.*

"*We eſtabliſh the law:* we provide for its honour by "the perfect obedience of CHRIST;" ſays *Aſpaſio.*—"Can you poſſibly think," replies Mr *Weſley*, "that St "*Paul* meant this?"—Before I anſwer this queſtion, give me leave to aſk another. Have you, Sir, done juſtice to *Aſpaſio?* Is what you quote, the whole of his interpretation? have you not ſecreted a ſentence, which ſpeaks the very thing you blame for omitting?

A member of the houſe of Commons, haranguing the honourable aſſembly, took the liberty to aſſert, "The gentlemen in the miniſterial intereſt, never pro-"poſe any thing for the good of their country."—This was no ſooner uttered, than a warm partizan of the other ſide ſtarting up, complained loudly of calumny and ſcandal. Hold, Sir, for a moment, ſaid the interrupted orator. Let me juſt finiſh my ſentence, and then give vent to your vehement invectives. My intention was to have added; "but we in the oppoſition readily agree "to their meaſures."—Upon hearing this explanation, the houſe ſmiled, and the haſty zealot ſat down aſhamed.

Let me produce the whole period now under conſideration. Then I believe, the reader will allow, that Mr *Weſley* has imitated this haſty gentleman, in one inſtance; and whether he has not ſome reaſon to imitate him in another, I ſhall leave to his own determination. —Immediately after the diſplay of free juſtification, or of *righteouſneſs imputed without works* *, *Aſpaſio*, aware of the poſſibility of abuſing his doctrine, aſſerts the indiſpenſable neceſſity of holineſs. This done, as quite cleared from the accuſation, he triumphs with the apoſtle; "*Do we then make void the law, through faith*, in the im-"puted righteouſneſs of our LORD? GOD *forbid! yea*, "*we eſtabliſh the law.* Conſidered as the original *cove-*"*nant* of life, we provide for its honour, by the perfect "obedience of CHRIST. Conſidered as the invariable "*ſtandard* of duty; we enforce its obſervance, by the "moſt rational, manly, and endearing motives †."—Here, Sir, was hardly any room for the precipitancy of interruption, becauſe the whole paſſage lay before you. And it is a little ſurpriſing, that you ſhould ſee and animadvert upon the former clauſe; yet neither ſee, nor regard the clauſe immediately following.

"Did ſuch a thought (of eſtabliſhing the law, by the "atonement and righteouſneſs of CHRIST) ever enter "into St *Paul*'s mind?"—Let the preceding context determine. Has the apoſtle been opening the true ſenſe of the precepts, that they might be rightly underſtood? Has he been inculcating the inviolable obligation of the precepts, that they might be duly practiſed? Has he not been aſſerting a juſtification abſolutely free, effected by the righteouſneſs of GOD, without any co-agency from the righteouſneſs of man? Does he not, in the laſt words, profeſſedly encounter the objection, which in every age, has been raiſed againſt this ſacred doctrine? "Hereby you neglect and diſhonour the divine "law." No; ſays the inſpired apologiſt, the law is hereby *eſtabliſhed*, and ſhewn to be more ſtable than earth or heaven. The grand legiſlator himſelf ſhall be humbled to its obedience; the GOD who gave the law, ſhall bleed for its penalties; rather than a tittle fail of its due accompliſhment.—Magnified thus, the law indeed is and made for ever honourable. And though *Aſpaſio* does not exclude our practical regards, I do verily, for my own part, believe; that the former ſentiment, againſt which you exclaim, was uppermoſt with the apoſtle, and is the chief deſign of the text.

Yes, Sir; it was the apoſtle's chief deſign, to ſhew the perfect conſiſtency of free juſtification with the moſt awful glories of the DEITY; and thereby lay a firm foundation for the hope of a ſinner. Had juſtice, which is the eſſential glory of GOD's nature, or the law, which is the revealed glory of his will—had either of theſe been violated, by the evangelical ſcheme; benign and deſirable as it is, it muſt have been utterly rejected; it could never have taken place; the whole world muſt have periſhed, rather than ſuch an injury be offered to any of the divine perfections. Therefore St *Paul* moſt ſweetly teaches, and moſt ſatisfactorily proves, that, inſtead of being injured, they are moſt illuſtriouſly diſplayed by the obedience and death of CHRIST. By this means, JEHOVAH is inflexibly juſt, even in juſtifying the ungodly; and his law is highly exalted, even in abſolving the tranſgreſſor, that believeth in JESUS.

Here is firm footing; here is ſolid rock.

Solid rock, on which the ſinner may reſt, who is well nigh ſunk in deſpair; while the waves and billows o

[* The exhortation is addreſſed, not to the ungodly, but to true believers; who had received CHRIST, and were ſaved through grace; conſequently, had no need to *win* or *attain* eternal life, but only to make it, in their own apprehenſion, or to their own conſciences, more and more *ſure*. Had they been unconverted people, the apoſtle would, like his divine MASTER diſcourſing with the rich, but unregenerate *Nicodemus*, have ſtruck at the root of their miſery; and ſpoke of more important things, than diſtributing a little ſhining duſt among the poor.]

† *Take faſt hold on*—thus I would tranſlate that emphatical compound word επιλαβωνται. Which agrees with the experience of the Chriſtian, and is not without the authority of the critic.—With *the experience of the Chriſtian.* Since believers, by the exerciſe of faith, producing all good works, are continually maintaining and increaſing their hold of CHRIST; and of that eternal life, which is given them in him.—With *the authority of the critic.* For the word ſignifies, "to ſeize with great vehemency; to lay hold on "with both hands, as upon a thing we are glad to have got, and "will be loath to let go again." LEIGH's *Crit. Sacr.*—That it does not, in this connection, denote an apprehending of ſomewhat not taken hold of before, is evident from verſe the twelfth, where this very exhortation is directed to *Timothy* himſelf: who was an eminent man of GOD, and the ſubject of particular prophecies; was a believer of the firſt claſs, and an undoubted heir of life and immortality: who needed not therefore *to attain*, but to live in the ſtedfaſt hope and unintermitted expectation of the glorious inheritance.

* Rom. iv. 6. † *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, p. 160.

divine

divine indignation go over his alarmed ſoul.—*Firm footing*, on which he may proceed, who ſees the importance of his eternal intereſts, and does not riſk them on the vague notion of mere mercy; dares not give into the modiſh religion, which leaves ſuch venerable things, as the juſtice of the Moſt High and the law of the Moſt Holy, deſtitute of their due honour; and leaves ſuch impotent creatures as men, to ſhift for themſelves, by doing the beſt they can.

"The plain meaning is, we eſtabliſh both the true "ſenſe, and the effectual practice of the law: we pro- "vide for its being both underſtood and practiſed in "its full extent."——How can you make this proviſion, if you ſet aſide the conſummate obedience of *CHRIST*; *who is the end of the law for righteouſneſs*; for accompliſhing that righteouſneſs, which its precepts deſcribe, and its conſtitution demands.

O! Sir, did you conſider, what that meaneth, which the apoſtle ſtyles το αδυναλον τε νομε, you would not uſe this language. Can *we*—can ſuch miſerable ſinners as *we*, ever dream of effectually practiſing, in its full extent, that law, which condemns every failure; which requires truth in the inward parts, which inſiſts upon perfection, abſolute perfection, in every inſtance, and on all occaſions; charging us,

With act intenſe, and unremitting nerve,
To hold a courſe unfaltering,

to the very end of our lives, and from the beginning of them too?——Attend, I entreat you, Sir, to this moſt ſublime ſanctity of the divine law. Then, inſtead of ſaying, we provide for its performance in the *full extent* of its demands; you will probably ſay, with a more becoming modeſty, we provide for its performance, in a way of willing, chearful, ſincere obedience, ſtill looking unto HIM for juſtification, who has, in our name, and as our ſurety, fulfilled it to the very uttermoſt.

It is, I apprehend, one of your leading errors, that you form low, ſcanty, inadequate apprehenſions of GOD's law; that law, which is a bright repreſentation of his moſt pure nature; a beautiful draught of his moſt holy will, and never, ſince the fall, has been perfectly exemplified in any living character, but only in the man *CHRIST JESUS*.—From this error, many others muſt unavoidably follow; a diſeſteem of imputed righteouſneſs, and a conceit of perſonal perfection; a ſpirit of legal bondage, and, I fear, a tincture of Phariſaical pride.

Should Mr *Weſley* aſk, why I harbour ſuch a ſuſpicion concerning his ſentiments in this particular? I anſwer, Becauſe, here, he ſpeaks of practiſing this law, which is ſo exceeding broad, in its full extent. Becauſe, elſewhere, he repreſents the violations of this law, whoſe leaſt tittle is of greater dignity than heaven and earth, as ſmall matters; as petty offences; or, to uſe his own words, as "things not exactly right."—But more of this hereafter.

Aſpaſio, to vindicate the equity of the future judgment, declares, "I ſee ſomething arbitrary in this pro- "cedure; but an admirable mixture of juſt ſeverity, "and free goodneſs. On thoſe, who reject the atone- "ment, juſt ſeverity. To thoſe, who rely on their "SAVIOUR, free goodneſs."—Mr *Weſley*, as though he would exculpate the ungodly, aſks, "Was it ever "poſſible for them not to reject it?—What ſays our infallible Counſellor; the TEACHER ſent from GOD? *They will not come to ME that they may have life.* They rejected his counſel. They would not ceaſe from their own works, and betake themſelves wholly to the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. This method of ſalvation they diſliked. It was fooliſhneſs unto them. Therefore they were diſobedient to the heavenly call.——Does this take away their guilt? Muſt GOD be reckoned unjuſt in puniſhing, becauſe men are obſtinate in their unbelief?

GOD does not require me, as you too injuriouſly hint, to "touch heaven with my hand," in order to eſcape damnation. But he invites and requires me, to accept of *CHRIST* and his ſalvation. If, intent upon any imaginary accompliſhments of my own, I overlook the gift; or if, eager in the purſuit of worldly gratifications, I trample upon it; is not the fault entirely my own? Does it not proceed from the folly of my mind, or the bad diſpoſition of my heart; and leave my conduct without excuſe?

Juſtification is complete, the firſt moment we believe; and is incapable of augmentation. Thus *Aſpaſio* ſpeaks. Thus Mr *Weſley* replies, "Not ſo."——And has he, for his authority, a ſingle text of ſcripture? No; but the whole council of *Trent*; one of whoſe canons dogmatizes in this manner: "If any ſhall affirm, that "righteouſneſs received is not preſerved, and increaſ- "ed likewiſe, by good works; but that good works "are only the fruits and ſigns of juſtification obtained, "not the means of increaſing it alſo, let him be ac- "curſed." *——I am ſorry, Sir, to ſee you again in ſuch company. And I would hope, if it were not an unhandſome reflection, you did not know your aſſociates. Yet it is ſtrange, that a *Proteſtant* divine ſhould have been ſo inattentive to the main part of his character; or ſhould be able to forget, that complete juſtification, through the righteouſneſs of our LORD alone, is the very eſſence, ſoul, and glory of the *reformation*.

But let us examine the point.——Juſtification, I apprehend, is one ſingle act of divine grace. It muſt, therefore, be either done, or undone. If done, in my very idea of the act, it includes completeneſs. So that to ſpeak of incomplete juſtification, is a contradiction in terms; like ſpeaking of dark ſunſhine, or a round ſquare.

An incomplete juſtification ſeems, in the very nature of things, to be an abſolute impoſſibility. Even an earthly judge cannot juſtify, where there is the leaſt departure from integrity. He may overlook; he may ſhew clemency; he may forgive. But he cannot, in ſuch a caſe, pronounce righteous. Much leſs can we ſuppoſe, that juſtification ſhould take place before an infinitely-pure and jealous GOD, unleſs all guilt be done away, and the perſon be rendered *completely righteous*.

Beſides, can *that* juſtification be other than complete, which is brought to paſs by the moſt majeſtic SON of GOD? by his perfectly-holy nature; by his infinitely-precious ſufferings; and by his inconceivably-meritorious obedience? This, if any thing in the world, muſt be abſolutely complete; beyond compare, and beyond imagination complete; to ſpeak all in a word, complete in proportion to the dignity, perfection, and glory of the accompliſher.

Is any ſuch notion, as an incomplete juſtification, to be found in the Bible? St *Paul* ſays, *Whoſoever believeth is juſtified*; to all intents and purpoſes juſtified. No, ſays Mr *Weſley*; he may be juſtified only in part or by halves. ——He that believeth, adds the apoſtle, *is juſtified from all things*. No, replies Mr *Weſley*; many that believe, eſpecially in the infancy of their faith, are juſtified only from *ſome* things. There is no neceſſity, that juſtification ſhould be complete, when or where-ever it exiſts.

Is there no neceſſity? Why then does the voice of inſpiration aſſert, that *the righteouſneſs of GOD* is upon them that believe? Can a man have that incomparably-magnificent righteouſneſs, and yet be incompletely juſtified?——Does not the ſame inſpired writer declare,——that this perfect and divine righteouſneſs is upon *all*; not upon *ſome* only, but upon *all* believers? whether they be weak or ſtrong; whether in the firſt moments of their converſion, or in the laſt

* *Si quis dixerit, juſtitiam acceptam non conſervari, atque etiam non augeri coram Deo per opera bona, ſed opera ipſa fructus ſolummodo et ſigna eſſe juſtificationis adeptæ, non etiam ipſius augendæ cauſam, anathema eſto.* Seſſ. vi. can. 24.

ſtage of their warfare.—Yes; and he farther aſſures us, that *there is no difference*. No difference, with regard to the righteouſneſs itſelf; for it is the *one everlaſting* righteouſneſs of the incarnate GOD. No difference, as to the reality of its imputation; for it is *unto all, and upon all*. No difference, in the way of receiving it; which is *by faith in JESUS CHRIST*. Conſequently, no difference in the fruits or effects; which are pardon and acceptance, free and full juſtification.

Is Mr *Weſley*, like the *Popiſh* party, an advocate for a firſt, for a ſecond, for I know not how many juſtifications? According to this ſcheme indeed, juſtification may be an incomplete thing. But the misfortune attending this ſcheme, is, that it has no foundation in ſcripture. The ſcripture knows nothing of it; the ſcripture declares againſt it; and acknowledges, as but one faith, but one baptiſm, ſo but one juſtification.

This is the grand ſcriptural maxim; *HE hath, by one oblation, perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*. The oblation is one, needing no repetition, and no appendage. It does not partially accompliſh, but perfects the buſineſs of juſtification; perfects it, not at the laſt only, but from firſt to laſt; yea, for ever and ever; in behalf of all thoſe, who are ſanctified; or made partakers of this great ſacrifice, and this divine atonement.

This is the fine ſcriptural illuſtration; *The heir, even while he is a child, is lord of all*. You have, perhaps, a ſon born. Upon this child you multiply your favours and careſſes. He grows in wiſdom and ſtature. Yet neither your favours nor his growth, add any thing to his ſonſhip, nor augment his right to your inheritance. With both theſe he was inveſted, the firſt moment he drew breath. So, we are no ſooner juſtified, than we are heirs; *heirs of GOD and joint heirs with CHRIST*. The perception and enjoyment of this privilege may increaſe. But the privilege itſelf, like the birth-right of the firſt-born, is incapable of augmentation.

Would Mr *Weſley*, with the followers of *Arminius*, exclude the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*; and introduce ſomething of man's as the efficient, or as a concurrent, cauſe of juſtification? Then likewiſe his notion of a gradual, a variable, an incomplete juſtification, muſt enſue. Whether it be faith, which he would introduce for this purpoſe, or repentance, or ſincere obedience, or whatever elſe he pleaſes; according to the meaſure of theſe works or graces, muſt be the degree of juſtification; and not only as to different perſons, but as to the ſame perſon, at different times.

Farther, ſince all theſe endowments are, ſo long as we continue in the preſent ſtate, imperfect; our juſtification muſt, according to this plan, unavoidably partake of their imperfections. It cannot be entire and lacking nothing, till mortality is ſwallowed up of life.—But how contrary is this to a cloud of witneſſes from the ſcriptures! *Ye are*, even now, *juſtified. He hath*, even in this preſent time, *reconciled you to GOD*.—Through the birth and death of IMMANUEL, there is not only *peace on earth*, but *good-will towards men*; favour, complacency, and love, from the holy GOD, to the fallen ſoul. And is not this complete juſtification?

"There may be as many degrees in the favour, as "in the image of GOD."—This objection turns upon a ſuppoſition, that the favour of GOD towards us is occaſioned by the image of GOD in us: which is the doctrine of the law; the very language of Heatheniſm; and has not a ſavour of that goſpel, in which *CHRIST is all*. And I think myſelf more concerned, to remove ſuch very prejudicial miſtakes, than to ſift and adjuſt any nice ſpeculations, relating to degrees of the divine favour. *Aſpaſio* has touched this point. Referring you to his obſervation, I ſhall confine myſelf to a more intereſting ſubject.

It is *CHRIST*, who *has redeemed us to GOD*, to the favour and fruition of GOD, *by his blood*; by his blood alone, without any aid from our goodneſs, or any co-operation from any creature.—His work pleaſes GOD. His work magnifies the law. His work is incomparably the nobleſt of all things in heaven or earth. This therefore is our recommendation to the divine Majeſty. Inveſted in this, we ſtand perfectly righteous before the KING immortal, and ſhall be eternally acceptable in his light.—It was only on account of *Abraham*'s ſupplication, that GOD ſhewed compaſſion to *Abimelech*. It was only on account of *Job*'s interceſſion, that the LORD was pacified towards his three friends. And it is only on account of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs, that the HIGH and HOLY ONE beholds any child of *Adam* with complacency and delight. To *JESUS* alone belongs the honour of reconciling, juſtifying, ſaving the innumerable millions of redeemed ſinners. And is not the LAMB that was ſlain, worthy to be thus honoured, and thus exalted?

Is then our own internal and external goodneſs of no avail in this matter?—Let us hear the eloquent *Iſaiah*, the evangeliſt of the *Jewiſh* church. *The lofty looks of man ſhall be humbled, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be bowed down; and the LORD*, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, *alone, ſhall be exalted in that day*.—Does this text, it may be ſaid, relate to the goſpel, and the caſe of acceptance with GOD? Or is it poſſible to make what follows, conſiſtent with ſuch an interpretation?—Let us ſee, whether it be not, by the HOLY GHOST himſelf, made perfectly conſiſtent with ſuch a ſenſe.

This day of the LORD *of hoſts*, in the prophetical ſcriptures, generally and principally ſignifies the time of the goſpel-diſpenſation; when the LORD puts the finiſhing hand to his revelation; gives the brighteſt diſplay of his grace; and gathers together all things in *CHRIST*.

This day, and its influence, ſhall cauſe a wonderful revolution in, what is called, the righteous, virtuous, moral world. It ſhall fall like a thunderbolt upon every idol, ſet up in the hearts of men; ſhall prove their wiſdom to be folly; their ability to be impotence; all their work to be worthleſs.

This prophecy, being repugnant to our notions, and ſo diſguſtful to our inclinations, is aſſerted and enforced with the greateſt particularity, both as to perſons and to things.

As to *perſons*.—*For the day of the* LORD *of hoſts ſhall be upon* whom? upon the ſordid wretch, or the ſcandalous ſinner? Rather upon *every one that is proud and lofty* in his own conceit; pluming himſelf with the notion of ſome imaginary pre-eminence above his neighbour. It ſhall be likewiſe *upon every one, that is lifted up* in the eſteem of others; either on account of *Roman* virtue, or *Athenian* philoſophy, or *Phariſaical* zeal. And, notwithſtanding his aſpiring pretenſions, or glittering accompliſhments, *he ſhall be brought low*; ſhall be degraded to the rank of a loſt, undone helpleſs ſinner.

So that none ſhall have it in his power to ſay, "I am "better than thou. I ſtand upon more honourable "terms with my MAKER, and am a fitter object for "his favour." They ſhall all be like priſoners, confined in the ſame dungeon, and liable to the ſame condemnation. Every one of them equally deſtitute of any plea for juſtification; and all of them, as to acceptance with their CREATOR, without any difference. No difference, in this reſpect, between the accompliſhed gentleman, and the infamous ſcoundrel; no difference between the virtuous lady, and the vile proſtitute. No difference at all, as to the way and manner of their obtaining ſalvation. So that the whole may appear to be of grace.

As to *things*.—This part of the ſubject is illuſtrated by a grand aſſemblage of images; comprehending all

that is moſt diſtinguiſhable in the viſible creation, and denoting whatever is moſt admired or celebrated among the ſons of men.—Oaks and cedars are the moſt ſtately productions of vegetable nature. Therefore *the day ſhall be upon all the cedars of Lebanon, and upon all the oaks of Baſhan.*—Hills and mountains are the moſt conſpicuous and majeſtic elevations of the earth. Therefore the day ſhall be *upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up.*—Towers and cities are the moſt magnificent works of human art. Therefore the day ſhall be *upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall.*—*The ſhips of Tarſhiſh* are put for the wealth, the advantages, and the various improvements, procured by navigation and commerce. *Pleaſant pictures* may repreſent every elegant and refined embelliſhment of civil life.—The whole collection of metaphors, ſeems to expreſs all thoſe attainments, poſſeſſions, and excellencies, which are ſuppoſed to add dignity to our nature, or ſtability to our hopes; to conſtitute a portion, in which we ourſelves may reſt ſatisfied, or a recommendation, which may entitle us to the favour of heaven.

Yet all theſe things, before the requirements of GOD's law, and before the revelation of his righteouſneſs, ſhall be eclipſed and diſgraced. *Thrown to the bats*, and conſigned over to obſcurity; *thrown to the moles*, and trampled into the duſt. So that, in the purſuit of eternal life, none ſhall regard them; or elſe regard them, only to deſpiſe them.

Thus, ſays the prophet a ſecond time.—To render the work of humiliation effectual, he redoubles his blow. May our whole ſouls feel the energy of his vigorous expreſſions! Thus *ſhall the loftineſs of man be bowed down, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be laid low.* All notion of perſonal excellency ſet aſide, they ſhall be baſe and vile in their own eyes; acknowledge the impoſſibility of being reconciled by any duties of their own, and place all their confidence on the propitiating death and meritorious obedience of JESUS CHRIST. *They* leſs than nothing; HE all in all.

With this important ſentiment I cloſe my letter; not without an ardent wiſh, that it may ſink into our thoughts, and dwell upon both our hearts.

Your's, &c.

LETTER V.

REV. SIR,

YOUR laſt, and ſeveral of your other objections, appear more like notes and memorandums, than a juſt plea to the public, or a ſatisfactory explanation of your opinion! They have rather the air of a caveat, than a confutation; and we are often at a loſs to diſcern, how far your remonſtrance is either forcible or appoſite.

Brief negatives, laconic aſſertions, and quick interrogatories, opened by no pertinent illuſtrations, ſupported by no ſcriptural authority, are more likely to ſtagger, ſtun, and puzzle, than to *ſettle our notions in religion.* You ſeem, Sir, to have forgotten, that propoſitions are not to be eſtabliſhed, with the ſame eaſe, as doubts are ſtarted; and therefore have contented yourſelf with a brevity, which produces but little conviction, and more than a little obſcurity.

This brevity of yours is the cauſe, and, I hope, will be the excuſe, of my prolixity; which, I perceive, is growing upon my hands, much more than I intended. If you had been pleaſed to ſhew your arguments at full length, and to accompany with proof your gloſſes upon ſcripture, the reader would then have been able to determine the preponderating evidence between yourſelf and *Aſpaſio*; and my trouble had been conſiderably leſſened, perhaps quite ſpared.

An inſtance of the foregoing remark, is the objection which follows.—St *Paul* often mentions *a righteouſneſs imputed*, ſays *Aſpaſio*. "Not *a* righteouſneſs," ſays Mr *Weſley*; "never once; but ſimply righteouſneſs."—St *Paul* mentions δικαιοσυνη, the righteouſneſs which is imputed, both with and without the *Greek* article. And do neither of theſe ſignify *a* righteouſneſs? This is a piece of criticiſm, as new to me, as it is nice in itſelf.—Beſides, where is the difference between *a* righteouſneſs, and righteouſneſs? Is not every righteouſneſs, *a* righteouſneſs? Is not every perſon, *a* perſon? and every prodigious refinement, *a* prodigious refinement?—I thought, Mr *Weſley* had known how to employ his time better than in ſplitting, or thus attempting to ſplit hairs.

To what purpoſe, Sir, is the exceſſive refinement? Many of your readers, I apprehend, will find it difficult to conjecture. For my own part, I freely confeſs, that I could not for a conſiderable time, diſcern your aim. Nor can I, even now, diſcover any other deſign, than a forced endeavour, to exclude the righteouſneſs of CHRIST; and introduce a miſtaken ſomething of your own, to officiate in its ſtead.—As the thread of your criticiſm is ſpun extremely fine, we muſt examine it with the cloſeſt attention. But firſt let me juſt take notice,—

That *Aſpaſio*, in conſequence of his obſervation, deduced from the apoſtle's language, aſks, What or whoſe righteouſneſs can this be? To which Mr *Weſley* anſwers! "He tells you himſelf: faith is imputed for righteouſ-"neſs."—But have you never read *Aſpaſio*'s interpretation of this text? If not, be ſo impartial, as to caſt your eye upon the *tenth* dialogue. There he conſiders this paſſage at large, and lays before you his expoſition of the words; not impoſing it, without aſſigning a reaſon; but, together with his expoſition, preſenting you with the grounds of his opinion. If you can overthrow them, try your ſtrength and your ſkill. They ſtand ready to receive your attack; being, at preſent, in full poſſeſſion of the field.

However, if you will not advert to *his* thoughts, allow me, if I can, to penetrate *your's*. "St *Paul* never men-"tions *a* righteouſneſs, but ſimply righteouſneſs."——Thus, I preſume, you argue—"Not *a* righteouſneſs; "that might ſeem to denote ſome *real* righteouſneſs; "ſome actual conformity to the divine law, imputed to "ſinners for their juſtification.—Whereas, if faith be "ſubſtituted inſtead of this real righteouſneſs; if faith "be all that to us, which our own obedience to the law "ſhould have been, and which *Aſpaſio* ſuppoſes the righ-"teouſneſs of CHRIST is appointed to be; if faith it-"ſelf be all this to us, then we are made righteous with-"out *a* righteouſneſs. Something is accounted to us "for righteouſneſs, which is really no ſuch thing.—— "Then we ſhall be under no neceſſity of ſubmitting to "the righteouſneſs of our GOD and SAVIOUR, but "may eaſily be furniſhed out of our own ſtock."

Is not this, or ſomething like this, your way of reaſoning? Do you not, in this manner, underſtand faith imputed for righteouſneſs? not as deriving all its efficacy, all its ſignificancy, from its moſt magnificent object; but as being itſelf the efficient of juſtification; the very thing for which we are accepted; in oppoſition to "the "wicked and vain commentaries of the *Calviniſts*, which "ſay, that all this is reſident in CHRIST, and appre-"hended by faith."

This led me to uſe that ſingular expreſſion, "a "miſtaken ſomething." Since this is an egregious miſtake

miſtake of faith; of its nature, its end, its import.——Of its *nature*. For it is a going out of ſelf, and a flying to CHRIST, for pardon, for peace, and for every ſpiritual bleſſing.——Of its *end*. For it is ordained, to preclude all boaſting; that itſelf may be nothing; that its owner may be nothing; that the grace of GOD, and the righteouſneſs of CHRIST, may be all in all.——Of its *import*. For it ſays, according to the prophet, *In the* LORD, not in myſelf, *have I righteouſneſs*. It would expoſtulate, in the words of the apoſtle, with its overweaning and doating admirers; Ye men of *Iſrael*, why look ye ſo earneſtly on me; as though, by my own power or dignity, I had procured your reconciliation, and rendered you accepted? The GOD of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* has glorified his SON JESUS, and appropriated this honour to *his* obedience and death. In the matter of juſtification, it is my buſineſs, not to furniſh a contingent, not to ſupply any part, but to receive the whole from his fulneſs.

On CHRIST's death ſinners are to rely, as the cauſe of their forgiveneſs; on CHRIST's obedience, as the ground of their acceptance. "How does this agree "with pag. 129."—Be pleaſed to turn back, Sir; and, with a very little attention, you will perceive the agreement. Then let me deſire you to turn inward; and you will, probably, diſcern more than a diſingenuity in your own procedure; ſince you reſolve to ſtop your ears againſt the author's explanation, his very particular explanation and reſtriction of his own meaning *.—If you was examining a mathematical ſyſtem, you would always carry in your memory, the leading problems or introductory axioms. If you did not, your own judgment would blame you. And when you neglect to do the ſame, in canvaſſing a theological treatiſe, does not your own conſcience reprove you?

Our LORD commends ſuch kinds of beneficence *only*, as were exerciſed to a diſciple, in the name of a diſciple. Here Mr *Weſley* aſks; "Is not this a ſlip of the "pen?"—Read the paſſage, Sir; and anſwer yourſelf. What are our LORD's words; *Inaſmuch as ye have done it to theſe my brethren.* Have you not then as much reaſon, to charge our divine MASTER with a ſlip of the tongue, as to charge *Aſpaſio* with a ſlip of the pen? It is undeniably plain, that he does in fact commend only ſuch kinds of beneficence, as were exerciſed towards *his brethren*. And I preſume, you will readily grant, that *his brethren*, the nobler relation, cannot be more extenſive than *his diſciples*, the inferior.

"Will not our LORD then commend all kinds of "beneficence, provided, *&c.*"——Excuſe my cutting ſhort your ſpeech. You are rambling from the point. What CHRIST *will* do, is quite another queſtion.——*Aſpaſio* neither denies, nor affirms any thing, on this ſubject. All that he conſiders, is, what appears to be really done, in that particular deſcription of the laſt day, and its awful proceſs. Nor will he ſcruple to affirm, a ſecond time, that our LORD applauds ſuch acts of beneficence *only*, as were exerciſed to a diſciple; to believers; to his brethren.

The righteous Judge ſpecifies this ſort of munificence, becauſe it is a ſure indication of one begotten by the word of truth. It is a teſt, which none but the ſaints and faithful in CHRIST JESUS will come up to.——And a Chriſtian is moſt properly diſtinguiſhed, not by what he does in common with others, but by the different principle from which he acts.——Of this particularity *Aſpaſio* takes notice, on purpoſe to warn, as well as to exhort his readers. *Exhort* them, that they may abound in works of generoſity. *Warn* them, that their works may ſpring from the right ſource, faith in the divine REDEEMER.

"You are not willing to call works of beneficence, "though exerciſed to a Samaritan or a Heathen," tranſient bubbles.——No more is *Aſpaſio*, in the ſenſe and manner, which you would inſinuate. He calls them ſuch, not abſolutely, but relatively. Not in themſelves, but with reſpect to an affair, infinitely too great for them to tranſact, either in whole or in part. In this view (as relative to juſtification) St *Paul* calls them *dung*, which is deſpicable and ſordid. Surely then *Aſpaſio* may call them *bubbles*, which are ſhewy but inſignificant.——I don't call the deſk, on which I write, a mere egg-ſhell. Yet I ſhould not heſitate to ſay, it is ſcanty as an egg-ſhell, if appointed to tranſport an army to the *Indies*; feeble as an egg-ſhell, if ſet up as a wall of munition, againſt a battery of cannon.

How muſt Chriſtians exceed the ſcribes and Phariſees? To this *Aſpaſio* replies. Not only in being ſincere; in having reſpect unto all GOD's commandments; but alſo in poſſeſſing a complete righteouſneſs. Nor can this be any thing leſs, than the perfect obedience of our great MEDIATOR.—"Did our LORD "mean this? Nothing leſs."——Peremptorily affirmed; but not ſo eaſily proved.——Yes, you add; "he ſpeci-"fies, in the following parts of his ſermon, the very in-"ſtances, wherein the righteouſneſs of a Chriſtian ex-"ceeds that of the ſcribes and Phariſees."——He does ſo. But is it not an abſolutely-complete righteouſneſs? A meekneſs, without the leaſt emotion of reſentment. A purity, without the leaſt ſtain of evil concupiſcence. A love, a long-ſuffering, a perfection, ſuch as our FATHER which is in heaven exerciſes. Now if this does not exceed the righteouſneſs of all the Chriſtians in the world, or if this is to be found in any character, ſave only in the character of our great MEDIATOR, I retract, moſt freely retract my opinion.

The diſcourſe relates to that righteouſneſs, by which we are ſaved; or by virtue of which we enter into the kingdom of heaven *. And why, Sir, why will you not reſign the honour of obtaining ſalvation, to the moſt bleſſed IMMANUEL's blood and obedience? Why will you hedge up your people's way to the immortal manſions, by teaching them to depend upon duties and attainments of their own?——Should any one, hearing this doctrine, that the law of the ten commandments requires a perfect, ſinleſs obedience; that none can be delivered from the wrath to come, or enjoy eternal life, without this unſinning, perfect obedience; ſhould ſuch a one, ſtruck with ſurpriſe and anxiety, inquire, "Who then "can be ſaved?" What anſwer would Mr *Weſley* give? The anſwer we would make, is obvious and full of conſolation. "No man, by his own performances. But ſalva-"tion is to be ſought, ſalvation is to be obtained, by the righ-teouſneſs

* In pag. 129. *Aſpaſio*, ſpeaking of the obedience and death of CHRIST, profeſſedly declares; "However, therefore, I may hap-"pen to expreſs myſelf, I never conſider them, as acting in the "*excluſive* ſenſe; but would always have them underſtood, as a "grand and glorious aggregate. Looking upon our SAVIOUR's "univerſal obedience, which commenced at his incarnation; was "carried on through his life; and terminated in his death;—"looking upon all this, in its *collective* form, as the object of my "faith, and the foundation of my hopes."

* *Chriſtus magna aſſeveratione pronunciat, Phariſaicam illam juſtitiam, quæ non perfectiſſime habet integram legis impletionem, non poſſe ingredi regnum cœlorum. Suorum igitur juſtitiam vult eſſe abundantiorem, hoc eſt, ſuos vult ad judicium Dei afferre abundantiſſimam, plenifſimam, et perfectiſſimam juſtitiam, ut per ac propter eam poſſent ingredi regnum cœlorum. Eam vero, quia in ſe non inveniunt, fide quærunt et apprehendunt in impletione legis, a Chriſto pro nobis præſtita.* Vid. CHEMNITII *Harm. Evang.* p. 722.

A truly valuable work, in which the learned reader will find many traces of lively devotion; many pieces of ſolid criticiſm, and many fine views opened, to ſee more clearly the wiſdom, beauty, and tranſcendent excellency of our bleſſed REDEEMER's life. This book is particularly eſtimable, for diſplaying with great perſpicuity, and enforcing with proportionable zeal, that diſtinguiſhed article of Chriſtianity, *juſtification through the righteouſneſs of* JESUS CHRIST; which is, as our author very emphatically ſpeaks, *ipſiſſimum evangelii fundamentum.*

" teousneſs of another; even by the conſummate obe-
" dience of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*."

He brings this ſpecious hypocrite to the teſt:—— " How does it appear," you aſk, " that this young " ruler was an hypocrite?"—It appears from his conduct. For, he came kneeling to our SAVIOUR, as one ſincerely deſirous of learning his duty; yet, when inſtructed in it, he would not perform it.—It appears from your own character of him. You ſay, " He " loved the world." Then the love of the FATHER was not in him. That he pretended to the love of GOD, is evident from his own words. That he had no real love, is certain from your own acknowledgment. If pretence without reality be not hypocriſy, pleaſe to inform us, what is.——It is farther apparent from your deſcant on the caſe. " Therefore he could not keep " any of the commandments in their ſpiritual ſenſe." And it is a ſure, as well as an important truth, that whoever pretends to keep the commandments, yet does not keep them in their ſpiritual meaning, is a deceiver of himſelf; a deceiver of others; a hypocrite.

" The keeping of the commandments," ſays Mr *Weſley*, " is undoubtedly the way to, though not the " *cauſe* of eternal life."——How then came it to paſs, that our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* ſhould declare, *I am the way?* The way, to what? To the favour of GOD; to the fruition of GOD; to every ſpiritual bleſſing; of, in other words, to eternal life.——After ſuch a claim, from ſuch a perſon, may I not, without the imputation of undue confidence, deny your aſſertion in your own form of ſpeech? " The keeping " of the commandments *undoubtedly* cannot be the way " to eternal life;" ſince this is an honour, this is a prerogative, which the all-glorious REDEEMER has challenged to himſelf.

Hence your diſtinction between the *way* to, and the *cauſe* of, appears to have no countenance from ſcripture. And will it not, upon a review, appear to have as little ſupport from reaſon? Caſt your eye upon yonder bridge. It is thrown over a deep and wide river. It is the way, the only way, whereby I croſs the water, and arrive at the oppoſite bank. If ſo, is it not likewiſe the cauſe of my ſafe arrival on the other ſide? There may be, in this caſe, other cauſes, concomitant or ſubordinate. But the bridge is the grand one; that which every body chiefly regards; and to which my paſſage is always aſcribed.

CHRIST therefore is the way, the only way, to life and immortality. By his precious blood, and by his divine righteouſneſs, we paſs the gulf of wrath and deſtruction. By the things which he has done, by the pains which he has endured, we enter the realms of peace and joy. Accordingly, we are exhorted *to walk in him*; and are aſſured, that as many as walk in this way, *ſhall renew their ſtrength*. This is, what the apoſtle calls, *the new and living way*. This is, what the pſalmiſt ſtyles, *the way everlaſting*. And though other ways may *ſeem right unto a man, yet the end thereof are the ways of death*.

A doubt, perhaps, may ariſe in the reader's mind, ſuggeſted by the words of the prophet; *An high-way ſhall be there, and a way, and it ſhall be called the way of holineſs*. True. The way is *CHRIST*, the incarnate GOD, with all his gifts, privileges, and bleſſings. *It ſhall be called the way of holineſs*.* None can enter and advance therein, yet continue carnal and unclean. All that travel this road renounce the hidden things of darkneſs, and do the works of righteouſneſs. It does not indeed find, but it aſſuredly makes, the paſſengers righteous. And though holineſs is not their way, yet it is a principal part of their buſineſs, while they walk in *CHRIST*.

Aſpaſio, having occaſion to ſpeak of *Abraham*'s faith, quotes the words of the apoſtle; *By works his faith was made perfect*. Which he thus explains; " His faith " here by anſwered its proper end, and appeared to be " of the true, the triumphant, the ſcriptural kind; ſince " it overcame the world, overcame ſelf, and regarded " GOD as all in all."——To this Mr *Weſley* replies, with the ſolemnity of a cenſor, and the authority of a dictator; " No. The natural ſenſe of the words is, " By the grace ſuperadded, while he wrought thoſe " works, his faith was literally made perfect."——Your proof, Sir. What have you to make good this interpretation? There is not a word in the text about grace ſuperadded. This is not aſſigned as the cauſe of a perfected faith. Nay, the ſacred writer expreſsly aſſigns another. *By works*, ſays St *James*, his faith was made perfect. No, ſays Mr *Weſley*; but by *grace ſuperadded*. St *James* affirms one thing; Mr *Weſley* affirms the contrary; and who am I, that I ſhould decide between two ſuch diſputants? But I believe, the reader will, without my interpoſal, eaſily chuſe his ſide.

Perhaps, you will reply, If this is not the true ſenſe, produce a better.——One leſs oppoſite to the natural import of the words, and the apparent meaning of the apoſtle, is already produced. Do you inſiſt upon another? I will then refer you to abler judges.——Shall I ſend you to an expoſitor, whom you yourſelf admire? Dr *Doddridge* thus comments upon the text. " *His faith* " *was perfected by works*: the integrity of it was made " fully apparent, to himſelf, to angels, to GOD."—— Shall I remit you to any expoſitor, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived? The GOD of glory ſays, *My ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs. Made perfect!* How? Is there any ſuch thing as a ſuperaddition to GOD Almighty's power, while he exerts it in behalf of his people? This none can imagine. But it is hereby manifeſted, to their comfort, and his glory. The ſame word is uſed concerning *Abraham*'s faith, and concerning the GOD of *Abraham*'s ſtrength. Why then ſhould it not be underſtood in the ſame ſenſe? Here it is τελειωθεις; there it is τελειωθη. And, in both places, it ſignifies not " literally made perfect," but illuſtriouſly diſplayed.

Shall I ſend you to a familiar illuſtration? I view, from my window, a young tree. The gardener, when he planted it, told me, it was a fruit-tree, a pear-tree, a right *beaute du roy*. It may be ſuch a tree, and have its reſpective ſeed in itſelf. But this did not then appear. If, when autumn arrives, its branches are laden with fruit, with pears, with that delicious kind of pears; this will be a demonſtration of all thoſe properties. This will not make it ſuch a particular tree; no, nor make it a good and fruitful tree; but only ſhew it to be of that fine ſort, or make its nature and perfections evident.

St *James* ſpeaks of the juſtification of our faith; thus proceeds *Aſpaſio*. And thus replies Mr *Weſley*; " Not unleſs you mean by that odd expreſſion, our " faith being made perfect."—I mean ſuch a perfection of faith as is mentioned above. Other perfection

Iſ. xxxv. 8. Upon this ſubject, Dr *Owen* ſpeaks excellently. " *CHRIST* is the medium of communication between GOD " and us. In him we meet, in him we walk. All influences of " love, kindneſs, mercy from GOD to us, are through him; all " our returns of love, delight, faith, obedience unto GOD, are " all through him. He being that *one way*, GOD, ſo often pro- " miſeth his people: and it is a glorious way, *Iſ.* xxxv. 8. *An* " *high-way, a way of holineſs*, a way that none can err in, that " once enter it. Which is further ſet forth, *Iſ.* xlii. 16. All " other ways, all other paths, but this, go down to the chambers " of death: they all lead to walk contrary to GOD."

See a treatiſe, entitled *Communion with GOD*. By JOHN OWEN, D. D. Which preſents us with the ſpirit and quinteſſence of the goſpel; with the nobleſt privileges and ſtrongeſt conſolations of Chriſtianity; animating us thereby to all the duties of holy obedience.—Here are pinks and roſes in the path. Milk and honey in the cup. Marrow and fatneſs on the table. In many treatiſes, the author has done worthily; but in this, I think, he excelleth them all.

I find not, either in books or men. Was faith perfect in *your* ſenſe of the word, love, joy, and all holineſs would be perfect likewiſe. Correſpondent to the principle, would be the ſtate of the production. There would be no longer any cauſe for that petition, which the diſciples put up; *LORD increaſe our faith.* Nor for that ſupplication, which you and I, ſo long as we continue members of the church of *England*, muſt uſe; "Give unto us the increaſe of faith, hope, and cha-"rity."

You call the juſtification of our faith an "odd expreſſion."——Is it not founded on the tenor of the apoſtle's diſcourſe? Is it not the native reſult of the apoſtle's inquiry? *Shew me* thy faith. Prove it to be real and unfeigned. Prove it by ſuch acts, as demonſtrate you truſt in JESUS alone for everlaſting life. If it ſtands this teſt, we ſhall acknowledge it to be that precious faith, whoſe author is GOD, and whoſe end is ſalvation.—Is not *that* a juſtification of faith, which diſplays its ſincerity, and renders it without rebuke? Somewhat like this would be reckoned a juſtification of any perſon, or of any other thing, and why not of faith?

Something, you ſee, Sir, may be ſaid in vindication of this expreſſion. However, if it be thought improper; if it tend to create any confuſion in our ſentiments; or to draw off any attention from that grand idea, which is peculiar to the word juſtification; the idea, I mean, of being made righteous before GOD; I freely give it up; I will alter it in my book, and uſe it no more.

He that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous: he manifeſts the truth of his converſion, and juſtifies his profeſſion from all ſuſpicion of inſincerity.——"Nay;" ſays Mr *Weſley*, "the plain meaning is, He alone is truly righ-"teous, whoſe faith worketh by love."—*Your* expoſition may be true, and *Aſpaſio*'s no leſs true. I leave the reader to determine, which is moſt exactly ſuitable to the apoſtle's arguing.——He is ſpeaking of the *Chriſtian* righteouſneſs; that which renders us righteous before GOD; that which fleſh and blood could never have diſcovered; which therefore was graciouſly revealed in the goſpel, and is the principal ſubject of goſpel-preaching. As there were, and always would be, many pretenders to the noble privilege, St *John* lays down a maxim or a touchſtone, to diſtinguiſh the ſincere from the hypocrite. *He that* uniformly *doth righteouſneſs*, in a way of ſanctification; he, and he only, *is* to be acknowledged by us, as truly *righteous* by way of juſtification.

Far be it from me, Sir, to be fond of wrangling. Where you hit upon the truth, or come pretty near it, I ſhall never be eager to oppoſe. On the contrary, I ſhall be very deſirous to agree; and preſerve, as much as poſſible, both the unity, of opinion, and the harmony of affection.——Your own interpretation ſhall take place. Only let your *working* be the ſign and fruit of a righteous ſtate, not that which makes or conſtitutes us righteous. The righteouſneſs of fallen creatures, *is* not of themſelves, but *of me, ſaith the LORD.* It is brought in and accompliſhed by HIM, whom GOD hath ſet forth to be their MEDIATOR and SURETY. So that we are made righteous, not by doing any thing whatſoever, but ſolely by believing in JESUS. Our character as the redeemed of the LORD, is, ὁ ἐκ πίστεως; *Men*, having their exiſtence, their ſubſiſtence, their all, *by faith.* Hence it comes to paſs, that we really are, what the apoſtle affirms, in the following words, *righteous, even as he is righteous.* Not barely righteous, as the moral Heathens, by dint of human reſolution; not barely righteous, as the reputable *Jews*, by the influence of their legal ſanctions; but righteous with that *very righteouſneſs*, which adorns and exalts, and will eternally diſtinguiſh the only begotten SON of GOD.

It remains to be inquired, *what* faith is moſt likely to operate, in this excellent and happy manner? I mean, to *work by* love.——Let me illuſtrate the point by a ſhort apologue; then releaſe the reader from his attention, and the writer from his taſk.

A certain king had two favourites, whom he honoured with his peculiar regard, and enriched with a ceaſeleſs liberality. They both, inſenſible of their vaſt obligations, became traitors and rebels. Being convicted of treaſon againſt their ſovereign, he was determined to overcome their evil with good. Accordingly, when they had nothing to plead in their own behalf, he generouſly forgave them both. The one he diſmiſſed from priſon, and ſuffered to live unmoleſted on his private inheritance. The other he reſtored to all his high preferments, and public employs. He adorned him again with the robe of honour, and admitted him again into the boſom of favour.—Which of them, now, will feel the warmeſt affection for their ſovereign? Which of them will be moſt ready to ſerve him on all occaſions; and, if need be, to hazard even life in his defence?——He, doubtleſs, on whom moſt was beſtowed.

And is not *that* perſon moſt likely to work and obey, from a principle of love, who believes, that his divine LORD has not only bore the curſe, but fulfilled the law for him? has given him, not barely an exemption from puniſhment, but a title to eternal life? yea, has clothed him with his own moſt perfect and glorious righteouſneſs. By virtue of which, he will, ere long, be preſented faultleſs before the throne of judgment, and have an abundant entrance into the everlaſting kingdom.——Will not the faith of ſuch unſpeakably-rich grace, pacify the conſcience, and purify the heart? awaken gratitude to our heavenly Benefactor, and enkindle zeal for his glory? cauſe us to diſcharge all the duties of our ſtation chearfully, and withſtand every allurement to evil reſolutely?

Surely, we may ſay of this faith, what *David* ſaid of *Goliath*'s ſword; *There is none*, there is nothing *like it.* For all theſe bleſſed purpoſes, it is beyond compare, and I ſhould think, beyond diſpute, efficacious.——That you, Sir, may know more of this faith, and diſpute leſs againſt it, is the ſincere and fervent wiſh of, &c.

LETTER VI.

REV. SIR,

AS this letter may probably be pretty long, I ſhall not increaſe the prolixity by a preface; but enter upon it without any farther introduction.

Whoſo doth theſe things, ſaith *David*, *ſhall never fall.* which *Aſpaſio* thus interprets, "ſhall never fall into "final apoſtaſy."——You are pleaſed to reply; "*David* "ſays no ſuch thing. His meaning is, Whoſo doth "theſe things to the end, ſhall never fall into hell."——It would be a great wonder, I muſt own, if he ſhould. But if he happens to fail, at ſome times, and in ſome inſtances, what becomes of him then?——However, let you and I, Sir, be at as little variance as poſſible. Where is the extraordinary difference between yourſelf and *Aſpaſio?* If a profeſſor of religion falls into hell, muſt he not previouſly fall into final apoſtaſy? and if he falls into final apoſtaſy, muſt he not inevitably fall into hell?

When you inſert the clauſe, *to the end*, do you interpret? do you not rather interpolate the ſacred text? The words of the pſalmiſt relate to the preſent time, עשה *doth*, not יעשה *ſhall do.* They contain an encouragement to thoſe, who, at this inſtant, bring

bring forth the fruits of evangelical righteouſneſs. The encouragement is deduced from the comfortable doctrine of final perſeverance. It carries this chearing import; "Whoſoever believes in JEHOVAH, as laying all his "ſins upon CHRIST, and giving him eternal life freely; whoſoever, from this principle of faith, ſincerely "loves and willingly obeys GOD; he ſhall never fall."—The words are לְעוֹלָם לֹא יִמּוֹט, *He ſhall never be moved.* A phraſe common among the *Hebrews*, to denote the ſtability of a man's happineſs. An immoveable thing never falls, either one way or another. So, this righteous perſon ſhall never fall; either into final apoſtaſy, which is the greateſt miſery here; or into hell, which is the conſummation of miſery hereafter.

But I begin to apprehend what you mean, and of what you are jealous. Your exclamation unravels all; "How pleaſing is this to fleſh and blood!"—Under favour, Sir, I cannot conceive how this doctrine ſhould be pleaſing to fleſh and blood. Fleſh and blood, or corrupt nature, is proud. Any ſcheme of perſeverance, to be accompliſhed by our own ſtrength, would indeed be agreeable to the vanity of our mind. But a perſeverance, founded on the fidelity and the power of GOD; a perſeverance, which acknowledges itſelf owing, not to any human ſufficiency, but to an union with CHRIST, and the interceſſion of CHRIST; this is a diſguſting method. This is what the natural man cannot away with. You will find the generality of people utterly averſe to it.—Fleſh and blood will not ſubmit, either to be made righteous before GOD, by the imputed righteouſneſs of CHRIST; or to be made faithful unto death, by the ever-failing faithfulneſs of CHRIST.——Try your friends; try your followers; try your own heart on this point.

To the humble believer, I acknowledge, this is a moſt pleaſing and conſolatory doctrine. He who feels his own impotence; who knows the power of his inbred corruptions; and is no ſtranger to the wiles of his ſpiritual enemy; he will rejoice in the thought, that *nothing ſhall pluck him out of his* almighty REDEEMER's *hand.* That his advocate with the FATHER, will ſuffer *neither principalities, nor powers, nor life, nor death, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor any other creature, to ſeparate him from the love of* GOD.—Without ſuch a perſuaſion, we might too truly ſay of the Chriſtian's joy, what *Solomon* ſaid of worldly merriment; *I ſaid of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What does it?* If he, who is to-day baſking in the divine-favour, may before the morrow be weltering in a lake of fire; then joy, even joy in the HOLY GHOST is unreaſonable; and peace, even that peace which paſſeth all underſtanding, is chimerical. A building without a baſis; at leaſt, *a bowing wall, and a tottering fence.*

Let us examine the doctrine, which Mr *Weſley* ſays is ſo pleaſing to fleſh and blood; or, in other words, to carnal people.—What is the thing which the pſalmiſt teaches, and *Aſpaſio* profeſſes? That the perſons who are deſcribed in the pſalm *, ſhall never apoſtatize from the true faith, or from true obedience. Is this ſo agreeable to carnal people? Is it not rather unwarrantable in Mr *Weſley* to ſuppoſe, that carnal people either poſſeſs true faith, or perform true obedience, or can be pleaſed with either? Eſpecially, ſince the apoſtle aſſures us, that *the carnal mind is not ſubject to the law of GOD, neither indeed can be.*

* The xvth *pſalm*, I apprehend, deſcribes the perfect character. That perfection, which CHRIST really fulfilled; and is the righteouſneſs, in which GOD is well pleaſed. The children of the truth are, by the ſame SPIRIT, led to imitate this character, according to the meaſure of their faith. Yet ſo imperfectly, that when compared with it in their own perſons, they have reaſon to pray, *Forgive us our treſpaſſes.* Though, when conſidered as cloathed with the fulfilment of all in CHRIST, they may aſſure themſelves of acceptance with GOD, and an everlaſting title to the divine favour.

Beſides, are not the duties mentioned by the pſalmiſt, offenſive to fleſh and blood? Do they not require, or imply, the mortification of our carnal appetites, and the diſcipline of our unruly affections? Can it be a welcome piece of news to fleſh and blood, that this mortification ſhall take place? inſtead of being remitted ſhall increaſe? and never, never be diſcontinued, till mortality is ſwallowed up of life?——If ſo, *the old man which is corrupt,* muſt be pleaſed with the curb, and the dagger muſt delight in its own reſtraint, and its own deſtruction.——Such a paradox we muſt believe, before we can eſpouſe Mr *Weſley*'s notion, that fleſh and blood are pleaſed with the doctrine of a final perſeverance in ſelf-denial, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.

"Should your repentance be without a failure, and "without a flaw; I muſt ſtill ſay to my friend, as our "LORD replied to the young ruler, *One thing thou lackeſt.* In all theſe acts of humiliation, you have only "taken ſhame to yourſelf. Whereas, a righteouſneſs is "wanting, which may magnify the law, and make it "honourable."——Theſe are *Aſpaſio*'s words; upon which Mr *Weſley* animadverts. "One thing thou lack"eſt, the imputed righteouſneſs of CHRIST. You "cannot think this is the meaning of the text."—Neither does *Aſpaſio* affirm this to be the meaning. He only uſes the words by way of accommodation. Could you demonſtrate, that our LORD intended no ſuch thing, yet the ſentence may not improperly expreſs *Aſpaſio*'s opinion; and if ſo, be not unfit for his uſe.

However, let us inquire into the exact meaning of the text. A very little ſearch will yield the deſired ſatisfaction. *Sell all thou haſt, and give to the poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven. Treaſure in heaven* was what the young gentleman lacked. Could this be any other than CHRIST himſelf? Is not CHRIST the treaſure, hid in the field of the goſpel? Is not CHRIST the inheritance, reſerved in heaven for us? Is not a communion with CHRIST, and an enjoyment of CHRIST, the ſupreme felicity of our nature?——*David* was of this mind, when he publicly declared, *Whom have I in heaven but thee?*——St *John* was of this mind, when he ſolemnly averred; *He that hath the* SON, *hath life.*—Whoever is of another mind, has very inadequate, very unworthy notions of heaven and its happineſs.——Now if CHRIST himſelf was the *one thing* needed, ſurely his righteouſneſs could not be ſecluded. His blood and obedience inſeparably accompany his perſon. He that hath the bridegroom, hath his riches alſo.

In oppoſition to this ſenſe, it is affirmed, "Certainly "the one thing our LORD meant, was the love of "GOD."——The love of GOD is *certainly* an eminent bleſſing. Poſſeſſed, I ſhould imagine, only by thoſe, who have firſt obtained eternal life, by *knowing the true* GOD *and* JESUS CHRIST. But does our love of GOD magnify the law; ſatisfy juſtice; or obtain heaven? Are we pardoned, are we reconciled, are we juſtified, on account of our love of GOD?——The young ruler wants *that*, which may open to him the kingdom of heaven; and *that*, whereby he may inherit eternal life. Mr *Weſley*, ſetting aſide pardon, reconciliation, juſtification, together with the one perfect righteouſneſs, which procures them, aſcribes all to our love of GOD. And, by this means, not to the true love, ariſing from the knowledge of him, as manifeſted in the goſpel; as having firſt loved us, in granting us remiſſion of ſins, freely through JESUS CHRIST.——This notion may paſs current at *Rome* *, not among the *Proteſtant* churches. Our own church has moſt expreſsly diſ-

* The council of *Trent*, by her interpreter *Andradius*, thus expreſſes herſelf; *Chriſtus obedientia ſua non meruit credentibus in ipſum ſalutem et vitam æternam: ſed hoc tantummodo meruit, quod propter ipſum infunditur nobis charitas inhærens; ut illa demum ſit, quæ homines Deo non tantum gratum, ſed pergratum, non tantum acceptum, ſed*

claimed it. Speaking of CHRIST and his precious blood-ſhedding, ſhe adds; "Whereby *alone* we are "made partakers of the kingdom of heaven."

"Is the obedience of CHRIST inſufficient to accom-"pliſh our juſtification?"——Here you would correct both the language, and the doctrine. The language: for you ſay, "Rather I would aſk, Is the death of "CHRIST inſufficient to purchaſe it?"—To purchaſe juſtification, you ſuppoſe, is more proper and expreſſive, than to accompliſh. As this may ſeem a ſtrife of words, I ſhall diſmiſs it without much ſolicitude. Only I would tranſiently obſerve, that to accompliſh, denotes more than to purchaſe. It denotes the conſtituent cauſe; what the ſchoolmen call, the matter of juſtification, or the very thing which effects it. If your favourite phraſe implies all this, let it have the pre-eminence.

Next, you correct the doctrine, by ſaying, "*I would* "*rather aſk, Is the death of CHRIST* inſufficient *to purchaſe* "*juſtification?*"—I anſwer, If you conſider the death of *CHRIST*, as excluſive of his obedience, it is inſufficient. If you do not, there is no great reaſon for your ſtarting a doubt, where we both are agreed. And indeed it is ſcarce worth my while to take notice of it. I will therefore return to the diſtinction, which you think proper to make, between accompliſhing and purchaſing juſtification.——Why, Sir, would you ſet aſide the former phraſe? Does it not imply, that which juſtifies? that very thing, which commends us to GOD? that *very righteouſneſs*, in which we ſtand accepted before him? Does not this way of expreſſing, guard moſt effectually againſt the errors of Popery, and exclude all coefficiency of faith, of works, or any thing elſe whatever?—I ſaid, the errors of Popery. For a *Popiſh* ſynod will allow, hat we are not juſtified without the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, by which he hath merited juſtification for us; but declares, at the ſame time, if any man ſhall ſay, we are formally righteous, by that very righteouſneſs, let him be accurſed.—According to this, which is no very good confeſſion, the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* purchaſes, but does not accompliſh; it merits our juſtification, but does not conſtitute our juſtifying righteouſneſs. See, Sir, whither your refinements are leading you.

The ſaints in glory, ſays *Aſpaſio*, aſcribe the whole of their ſalvation to the blood of the LAMB. "So do I," replies Mr *Weſley*; "and yet I believe, he obtained for "all a poſſibility of ſalvation."—Is this objection pertinent? Does *Aſpaſio*'s aſſertion contradict your belief? Does it not comprize, all that you avouch, and much more? Is it poſſible that Mr *Weſley*, who is ſuch a maſter of logic, ſhould argue in this manner? "The ſaints in "glory aſcribe all their ſalvation to CHRIST's blood; "therefore he did not obtain a poſſibility of ſalvation for all men." What a forced concluſion is this! What wild reaſoning is here! Such premiſes, and ſuch an inference, will probably incline the reader to thing of a ſun-beam and a clod, connected with bands of ſmoke.

If you was determined to make this paſſage faulty, you ſhould have oppoſed it with the following declaration of your faith; "Yet I believe, that CHRIST "obtained *no more than* a poſſibility of ſalvation for "any." Then you would have ſomething ſuited to your purpoſe; but not agreeable, either to ſound ſenſe, or ſound doctrine.—Not to *ſound ſenſe*. Your poſſibility of ſalvation is, if people perform the conditions. How then can they aſcribe *the whole* glory to CHRIST? At this rate, they do a piece of injuſtice to their own reſolution and diligence; as theſe by fulfilling the conditions, had a hand in obtaining the reward, theſe ought to have a ſhare in receiving the honour.——Not to *ſound doctrine*.——*Aſpaſio* believes much more than a poſſibility of ſalvation by JESUS CHRIST. He believes a full and complete ſalvation; according to that noble text, *It is finiſhed*. A ſalvation not to be acquired, but abſolutely given; according to that precious ſcripture, GOD *hath given to us eternal life*. Not upon ſome terms or pre-requiſites, but without any condition at all; according to that moſt gracious invitation, *Whoſoever will, let him take of the water of life freely*.—This I look upon as ſound doctrine. But will your notion of a conditional ſalvation, propoſed by a way of bargain, and granted upon terms, comport with this *gift of grace*?

No more than *a poſſibility* of ſalvation!——Yes, Sir, CHRIST obtained a great and a free ſalvation. *Great*; for it comprizes the pardon of all ſin, original and actual; a reſtoration to entire and unalterable favour; together with a title to everlaſting life and glory.——This is ſuch a proviſion for our happineſs, as becomes the immenſe goodneſs, and inconceivable majeſty of an incarnate GOD; ſuch as not only ſupplies our wants, and ſatisfies our deſires, but ſurpaſſes our very wiſhes; tranſporting us with wonder, and filling us with joy.—To accompliſh all this, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, nothing leſs could be ſufficient, than the active and paſſive righteouſneſs of HIM, who is gone into heaven, angels, and authorities, and powers being made ſubject unto him.—Since this matchleſs ranſom has been paid; ſince theſe grand conditions are performed; there is no obſtruction from the divine juſtice, or the divine truth. All that ineffable and eternal bleſſedneſs is now become *free*; is granted to ſinners, to rebels, to the moſt unworthy; they are allowed, yea, invited to receive it, to poſſeſs it, to rejoice in it as their own portion; and without the proviſo of any good thing in themſelves, purely on account of their SAVIOUR's all-ſufficient work.

I read in ſacred hiſtory of *Eleazer the ſon of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David; how he aroſe, and ſmote the Philiſtines, until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto his ſword; and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him* only to ſpoil. And were not theſe mighty men typical, faintly typical of our almighty REDEEMER? Did not JESUS alſo ariſe, and work a great victory? Has he not triumphed glorioufly over ſin, and all our enemies? And what have we to do, but only to return, and divide the ſpoil, and ſhare the benefits of his conqueſt?——May we not boldly ſay? "My ſin is done "away, becauſe CHRIST has bore it on the curſed "tree. I ſtand accepted before GOD, becauſe "CHRIST has finiſhed the righteouſneſs, which ren-"ders me unblameable and unreproveable. I ſhall re-"ceive the HOLY GHOST, becauſe CHRIST is my "advocate; and prays the FATHER, that he will give "me another comforter. This ſacred comforter, by "ſhewing me the riches of CHRIST, will more and "more ſanctify my nature." To think and live in this manner, is to take the ſpoil after our victorious leader.

Let me cloſe and confirm this ſentiment, with a paſſage from that inimitable penman, the prophet *Iſaiah*; who, for his remarkably-clear views of CHRIST, may almoſt be admitted into the number of evangeliſts; and, for his exquiſitely-fine deſcriptions of CHRIST, greatly exceeds all orators and all poets. *Who is this that cometh from* Edom, *with dyed garments from* Bozrah? *This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength?——I that ſpeak in righteouſneſs, mighty to ſave.——Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?——I have trodden the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with me.*

The prophet, like one thrown into a ſudden ſurprize, with a beautiful abruptneſs, cries out, *Who is this?* What extraordinry appearance diſcovers itſelf to my ſight? Is it a human, or a divine form, *that* I behold? He *cometh from Edom* the country, *from Bozrah* the capital,

ſed peracceptum reddat ad vitam æternam. Vid. Chemnit. Exam. Conc. Trident. p. 146.

capital, of our profeſſed national enemies. Is he for us, or for our adverſaries?—The firſt queſtion ſeems to proceed from a diſtant and in diſtinct view. He then takes a nearer ſurvey, and deſcribes the wonderful perſonage with greater particularity. This that cometh *with dyed garments*, like ſome terrible and victorious warrior, that has ſcarcely ſheathed the ſword of ſlaughter; who is all encrimſoned, and ſtill reeking with blood of the ſlain.

The viſion becomes clearer and clearer. I ſee him (adds the rapturous prophet) *glorious in his apparel*. Highly graceful, as well as extremely awful. Bearing in his aſpect, in his whole perſon, in his very dreſs, the marks of tranſcendent dignity. *Travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength*. Not faint with toil, nor wearied with the fatigue of the dreadful action; but like one, that is indefatigable in his zeal, and irreſiſtible in his power; and therefore ſtill preſſing forwards, to new victories; ſtill going on, from conquering to conquer.

The majeſtic object is, all this while, advancing. At length, he approaches near enough, to hold a conference with this devout inquirer. One would naturally expect, that his ſpeech ſhould be like his aſpect, alarming and tremendous. But grace is on his tongue, and his lips drop balm. *I that ſpeak in righteouſneſs:* all whoſe words are faithfulneſs and truth; an immoveable foundation for the faith of my people. *That ſpeak of righteouſneſs:** of that myſterious righteouſneſs, which is the delight of my FATHER, and the life of the world. To bring in which, is the deſign of my appearance on earth, and to reveal it is the office of my SPIRIT. By means of this righteouſneſs, I am *mighty to ſave*: to ſave thee; to ſave any loſt ſinner; to ſave them, as with the arm of omnipotence, beyond all that they can think, even to the very uttermoſt.

Here the prophet ſeems to be ſomewhat at a loſs, and takes leave to renew his inquiry. If thou art come, not to deſtroy men's lives, but to ſave; *wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?* Theſe indicate, not deliverance, but deſtruction. Theſe are tokens, not of forbearing mercy, but of inexorable vengeance.—'Tis true, replies the illuſtrious hero, *I have trodden in the wine-preſs*; † I have cruſhed my foes; I have trampled them under my feet; and repentance was hid from my eyes. But thy enemies were the object of mine indignation. Sin, and death, and hell are the vanquiſhed adverſaries. It is their blood that is ſprinkled upon my garments, and that ſtains all my raiment.—This victory I have gained, by myſelf *alone*. Being infinitely too great in my power, to want an aſſociate; and infinitely too jealous of my honour to accept of any aſſiſtance. *Of the people*, whether in heaven or on earth, *there was none with me*; to afford the leaſt ſuccour, or to take the leaſt ſhare in the glorious work. The ſalvation of ſinners; their deliverance from wrath, and their redemption to GOD, is, in all its parts, my act, even mine, and mine only. Yours be all the benefit; mine all the glory.

The terms of acceptance for *fallen* man, were, a full ſatisfaction to the *divine juſtice*, and a *complete conformity* to the divine law. "This," ſays Mr *Weſley* to *Aſpaſio*, "you take for granted, but I cannot allow."——That *Aſpaſio* does not take theſe points for granted, I thought, even his enemies would confeſs. That he has attempted, at leaſt, to make good his opinion, all the world, beſides yourſelf, Sir, will acknowledge. What elſe is the deſign of dialogue the *third* and *fourth*? what elſe is aimed at, in dialogue the *ſeventh*, *eighth*, and *ninth*? The former treat largely of the full ſatisfaction given to divine juſtice. The latter treat ſtill more largely of the conformity demanded by the divine law, and yielded by the divine *JESUS*.

Theſe things, however, "you cannot allow."—Not allow a full ſatisfaction of divine juſtice to be neceſſary! Are you not then acceding to the *Socinian*? Not allow a complete conformity to the divine law, to be neceſſary! Are you not then warping to the *Antinomian*? See, Sir, how you approach the rocks, both on the right hand, and on the left. May the KEEPER of *Iſrael* preſerve yourſelf and your followers, from ſuffering ſhipwreck! —Every one, I think, muſt allow what you deny, who believes the divine juſtice to be infinite, and the divine law to be unalterable. A juſtice, that will admit of any ſatisfaction, leſs than complete, can never be deemed infinite. And if the divine law can reſt ſatisfied with an obedience that is defective, it is not ſo venerable as the law of the *Medes* and *Perſians*.

"*The* terms *of acceptance for fallen man*," you ſay, "*are* repentance *and* faith."—I muſt own, I don't much like the expreſſion *terms*, unleſs it be referred to the mediation of *CHRIST*. And you yourſelf, if you would act conſiſtently, ſhould not be over-fond of it, becauſe it is not ſcriptural. Though, for my own part, I have no quarrel againſt the word, becauſe it is not the exact phraſeology of ſcripture, but becauſe I diſlike the idea it conveys. Shall *we* treat with the DEITY, as free ſtates or ſovereign princes treat with each other? the one obtaining from the other, peace or ſome advantageous conceſſion, by complying with his terms?

To confirm your opinion, that "the terms of acceptance for fallen man, are repentance and faith," you produce the following text; *Repent ye, and believe the goſpel*.——Here you write, like a man of ſenſe; who knows what juſt diſputation means. You lay aſide your *certainlies*, your *undoubtedlies*, your *unqueſtionablies*; and urge a proof from ſcripture.—Whether you rightly underſtand, and duly apply this proof, muſt now be inquired.

Repent ye, and believe the goſpel. This may be the meaning of the exhortation. *Repent*; relinquiſh all your wrong notions, relating to the way and manner of finding acceptance with the DEITY. *Believe the goſpel*; which opens a moſt unexpected avenue, for the communication of this bleſſing; which brings you tidings of a ſalvation, fully procured by the incarnate GOD, and freely offered to the unworthy ſinner.—The word you know, is μετανοεῖτε. Which, in its primary ſignification, denotes not ſo much a reformation of conduct, as a change of ſentiment.

Suppoſe it to ſignify a reformation of conduct. The

* *Vox* רבר loqui *conſtructa cum præfixa* ב, *notat paſſim, phraſi ſacra, loqui de re.*

† *Trodden the wine preſs.*—I can hardly forbear taking notice of the great impropriety, with which this text and this metaphor are frequently uſed by our theological writers. They apply both to CHRIST, as bruiſed by his almighty FATHER; and bearing the weight of that indignation which was due to the ſins of mankind. Nothing is more common, than to make this text deſcriptive of his agony in the garden.—If indeed it had been ſaid, *I am trodden in the wine-preſs*, the image might not be improper. But when it is ſaid, *I have trodden*, nothing can be more unſuitable to a ſtate of humiliation and ſuffering. This phraſe evidently denotes conqueſt and triumph; enemies vanquiſhed and totally deſtroyed. It ſhould never therefore be applied to the agonizing, but to the triumphant SAVIOUR; not to JESUS proſtrate on the ground, but to JESUS making his foes his footſtool.

As I have taken leave to animadvert upon a common miſtake, I would alſo take liberty to pay merit its due honour; by recommending to my reader a poetical verſion of this paſſage, given us by Dr *Lowth*, in his very elegant work, entitled *De ſacra poeſi Hebræorum*. Where he underſtands the text in the ſenſe ſuggeſted above; and tranſlates it, in the very ſpirit of *Virgil*. As the lines are few, and the book may not be in the hands of all my readers, I will preſent them with a tranſcript.

——— Ille patris viris indutus et iram,
Dira rubens graditur, per ſtragem et fracta potentum
Agmina, prona ſolo; proſtratiſque hoſtibus ultor
Inſultat; ceu præla novo ſpumantia muſto
Exercens, ſalit attritas calcator in uvas,
Congeſtamque ſtruem ſubigit: cæde atra recenti
Crura madent, rorantque inſperſæ ſanguine veſtes.

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meaning then may be as follows. *Repent;* forſake all your vices, and all your follies; mortify every evil temper, and renounce every evil way. In order to render this practicable, *believe the goſpel;* wherein a SAVIOUR is preached and diſplayed; who makes peace for ſuch offenders; reconciles them to GOD; and obtains eternal redemption for them. This will ſweetly withdraw your affections from iniquity, and ſweetly attach them to the bleſſed GOD. Whereas, without this powerful expedient, you will never be delivered from the pleaſing witchcraft of your luſts. Sin will always have dominion over you, ſo long as you are under the law, and not under grace.—Repentance, thus underſtood, is not the condition of obtaining ſalvation, but the fruit of ſalvation obtained.

Beſides, if repentance be a gift, it cannot be a term or condition. He muſt be a ſtranger to the import of language, and the common ideas of mankind, who will take upon him to affirm the latter; and he muſt be yet a greater ſtranger to the holy word of GOD, who will offer to deny the former.——*CHRIST is exalted,* ſaith the apoſtle, *to give repentance.* Not to require it, as a condition of bleſſedneſs; but to give it, as a moſt eminent bleſſing. Not require repentance of fallen man, who is not able to think a good thought; but give it, from his unſearchable riches; and work it, by his almighty power.

You ſay "the terms of acceptance for fallen man, "are, &c."—Methinks, I ſhould be glad to know, what you mean by *fallen* man. Do you mean (as you tell us, in your collection of ſermons) "one dead to GOD, "and all the things of GOD? having no more power "to perform the actions of a living Chriſtian, than a "dead body to perform the functions of a living man?" What terms, I beſeech you, can ſuch a one fulfil? Be they ever ſo difficult, or ever ſo eaſy, it maketh no difference. The hand ſtiff in death, is no more able to move a feather, than to remove a mountain.—Whatever, therefore, others may affirm, you, Sir, cannot talk of repentance, to be exerciſed by *fallen* man, until he is quickened and enabled by fellowſhip with *CHRIST*, the living and life-giving head. Unleſs you chuſe, either to contradict your own aſſertion, that fallen man is abſolutely dead to all good; or elſe think proper to maintain, that the dead may not only act, but perform ſome of the moſt excellent acts, and important offices.

You ſhould likewiſe, Sir, if you would write correctly and argue forcibly, have told us, what you mean by faith. Otherwiſe you may intend one thing, and I another, even while we both uſe the ſame word. In this caſe, our diſpute might be as endleſs, as it muſt be fruitleſs.

By faith I mean, what St *John* calls, *a receiving of* CHRIST; a receiving of him and his benefits, as they are freely given, in the word of grace and truth. If this, which is the apoſtolical, be a proper definition, then it ſeems not to come under the denomination of a condition. They muſt be exceſſive refiners indeed, who would call my receiving a rich preſent, the terms or conditions of poſſeſſing it; or would eſteem my eating at a plenteous feaſt, the terms and conditions of enjoying it. Is not this to ſubtilize, till ſound ſenſe is loſt?

Faith, according to St *Paul*, is a perſuaſion, that *CHRIST loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* Where is any trace or any hint of conditionality, in this deſcription? I don't hear the apoſtle ſaying, He loved me, provided I repent; he gave himſelf for me, in caſe I think this, or do that: but he gave himſelf for me, when I was ungodly, and *had* performed no conditions; when I was without ſtrength, and *could* perform no conditions.—Thus he gave himſelf for me, that I might have remiſſion of ſins, through his blood; and eternal life, through his righteouſneſs.—Believing theſe delightful truths, and receiving theſe heavenly privileges, I love my moſt adorable Benefactor; and abhor thoſe iniquities for which we wept, and groaned, and died. That love of CHRIST is vital holineſs: and this abhorrence of ſin, is practical repentance. And both are the fruits, therefore cannot be the conditions, of ſalvation by JESUS.

Some holy men and excellent writers, I confeſs, have not ſcrupled to call faith and repentance the conditions of our ſalvation. Yet I cannot prevail on myſelf to admire or approve the language. I fear, it tends to embarras the ſincere ſoul; to darken the luſtre of grace; and to afford too much occaſion for boaſting.

To embarraſs the ſincere ſoul——For, if I am ſaved on conditions, this will naturally divert my attention from the grand and all-ſufficient cauſe of juſtification, the righteouſneſs of CHRIST; which alone gives ſolid comfort. Inſtead of delighting myſelf in the LORD REDEEMER, I ſhall be engaged in an anxious concern about the ſuppoſed conditions. Whether I have performed them? Whether I have performed them aright? whether there may not be ſome latent defect, that ſpoils all, and renders my labour fruitleſs? The more ſerious our minds are, and the more tender our conſciences, the more ſhall we be liable to perplexity and diſquietude on this head.

It eclipſes the luſtre of grace.—*Ye are ſaved by grace,* ſays the oracle of heaven. But if ſalvation be upon conditions, it cannot be of grace. It muſt, in ſome meaſure at leaſt, be of works. Since it depends upon working the conditions, it is obtained by working the conditions; and the candidate has reaſon to look principally unto his performance of the conditions. They are to him, by incomparable degrees, the moſt important point. Becauſe, without their all-ſignificant interpoſition, every thing elſe is as nothing. Even GOD's everlaſting love, and CHRIST's everlaſting righteouſneſs, are, till the conditions are fulfilled, but ciphers without the initial figure.

It affords too much occaſion of boaſting.——May I not, in this caſe, thank my own application and induſtry; They, they exerted themſelves ſucceſsfully; and behold! the promiſed reward is mine. What then ſhould hinder me from ſacrificing unto my own net, and burning incenſe unto my own drag?—At this door the notion of merit will unavoidably creep in. Becauſe my performance of the condition is meritorious of the *covenanted* reward. So far meritorious, that the reward is my due. I may demand it, as a debt. And it will be an act of apparent injuſtice to withhold it.——But ſhall theſe things be ſaid unto the ALMIGHTY? Will theſe things redound to *the praiſe of the glory of his grace?* Do theſe things hide vanity from man; or conſiſt with a ſalvation, that is *without money, or without price?* Not quite ſo well, I believe, yourſelf will acknowledge, as the following lines:

Let the world their virtue boaſt,
Their works of righteouſneſs;
I, a wretch undone and loſt,
Am freely ſav'd by grace:
Other title I diſclaim,
This, only this, *is all my plea;*
I the chief of ſinners am,
But JESUS *died for me.*

"Fallen man," you ſay, "is juſtified, not by perfect "obedience, but by faith."——"Not by perfect obe-"dience." Ah, Sir! if you had remembered the immutability of GOD, and the ſpirituality of his law, you would not have challenged this expreſſion.——"But by faith." Here, 'tis true, you uſe the language of ſcripture. Nevertheleſs it behoves a watchman in *Iſrael*, to ſhew how the language of ſcripture may be abuſed. Faith, you allow, is imputed to us for righteouſneſs; therefore (you infer) not the righteouſneſs or perfect obedience of CHRIST. This if you mean any thing, or would ſpeak any thing to

the purpose, must be your way of arguing. So you would set faith and CHRIST's righteousness at variance. The former shall exclude the latter from its office. Whereas, the former is only the pitcher at the fountain, while the latter is the very water of life; is that blessed, glorious, heavenly expedient, which, received by faith, justifies, sanctifies, saves.

According to your gospel, faith will say to the righteousness of the REDEEMER, "Depart hence. I have "no need of thee. I myself act as the justifying right-"eousness. *I stand in the stead of perfect obedience, in order "to acceptance with* GOD *."——To this may we not reply? Was faith then crucified for you? has faith magnified the divine law? or is it by means of faith, that not one jot or tittle of its precepts pass unfulfilled?

If faith, in this sense, is imputed for righteousness, how can you subscribe that emphatical article, which declares, "We are accounted righteous before GOD, "*only* for the merit of our LORD and SAVIOUR "JESUS CHRIST." Surely, Sir, you are accounted righteous, for the sake of *that*, whatever it be, which stands in the stead of perfect obedience. That, whatever it be, may claim the honour; and to that justice itself cannot but award the prize.

If your notion be true, the believer ought to have his own faith principally in view. Whatever presents me perfectly obedient before GOD, is my greatest good; is my choicest portion; the best foundation for my hope, my peace, my joy. To this, therefore, so long as I know my own interest, I must chiefly look. Whereas, *look unto* JESUS, is the direction of the HOLY GHOST. Look unto his perfect atonement, and complete righteousness, *and be saved*, is the grand unchangeable edict, issued from the throne of grace.

Perhaps, you will say, Are not the words of scripture expressly on my side? *Faith is imputed for righteousness.* True. But is the sense of scripture on your side? Suppose, I should undertake to prove, that *David* was purged from guilt, by the hyssop which groweth on the wall; this you would think a wild and an impracticable attempt. But should I not have the words of scripture expressly on my side? *Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean.* Yet should I not have the least countenance imaginable from the spirit and sense of those sacred writings. Has the hyssop, a mean worthless shrub, any kind of fitness, to stand in the stead of the sacrificial blood, and make the atonement for sin? No more fitness has faith, to stand in the stead of perfect obedience; to act as our justifying righteousness; or procure our acceptance with GOD.

"What CHRIST has done."——Here Mr *Wesley* himself speaks of what CHRIST has *done*. He represents it by a very magnificent image. He lays it as the foundation of that first and most comprehensive blessing, justification. In this I most cordially agree with him. Hoping, that we shall unanimously join, to defend this important sentiment, against all opposition; and endeavour to display the REDEEMER's work, as well as his passion, in all its glorious excellency.

"What CHRIST has done is the foundation of our "justification, not the term or condition."——The prophet *Isaiah* had other notions of this matter; *If thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed.*—— *If* * is the hypothetic language; denotes a term; expresses a condition; on the performance of which, the MESSIAH *should see his seed*; should have a numberless multitude of sinners, pardoned and renewed; born again of the SPIRIT, and made heirs of salvation. The grand term, on which all these blessings depend, and by which they are made sure to believers, is, the pouring out of the MESSIAH's soul, as a sacrifice for their sins, and a ransom for their persons.

"The foundation, not the condition."——Methinks you should offer some reason for this distinction. Especially, since St *Paul* assures us, that CHRIST is, in the work of salvation, not this or that only, but he is ALL. Especially, since CHRIST himself declares, *I am*, in that grandest of all affairs, the redemption of sinners, *the beginning and the ending*. And well he may be so, since he is, as it follows in the text, *the* ALMIGHTY.

Your meaning, I presume, is, What CHRIST has done, is a foundation for the influence and significancy of our own doings. That they, under the notion of terms and conditions, may come for a share, and be his co-adjutors in the great work. This was the doctrine, established by the council of *Trent*; this is the doctrine, still maintained in the conclave of *Rome*; and is, perhaps, of all their abominations the most refined, yet not the least dishonourable to our SAVIOUR. It bears the greatest opposition to the truth of his gospel, and the freeness of his redemption.

I have heard it insinuated, that Mr *Wesley* is a Jesuit in disguise. This insinuation I rejected, as the grossest calumny; I abhorred, as falsehood itself. I acquit you, Sir, from the charge of being a Jesuit or a Papist. But no body, I apprehend, can acquit your principles from halting between Protestantism and Popery. They have stolen the unhallowed fire, and are infected with the leaven of Antichrist. You have unhappily adopted some specious Papistical tenets, and are listening to the mother of abominations, more than you are aware.

Amidst all your mistakes (and from mistakes who is exempt?) I verily believe, your principal aim is, the honour of CHRIST, and the edification of souls. Therefore I speak the more freely. Was you a bigot to selfishness, or a devotee to vain-glory, such liberty might be displeasing. But I am persuaded better things of Mr *Wesley*. He has publicly declared, that "wherein soever "he is mistaken, his mind is open to conviction; and "he sincerely desires to be better informed." This is written in the true spirit of a Christian. To this spirit I address myself. Begging of you, Sir, with the sincerity and tenderness of a brother, to consider these hints impartially; lest, being misled yourself, you mislead your thousands and ten thousands.

In the mean time, I hope, you will not take it amiss, if, to my affectionate entreaties, I add my earnest prayers: That you, Sir, and your people, may be in the number of those *blessed men, unto whom* GOD *imputeth righteousness without works*. Which I take to be the first and great evangelical privilege; as, I am very sure, it is the richest benefit, I know how to crave, either for you, or for your most, &c.

* These are Mr *Wesley*'s own words, in his explication of this very doctrine. See his sermon on *the righteousness of faith*. Vol. I. p. 111.

* *Is.* liii. 10. תשים אם, Si posueris. *Vocula* אם *valet* conditionem, *et recte vertitur per* si. *Patet enim clarissime*, conditionem *hic conjungi cum* privilegio, *præstita conditione obtinendo*. VITRIN.

LETTER VII.

REV. SIR,

PERSONS skilled in the dissection of animal bodies, frequently mention *comparative anatomy*.—— May I borrow the term, and apply it to theology? I do then freely declare, that in case you censured *Aspasio*, for

for points of divinity, *comparatively small*, you ſhould have no oppoſition nor any check from this pen.

Some people, for inſtance, are of opinion, that the belief of a parent is conſiderably beneficial to his children. That, when St *Paul* ſays to the anxious jailor, *Believe on the* LORD JESUS, *and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy houſe*; he promiſes ſome ſpecial good, that ſhould redound to the man's houſehold, from his own receival of CHRIST. It ſeems, indeed, that the apoſtle muſt intend ſomething of this nature; more than barely to ſay, thy family alſo, provided they follow thy example, ſhall obtain ſalvation with eternal glory. If this were the whole of his meaning, he need not have confined it to the jailor's domeſtics, but might have extended it to all the inhabitants of *Philippi*.

Such tenets, whether admitted or rejected, affect not the *main* point. Men may embrace which ſide of the queſtion they think proper, and yet be found in the faith of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. But errors, relating to *that righteouſneſs*, which is the one efficient cauſe of juſtification; in which alone GOD is well pleaſed, and all his perfections glorified; which is the only ſpring of ſolid peace, and true godlineſs; ſuch errors are extremely pernicious. Theſe we muſt withſtand with reſolution and zeal. We may not give place to their encroachment, no, not for an hour. The former may be compared to a fly, ſettled on the diſh; the latter are more like poiſon, mixed with our food. To diſlodge *that*, may not be amiſs. But to prevent, or expel, or antidote *this*, is abſolutely neceſſary. In the former number, perhaps, the reader will rank your obſervation, which follows. But as I have undertaken to follow you ſtep by ſtep, I muſt not diſregard it.

Aſpaſio, ſpeaking of *David*, expreſſes a high eſteem for that hero, king, and ſaint. Allowing, that his eſteem were carried a little too far; where would have been the great hurt, or the grievous offence? How, Sir, could this have led to "unſettled notions in religion *?"—I was inclined to anſwer your reflections, as the hero himſelf anſwered his cenſorious brother, *Is there not a cauſe?* Then paſſing on to another ſubject, as he, perfectly maſter of himſelf, and nobly ſuperior to the affront, turned to another perſon. But as you ſeem to have injured *David*, and not done juſtice to the truth, I ſhall hardly be excuſed, if I diſmiſs the matter, without ſome more particular notice.

GOD himſelf dignifies *David* with the moſt exalted of all characters, ſays *Aſpaſio*.—"Far, very far from "*it*," ſays Mr *Weſley*, "We have more exalted cha"racters than *David's*."—Where, Sir? Shew me, in any of the ſaints, or in any of the ſacred writers, a more devout, or a more divine ſpirit, than that which breathes in the penman of the *Pſalms*. For my own part, I know nothing ſuperior to it, in any author, or in any language. Neither can I concieve a more exalted character, than the character given of *David*, *a man after GOD's own heart*. If GOD be an unerring judge, if *his* approbation be the infallible ſtandard, this deſcription muſt expreſs the moſt conſummate human worth. Say whatever you will of a perſon, it does not, it cannot, exceed this moſt illuſtrious teſtimony.

"But this is ſaid of *David* in a particular reſpect."—Ay! notwithſtanding the HOLY SPIRIT has declared concerning him; *a man after mine own heart, who ſhall perform* all *my will*. If you was expounding this text, would you think it right to ſay? He ſhall perform *all my will*, that is, he ſhall ſerve me in *ſome particular reſpect*.—"It was not ſaid, with regard to "his whole character." No! not when the SPIRIT of inſpiration has borne this witneſs to *David*; *His heart was perfect with the* LORD *his* GOD. Could his heart be perfect, yet not influence his *whole* conduct?—"But "it was ſaid in the ſecond or third year of *Saul's* reign." Therefore it was not applicable to him, during the future years of his life. This is the inference you would draw. But can you really think it a juſt one? or would you call *that* perſon, a man after GOD's own heart, who is ſingularly pious in the days of his youth, but ſwerves and declines in his advanced age?

Notwithſtanding all theſe remonſtrances, you puſh matters to the utmoſt; as though it was a point of the laſt importance, to prove *David* an errant backſlider. With this view, you add; "But was he a man after "*GOD's* own heart, all his life, or in all particulars? "So far from it, that"——Stop, Sir, I beſeech you. And, before you ſpeak unadviſedly with your lips, hear what the LORD himſelf replies, to both your interrogatories; *David did that which was* right, *in the eyes of the* LORD, *and turned not aſide* from any thing *that he commanded him*, all the days *of his life, ſave only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite*. Surely, you was not aware, that ſuch things are written in the book of GOD. Otherwiſe, you would not have contradicted them, with ſo much boldneſs. I will, therefore, put the moſt charitable conſtruction upon your procedure, and ſay with the apoſtle; *I wot, that through inadvertence you did it*.

There is not a juſt man upon earth, that ſinneth not, is a text quoted by *Aſpaſio*. Upon which Mr *Weſley* obſerves; "*Solomon* might truly ſay ſo, before CHRIST "came."—According to this inſinuation, what *Solomon* ſaid in his *Proverbs* and other books, was ſaid only by a ſhort-ſighted mortal; who might adapt his inſtructions to the preſent œconomy; but was not able to plan a ſyſtem of morals for futurity. Whereas, I always ſuppoſed, that his writings were dictated by that infinitely-wiſe SPIRIT, before whom all times are preſent, and to whom all events are known. Agreeably to this ſuppoſition, *Paul* informs us, that *whatſoever things were written aforetime*, whether by *Solomon* or any other prophet, *were written for our learning*.—No; ſuggeſts Mr *Weſley*. Here is ſomething written which appertains not to us Chriſtians. We are above it.—Are you ſo? Your reaſon for theſe lofty apprehenſions? Why, "St *John* affirms, *Whoſoever is born of GOD, ſinneth not*."

True; he ſinneth not habitually; it is not his cuſtomary practice. Thus the paſſage is explained by another apoſtle; *Sin*, though it may make inſurrection, does *not reign in his mortal body*. Though it may aſſault him, yet it *has not dominion over him*.—

Again, he *ſinneth not*, is the ſame way of ſpeaking, and to be underſtood with the ſame limitation, as that text in *Job*, *HE giveth not account of any of his matters*. How, Sir, would you interpret theſe words? It is undeniably certain, that ſometimes GOD giveth account of his matters. He gave it to *Abraham*, when *Sodom*, *and Gomorrah*, and the cities about them, were to be deſtroyed with brimſtone and fire from heaven. You would therefore, I preſume, in ſome ſuch qualified ſenſe expound the paſſage; "*He giveth not account*; it is "not his uſual way. Not a cuſtomary procedure with "the ſupreme diſpoſer of things. He generally re"quireth his creatures to tranſact with him upon truſt; "to give themſelves up, with an implicit reſignation to "the veracity of his word, and the good-pleaſure of his "will."—The harmony of ſcripture, and the neceſſity of the caſe, call upon you to give the ſame expoſition of the text before us.

I ſaid, the neceſſity of the caſe. For you will pleaſe to obſerve, the thing affirmed, is affirmed in ſuch a manner, that it muſt be applied to every individual Chriſtian, and at the very inſtant of his commencing a true Chriſtian. The apoſtle ſays not, a ſaint of the

* The reader will pleaſe to remember, that the pamphlet, which contains the remarks under conſideration, is entitled *A Preſervative againſt unſettled notions in religion.*

the first rank; but *whosoever*. He says not, After such a one has been, for a considerable time, born of GOD; but whosoever *is born*, is but just entered upon the desirable state, *sinneth not*. The character belongs to the very weakest believer. The description is suited even to babes in *CHRIST*. To suppose, therefore, that it implies an entire freedom from sin, infirmity, and defect, is to suppose, that all the children of the regeneration are born in a state of manhood; or rather, are more than men, even while they are infants of a day.

Our sense of the passage is free from this impropriety, yet gives no countenance to immortality. *Whosoever is born of GOD sinneth not.* He does not, he cannot sin, like the devil, or one actuated by the diabolical nature. This interpretation is rendered probable, by the apostle's antithesis; *He that committeth sin is of the devil.* It is rendered necessary, by the preceding remark, and by the experience of Christians.—The text, thus interpreted, is applicable to the babe in *CHRIST*, as well as to the adult. Though either of them may fall, thro' the violence or surprise of temptation; yet neither of them can live and die in allowed iniquity, whether of omission or commission. They cannot have a settled love to any known sin, nor can they commit it with the full consent of their will.

Solomon, when he uttered those humbling words *, had his eye upon what you somewhere call, "the inconceivable purity and spirituality of the sacred precepts;" upon that universal obedience which they require, in every the minutest instance.—That we do nothing, great or small, which they forbid; leave nothing undone, in heart or life, which they enjoin.——That we do all this, in the most perfect degree. Not only serving the LORD, but serving him with all our strength. Not only loving our neighbour, but loving him as our own soul. Ever exercising the utmost regularity of affection and desire; ever maintaining the utmost rectitude of temper and thought.—If you also, Sir, had your eye fixed upon the same law, as it delineates and demands this "inconceivable purity and spirituality;" you would not scruple to acquiesce in the wise man's confession, nor think much to adopt it as your own. You would acknowledge it calculated, not only for the *Mosaic* æra, and the meridian of *Judea*, but for all times and all places; till those new heavens, and that new earth appear, wherein dwelleth consummate righteousness.

In many things we offend all. "That St *James* does "not speak this of himself, or real Christians, will "clearly appear to all, who impartially consider the "context."—I wish, Sir, you had made this appear to *me*; even to him, whom you honour with this address. Then I should not have been obliged to ask, Of whom speaketh the apostle?——He says, *My brethren.* Does not this imply true believers, and real Christians?——He says, *We teachers* †. Does not this comprehend himself, and describe his office?—He adds, *We all.* If he himself, and real Christians, are not included in this most comprehensive clause; I would desire to know, in what terms they could possibly be comprised.

According to this interpretation, the arguing is just, and the conclusion forcible. As though he had said,—"My dear brethren, though you are truly converted to Christianity, yet do not unadvisedly engage in "the arduous and awful work of the ministry. Remembering, that we ministers of the gospel shall be "subject to a stricter judgment ‡ than Christians in ordinary life; and if, upon trial, we are found faithless, "shall receive a heavier condemnation ‡.——The danger, let me add, is very considerable; because such "is the frailty of our mortal state, that the very best "among us, and those conversant in sacred things, can"not always walk uprightly; but, in many instances, "we trip, we stumble, we offend."

Whereas, if neither the apostle himself nor real Christians be meant, I can see no propriety nor force in the reasoning. Nay, I can see no reasoning at all, though the illative particle *for* evidently requires it. Nothing but a most insipid and frivolous assertion; "For, "in many things, we that are not real Christians of"fend." Is this a discovery worthy of apostolical wisdom? Is this all that the inspired St *James* meant to declare? You and I could have told him and his people a great deal more. Whosoever is not a real Christian, offends, not in *many* things only, but in *every* thing. To such a one, nothing is pure. His mind and conscience are defiled: his whole life is sin.

We have examined this objection, as it stands in itself. Let us now take a view of it, as it may appear in its consequences.—*In many things we offend all.* "The "apostle speaks not of himself, nor of real Christians." What fine work would our adversaries make with the scriptures, if we should allow them Mr *Wesley*'s liberty of interpretation! Tell a *Pelagian*, that all mankind is depraved. Prove the universal depravity, by that abasing text, *All we, like sheep, have gone astray.* How easily may he reply, *All we* does not mean all mankind? The prophet speaks not of himself, nor of virtuous persons, but only of profane people, and men of the baser sort. ——Tell an *Arian*, that our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* is very GOD. Confirm the glorious truth, by that most cogent text; *In HIM dwells all the fulness of the GODHEAD.* The heretic has nothing more to do, than, in Mr *Wesley*'s manner, to answer, *All fulness* does not mean all the divine perfections, but only some pittance of portion of them.——Dear Sir, whenever you are disposed to criticise again, let me beseech you to consider a little the import of language, and the consequences of things.

Had the words been, *In many things we offend*, you might, by disregarding the context, have borrowed some slight seeming countenance for your criticism, from verse the ninth; where the apostle is supposed to personate the wicked, *Therewith curse we man.* But in the place under consideration, he enlarges the sentiment, and strengthens the language; though free from that particular crime, he was not free from this general charge. Here therefore he spares not himself; he takes shame to himself, and teaches the most upright of the human race, to plead guilty before their Judge. We the servants of GOD; we the ambassadors of *CHRIST*; we *all* *—not one excepted—in many things offend.—Where then could *they*, and O! where can *you* and *I*, look for our perfection, but only in our divinely-gracious SURETY, BRIDEGROOM, HEAD? There let us seek it, where some excellent lines (whose author you may probably know) have taught us to find it.

Now let me climb perfection's height,
And into nothing fall;
Be less than nothing in thy sight,
While CHRIST *is all in all.*

In the paragraph which begins, "O children of "*Adam*," you don't distinguish what the law is *made* to speak, according to a new scheme of divinity; and what it really *does* speak to true believers, on the principles of the gospel. Give me leave to rectify your mistakes, and to point out the manner in which you should have expressed yourself.

To rectify your mistakes—You suppose the law, upon *Aspasio*'s plan, speaking to this effect. "O children "of *Adam*, you are no longer obliged to love the

* Eccl. vii. 20.

† The original is, not κυριοι, *masters*, but διδασκαλοι, *teachers*.

‡ ‡ *Judgment, condemnation.*—the word κριμα may be taken in both these significations.

* *Ne seipsos quidem excipiunt apostoli.* BENGEL. in loc.

"LORD your GOD with all your heart." Indeed you are. The obligation remains, and is unalterable. But it has been fully ſatisfied, as the condition of life and immortality, by the believer's glorious SURETY.—"Once I inſiſted on abſolute purity of heart. Now "I can diſpenſe with ſome degrees of evil deſire." No ſuch thing. Every degree of evil deſire I condemn with inexorable rigour. But every ſuch offence has been thus condemned, and thus puniſhed, in the fleſh of your crucified LORD.—"Since *CHRIST* has ful-"filled the law for you, you need not fulfil it." Rather, you need not fulfil it, in order to the juſtification of your perſons, or to obtain eternal life and glory. This, to you the greateſt of impoſſibilities, has been performed in your behalf, by a MEDIATOR and a REDEEMER, to whom nothing is impoſſible.—"I will connive at, yea accommodate my demands to your "weakneſs." Not this, but what is much better, I ſee no ſinful weakneſſes in you, becauſe they are all covered * with the reſplendent robe of your SAVIOUR's righteouſneſs; therefore I no longer curſe, but bleſs you, and ſign your title to everlaſting happineſs.—Thus the enmity of our nature is ſlain: thus the precepts, even the ſtricteſt precepts, become amiable and deſirable. We love the law, which, through our dear REDEEMER, is no longer againſt us, but on our ſide; is a meſſenger of peace, and bears witneſs to our completeneſs in *CHRIST*.

The manner in which you ſhould have expreſſed yourſelf—This is what the law ſpeaks, according to *Aſpaſio*'s doctrine. "O believers in *CHRIST*, I am, like my divine "Author, conſummate and unchangeable. I did re-"quire, I do require, and ever ſhall require, perfect "love to GOD; perfect charity to your neighbour; "and perfect holineſs, both in heart and life. Never "abating one tittle of theſe my requirements, I ſhall "denounce the curſe upon every diſobedience; upon "the leaſt departure from abſolute perfection.—But "this is your comfort, believers, that the curſe is exe-"cuted upon your moſt holy SURETY. This is your "comfort, believers, that my precepts have been fully "obeyed by *JESUS* your SAVIOUR. As this was "done, in your nature, and in your ſtead, I am ſatis-"fied, and you are juſtified. Now, though I can ne-"ver diſpenſe with any fault, nor connive at any in-"firmity; yet I behold all your faults laid upon IM-"MANUEL: I behold all his righteouſneſs put upon "you; and on *his* account I acquit you, I accept you, "and pronounce you righteous †."

This is the language of the law to the faithful, as they are in *CHRIST JESUS*. This is the ſpirit of *Aſpaſio*'s converſation with his friend *Theron*. The native tendency of this doctrine, and its powerful agency in producing true holineſs, are profeſſedly diſplayed in the tenth letter; and not obſcurely hinted in various other places. If you can prove, that it has a contrary tendency, you will prove, that *the grace of* GOD does no longer *teach us to deny*, but prompt us to commit *ungodlineſs*. An attempt, in which, with all my eſteem for your perſon, and deference to your abilities, I cannot with you *GOD ſpeed*.

"Does the righteouſneſs of GOD ever mean (as "you affirm) the merits of *CHRIST*?—Where do I affirm this, Sir? Be pleaſed to produce the paſſage. At leaſt refer us to the page.—*Aſpaſio*, in the place which offends you, ſpeaks of what *CHRIST* has done and ſuffered; of his active and paſſive obedience. The expreſſions you change into "the merits of "*CHRIST*;" which being an ambiguous phraſe, may ſerve to perplex the cauſe, rather than clear up the difficulty. Give me leave, therefore, to reſtore *Aſpaſio*'s words, and to ſtate the queſtion fairly.

"Does the righteouſneſs of GOD ever ſignify the "active and paſſive obedience of *CHRIST*?" To this Mr *Weſley* replies, "I believe not once in all the "ſcripture."—Why then, Sir, do you not diſprove what *Aſpaſio* has advanced in ſupport of this interpretation? *You* believe one thing; *he* believes another. And there is this *little* difference in the ground you reſpectively go upon. He appeals to argument and ſcripture. You reſt the whole matter upon this ſingle bottom, "I believe ſo."

You proceed—"It" (that is, the righteouſneſs of GOD) "often means, and particularly in the epiſtle "to the *Romans*, GOD's method of juſtifying ſinners." —Suppoſe I ſhould ſay, in my turn, This phraſe never means, no, not in the epiſtle to the *Romans*, GOD's method of juſtifying ſinners; I ſhould then argue in your own way; being a ſhield ſuited to your ſword; juſt as good an argument to defend, as you have brought to deſtroy my opinion. What would the judicious reader ſay, on ſuch an occaſion? Would he not ſmile, and cry, "A goodly pair of diſputants "truly."

But let me aſk, Does the holineſs of GOD ſignify his method of ſanctifying ſinners? Does the wiſdom of GOD ſignify his method of making ſinners wiſe? This no mortal has ſuſpected; this you yourſelf will hardly venture to aſſert. Why then ſhould we take your word, when, without aſſigning the leaſt reaſon, you dictate and declare, "The righteouſneſs of GOD "means his method of juſtifying ſinners?"—You muſt pardon us, Sir, if we prefer St *Peter*'s judgment; his judgment in that memorable paſſage, *Who have obtained like precious faith in the righteouſneſs of our GOD, even of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST*. This ſentence is a key to all thoſe texts in the New Teſtament, and many of thoſe in the Old, which mention the righteouſneſs of GOD. Here it neceſſarily ſignifies the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*; becauſe none elſe is our GOD and SAVIOUR. Here it confeſſedly ſignifies the object of juſtifying faith. Which cannot be the eſſential righteouſneſs of an abſolute GOD, but muſt be the vicarious righteouſneſs of an incarnate GOD. And why ſhould you ſcruple to call the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, the righteouſneſs of GOD? ſince his blood is called the blood of GOD. His life, which he laid down for us, is called the life of GOD. And he himſelf, as the author of our ſalvation, is called *JEHOVAH* (or GOD ſelf-exiſtent and everlaſting) *our righteouſneſs*.

It is poſſible, you may produce ſome commentators of eminence, who coincide or have led the way, in this your interpretation. But may we not aſk them, as well as yourſelf, on what authority they proceed? —Is this the plain and natural ſignification of the words? No; but an apparent force upon their natural import.—Does this tend to fix and aſcertain the ſenſe of the paſſage? No; but it gives the paſſage ſuch a rambling turn, as will accommodate itſelf to the ſentiments of Arians or Socinians, Arminians or Papiſts.—Is this reconcileable with the tenor of ſcripture? *He hath made HIM to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him.* Make a trial of your interpretation upon this diſtin-

* Pſal. xxxii. 1. *Bleſſed is he, whoſe iniquities are covered.* Upon this text St *Jerome* very ingeniouſly, and very comfortably deſcants; *Quod tegitur, non videtur; quod non videtur, non imputatur; quod non imputatur, non punietur.* That which is covered, is not ſeen; that which is not ſeen, is not imputed; that which is not imputed, ſhall not be puniſhed.

† I think, it is no miſrepreſentation, to ſuppoſe the law ſpeaking, in this manner, to the believers.—Becauſe to them *all things* are *become new*. Conſequently, the voice of the law is new.—Becauſe *all things are theirs*. If ſo, the ſentence of the law is theirs. Not to overwhelm them with confuſion, but to make them joyful through hope.—Becauſe this is the language of the almighty LAWGIVER, to the redeemed of the LORD JESUS; and ſurely the law will not jar, but harmonize with its author, ſaying, *How ſhall I curſe whom GOD hath not curſed? or how ſhall I defy, whom the LORD hath not defied?*

diſtinguiſhed text; ſee how it will accord with common ſenſe, or the analogy of faith. That we might be made the righteouſneſs of GOD; that is, "that "we might be made GOD's method of juſtifying "ſinners." Can you yourſelf, Sir, upon an impartial review, be pleaſed with *ſuch* interpretations of ſacred writ?

How much more noble, and how much more comfortable is the eaſy and obvious ſenſe, which the words, in a moſt beautiful climax, afford! He made CHRIST, who was perfectly free from ſin, both in heart and life; God made him to be ſin, juſtly chargeable with it, and juſtly puniſhable for it. That we, who are full of ſin, both original and actual, might be made *righteous*—and not barely righteous, but (which is a much ſtronger expreſſion) *righteouſneſs itſelf*;——yea, that we might be what exceeds all parallel, and paſſes all underſtanding, *the righteouſneſs of God**; might have made, that very righteouſneſs for our juſtification, which the God of all perfection, uniting himſelf to our nature, wrought, finiſhed, and infinitely ennobled.

Mr *Samuel Clarke*, in his annotations on this verſe, on *Rom.* i. 17. on *Rom.* x. 3. writes in the ſame vague and unſatisfactory manner as yourſelf. I could mention another celebrated commentator, who leans to this timid and trimming ſcheme.—I ſpeak thus freely, becauſe I look upon the article of juſtification through the righteouſneſs of our God and Saviour, to be the ſupreme diſtinguiſhing glory of Chriſtianity. Becauſe I conſider it as the richeſt, incomparably the richeſt privilege of the Chriſtian. To have a righteouſneſs,—a conſummate righteouſneſs,—the very righteouſneſs of the incarnate God,—dignified with all the perfections of the divine nature,—to have this righteouſneſs imputed for our juſtification! matchleſs, inconceivable bleſſing! This fills the believer's heart with inexpreſſible comfort and joy. This diſplays the grace of God, in the moſt charming and tranſporting light. This conſtitutes the moſt engaging motive to love, to holineſs, and to all willing obedience.

Let us not then treat of it, in ſuch *diluting* terms, or in ſuch a *compromiſing* ſtrain, as ſhall defeat the efficacy of the heavenly *cordial*, or deliver up the precious *depoſitum* to the enemies of the goſpel. Let us rather, *by* a clear and full *manifeſtation of the truth*, of this capital and leading truth eſpecially, *commend ourſelves to every man's conſcience*. Their humour may diſlike it, their prejudice may reject it; but their conſcience, whenever it awakes, and gains the aſcendant, will embrace it; will cleave to it; and rejoice in it.

But ſtay. Let me proceed cautiouſly; not triumph immaturely. You rally your forces, and prepare for a freſh attack. *Aſpaſio* tells his friend, that the righteouſneſs of God, ſignifies a righteouſneſs of the moſt ſupereminent dignity; ſuch as is worthy to be called by his name, and may juſtly challenge his acceptance. To this you reply, "I cannot allow it at all."—*Aſpaſio* ſupports his opinion by ſcripture, by reaſon, and by a very reſpectable authority. All which Mr *Weſley* would confront and overthrow, by that one irrefragable proof, "I cannot allow it at all."—Surely, ſaid I, upon reading ſuch controverſial triflings, delivered with the air of oracular reſponſes; ſurely this letter muſt have ſtolen its way into the world. It was deſigned as a preſervative for Mr *Weſley*'s private ſocieties only. It could never be intended for public view, and general examination. Since every reader is treated, not as his judge, no, nor as his equal, but as his pupil; not as one, that is to be addreſſed with argument, and convinced by reaſoning, but as a tame diſciple, that is to acquieſce in the great preceptor's ſolemn "SAY SO."

To your next paragraph I have no material objection. I might indeed complain of an unfair quotation; but I ſhall only obſerve, that you would diſcard the expreſſion, *imputation of righteouſneſs*, and inſert in its ſtead, *intereſt in* CHRIST. You had not always, Sir, ſuch an averſion to the phraſe imputed: witneſs that ſtanza in one of your hymns;

Let faith and love combine
To guard your valiant breaſt;
The plate be righteouſneſs divine,
Imputed and impreſt.

However, in this place I am willing to gratify you; becauſe it will be difficult to ſhew, how a ſinner can have a real intereſt in CHRIST, in what he has done and what he has ſuffered, any other way than by imputation. I am willing to gratify you, provided you do not entertain that ſtrange conceit, of an *incomplete* intereſt, or an intereſt in half the REDEEMER; but look upon the holineſs of his nature, the obedience of his life, and the atonement of his death, as the one undivided ineffable treaſure, in which every believing ſinner is intereſted; as that which is the all-ſufficient cauſe of his juſtification; rendering acceptable, firſt his perſon, then his performances; and, at the laſt, introducing him, with dignity, and triumph, into everlaſting habitations.

Here I lay down my pen; unleſs you will permit me to relate a little piece of hiſtory, not foreign to your laſt ſentiment.——A certain general happened to obſerve a common ſoldier diſtinguiſhing himſelf, on the day of battle, with uncommon activity and courage; determined to reward merit where-ever it was found, he advanced the brave plebeian to a captain's poſt; who had not long enjoyed the honour, before he came to his benefactor, and, with a dejected countenance, begged leave to reſign his commiſſion. The general, ſurpriſed at ſuch an unexpected requeſt, aſked him the reaſon. Your officers, ſaid the petitioner, being gentlemen of family and education, think it beneath them to aſſociate or converſe with a ruſtic. So that now, I am abandoned on every ſide; and am leſs happy, ſince my preferment, than I was before this inſtance of your Highneſs's favour.——Is this the cauſe of your uneaſineſs? replied the general; then it ſhall be redreſſed, and very ſpeedily: to-morrow I review the army, and to-morrow your buſineſs ſhall be done.——Accordingly, when the troops were drawn up, and expected every moment to begin their exerciſe; the general calls the young hero from the ranks; leans his hands upon his ſhoulder; and, in this familiar endearing poſture, walks with him through all the lines.——The ſtratagem had its deſired effect. After ſuch a ſignal and public token of his prince's regard, the officers were deſirous of his acquaintance; and courted, rather than ſhunned, his company.

And will not the favour of the bleſſed *JESUS*, give us as great a diſtinction, and as high a recommendation, in the heavenly world? Will not the angelic hoſts reſpect and honour thoſe perſons, who appear waſhed in his blood; clothed with his righteouſneſs; and wearing the moſt illuſtrious tokens of his love, that he himſelf could poſſibly give?—In theſe tokens of his love may we and our readers be found! Then ſhall we meet one another with courage and comfort, at the great tribunal; with honour and joy, amidſt the angels of light; with everlaſting exultation and rapture, round the throne of the LAMB.

Under ſuch pleaſing hopes I take my leave at preſent, and remain your, &c.

* St *Chryſoſtom* expounds the important paſſage, in much the ſame manner. His words are worthy, not only to be copied in a note, but to be written on our hearts. Ποιος ταυτα λογος, ποιος ταυτα παρρησιας συνησειεν; Τον γαρ δικαιον, φησιν, εποιησεν αμαρτωλον, ινα τους αμαρτωλους ποιηση δικαιους. Μαλλον δε ουδ' ουτως ειπειν, αλλ' ο πολλω μειζον ην. Ου γαρ ειπεν, θνητον, αλλ' αυτην την ποιοτητα. Ου γαρ ειπεν, εποιησεν αμαρτωλον, αλλ' αμαρτιαν. Ινα γ' ημεις γενωμεθα, ουκ ειπε, αλλα δικαιοσυνη, και Θεου δικαιοσυνη. *What words can expreſs, or what thoughts can conceive, the greatneſs of theſe things? He made the RIGHTEOUS ONE a ſinner, that he might make wretched ſinners righteous. This, though marvellouſly great, is not all. The word is not in the concrete, but in the abſtract. He made the JUST ONE, not a ſinner, but ſin; that we might be made, not righteous only,—but righteouſneſs itſelf,—yea, the righteouſneſs of GOD.*

LETTER VIII.

REV. SIR,

YOU introduce the paragraph that comes next under our conſideration, by a very juſt diſtinction. *Aſpaſio* had obſerved, that a rebel may be forgiven, without being reſtored to the dignity of a ſon. To whith you reply; "A rebel againſt an earthly king may; but "not a rebel againſt GOD: in the very ſame moment "that *GOD* forgives, we are the ſons of *GOD*."—This is perfectly right. But hence to infer, that the converſation of our two friends is no better than "an idle diſ-"pute," is not very polite, and not at all concluſive. Becauſe remiſſion of the offence, and reſtoration to favour, may come in the ſame moment, and yet be different bleſſings. That afflicted patient, mentioned in the goſpel, had at the ſame inſtant his ears opened, and the ſtring of his tongue looſed. Were theſe effects, therefore, one and the ſame kind of healing?——Beſides, why are forgiveneſs and ſonſhip united in the divine donation? Becauſe the ſufferings of a ſinner, and the obedience of a ſon, were united in the divine REDEEMER. So that we muſt ſtill have our eye, our believing and adoring eye, upon the meritorious righteouſneſs of our *LORD*.

"Pardon and acceptance, though," &c. Here I ſee nothing but the *crambe repetita*.——"The words of *Job*," &c. Here I ſee nothing but the uſual argument, our maſter's *ipſe dixit*. Therefore we will paſs on to the next period.

Two texts of ſcripture are produced. You ſet aſide *Aſpaſio*'s interpretation, to make way for one of your own. Which might have paſſed without ſuſpicion, if it had appeared in your ſermons, or been delivered from your pulpit; where a perſon may be content with the general ſenſe, without entering upon a critical nicety. But, by rejecting *Aſpaſio*'s expoſition, you ſeem to intend a peculiar degree of accuracy. Let us then examine the paſſages with ſuch a view.——*Grace reigneth through righteouſneſs unto eternal life*; "that is, the free "love of GOD brings us, through juſtification and "ſanctification, to glory."

In this, I queſtion, Sir, whether you are exactly orthodox. You lead the reader to ſuppoſe, that ſanctification is as much the cauſe of glory as juſtification; that CHRIST's work, and our graces, have juſt the ſame weight; act in the very ſame capacity; have, at leaſt, a joint influence, in procuring eternal life. You ſhould rather have expreſſed yourſelf in ſome ſuch manner; "The free grace of *GOD* brings us, through the joyful "privilege of juſtification, firſt to ſanctification, or the "love of his bleſſed ſelf; then to glory, or the enjoy-"ment of his bleſſed ſelf."

Beſides, you neglect the ſignificancy of that beautiful and emphatical word, *reigneth*. On this much ſtreſs ought to be laid in reading the ſentence; therefore it ought not to be totally overlooked in explaining the ſentence. Grace is *diſcovered* in other inſtances; grace is *exerciſed* in other bleſſings: but by giving us eternal life; by giving it freely, even when we are undeſerving guilty creatures; this ever-amiable attribute *reigneth*. It is manifeſted with every grand and charming recommendation. It appears, like the illuſtrious *Solomon*, when ſeated on his inimitably-ſplendid throne of ivory and gold; or like the magnificent *Ahaſuerus*, when he *ſhewed the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majeſty*.

Another particular I cannot perſuade myſelf to admire. You change the word *righteouſneſs* into *juſtification*; inſtead of ſaying, "Brings us through righteouſ-"neſs;" you ſay, "Brings us through juſtification." By this language, you ſcarce diſtinguiſh yourſelf from any heretic. You may rank with the Arian, or with the Sectariſt of any denomination. They will, every one, allow the neceſſity of juſtification, in order to final felicity; but not the neceſſity of a righteouſneſs adequate to the demands of the law, as a foundation for this bleſſed hope.—You do juſt the ſame injury to *CHRIST* and his righteouſneſs, which obtain this inconceivable recompenſe of reward; as you would receive from a meſſenger, who carries a rich preſent to your friend, but will not acknowledge from whom it comes. It comes, he confeſſes, from ſome man; but obſtinately refuſes to ſay from Mr *John Weſley*. Whereas, *Aſpaſio* ſcruples not to own, nay, rejoices to declare, from whence the invaluable benefit of juſtification proceeds: Not from works of the law; no, nor from works of the *SPIRIT*; from nothing done by us, from nothing wrought in us; but wholly from the blood and obedience of *JESUS CHRIST*.

The next paſſage, on which you deſcant, is, *That they may receive forgiveneſs, and a lot among the ſanctified*. Thus you tranſlate the original. *Aſpaſio*, not affecting needleſs novelty, is content with the common verſion. *That they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among all them that are ſanctified, by faith that is in ME.*—Why do you omit the word *ſins*? Forgiveneſs, I own, implies it. But the apoſtle chuſes to expreſs it. By which means, the ſentence becomes more full and emphatical. Grace is more highly honoured, and man more deeply abaſed.—I wonder alſo, why you ſhould prefer *lot* to inheritance, which is the uſual tranſlation. The latter word conveys a much more noble and pleaſing idea to the *Engliſh* reader, than the former.——*Receive forgiveneſs of ſins*; not earn it (let us mark this) by performing conditions, but receive it, as an abſolute gift. Juſt as *Joſeph*'s brethren received the portions ſent them from the viceroy of *Egypt*'s table.—*Receive an inheritance*; conſiſting of all ſpiritual bleſſings here, and a title to everlaſting bleſſedneſs hereafter. All which are beſtowed as freely, as the ſeveral portions of land in *Canaan* were, by *Moſes* and *Joſhua*, conſigned over to the tribes of *Iſrael* for a poſſeſſion.—*Among thoſe that are ſanctified*. If you ſhould inquire, how ſinners are ſanctified? The anſwer is added; *by faith which is in ME*. Not *for* faith, as your conditional ſcheme ſuppoſes; but *by* faith: by accepting the bleſſings mentioned; by looking upon them as our own; through the divine gift; and by living in the delightful enjoyment of them. Thus our hearts are won to *GOD*, and filled with his love. Thus they are weaned from vanity, and renewed in true holineſs.

Is the ſatisfaction made by CHRIST's death, ſufficient to obtain both our full pardon, and our final happineſs? *Aſpaſio* has anſwered this queſtion in the negative. He has confirmed his opinion, by the authority of ſcripture, and the teſtimony of reaſon. Mr *Weſley* thinks it enough to reply; "Unqueſtionably it is ſuffi-"cient, and neither of the texts you cite prove the con-"trary."——How eaſy, by this way of arguing, to overthrow any ſyſtem, and ſilence demonſtration itſelf!—But pray, Sir, be pleaſed to recollect yourſelf. Did you not, a little while ago, extol *Aſpaſio* as "unqueſ-"tionably right," becauſe he made the *univerſal* obedience of CHRIST, from his birth to his death, the one foundation of his hope? Yet here you condemn him, as "unqueſtionably wrong," becauſe he does not attribute all to CHRIST's death *excluſively*. Will Mr *Weſley* never have done with ſelf-contradiction? why will he give me ſuch repeated cauſe to complain,—*Quo tendam vultus*, &c.

If it was requiſite for Chriſt to be baptized, argues *Aſpaſio*, much more to fulfil the moral law.—"I can-"not

not prove," replies Mr *Wesley*, "that either the one or the other was requisite, in order to his purchasing redemption for us." Why then do you admit his obedience to the moral law, as an essential part of the foundation of your hope? A tottering foundation methinks, which is laid in a doctrine you cannot prove.

But if you cannot prove it, may not others prove it for you? You are not called to prove this point, Sir, but only to disapprove what *Aspasio* has advanced in confirmation of it.——That it was requisite for our LORD to be baptized, he himself acknowledges. Speaking of that sacred rite, he says, *Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.* It *becometh*; was it not requisite for CHRIST, always to act the becoming part? in every circumstance to demean himself, according to the utmost decorum and highest dignity of character?—— "This was not requisite to purchase redemption for us." For what then was it requisite? Not to wash away any stain from the holy JESUS. Not to obtain any blessedness for the *SON* of the *HIGHEST*. Since, as the *SON* of the eternal *GOD*, he had an undoubted right to all the blessings of heaven and earth, of time and eternity.

"But it was not requisite, that he should fulfil the moral law."——No! Do *you* then establish the law? Are not you the *Antinomian*, who would have sinful man saved, yet the divine law not fulfilled, either by them or their SURETY? This is a strange way of magnifying the great standard of all righteousness. Rather, it is the sure way of dishonouring and debasing it.—— What says our *LORD*? *I came, not to destroy the law, but to fulfil* *. Did this signify, as some expository refiners suggest, only to vindicate and illustrate the law; to explain its highest meaning, and rescue it from the false glosses of the scribes; the business might have been done by the prophets and apostles. No occasion for the KING of heaven to appear in person. His ambassadors might have transacted the whole affair of vindication and explanation. But to fulfil every jot and tittle prescribed in its commands; to suffer all the vengeance and the whole curse denounced in its penalty; this was a work worthy of the *SON* of *GOD*,—practicable by none, but the *SON* of *GOD*;—and, being executed by HIM, is truly meritorious of pardon and life for poor sinners; of their restoration to the divine favour, and of their admission into the heavenly kingdom.

The moral law is inviolable in its nature, and of eternal obligation. This is a truth of great importance: with this is connected, and on this depends, the absolute necessity of a vicarious righteousness. I am no longer surprised, that you dispute against the latter, since you question or deny the former.—But consider, what our *LORD* says farther upon this subject, in the fifth of St *Matthew*, and the eighteenth verse. Perhaps, you will reply, "I have both considered it, and expounded it, in my sermons." You have; but in such a manner, as, I hope, you will live to retract. Thus you expound the awful text, and turn it into a piece of unmeaning tautology. "*One jot or one tittle shall in no* "*wise pass, till heaven and earth pass*; or, as it is expressed immediately after, *till all* (or rather *all things*) *be* "*fulfilled*, till the consummation of all things *." You would make ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, and ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται, synonimous phrases, expressive of the same thing. Thus stands the passage, interpreted according to your criticism. "Till the consummation of all things, one "jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till "the consummation of all things." See! to what miserable subterfuges a man of learning is driven, in order to evade the force of a text, which militates strongly for the meritorious obedience of CHRIST.

How much more just, more noble, more useful, is the common exposition, and the obvious meaning? Which we may thus introduce—These are the terms of life and happiness to man. Whosoever falls short, *GOD* himself pronounces accursed. And will the *UNCHANGEABLE* go back from his purpose; make abatement in his demands; or come to a composition with his creatures? No verily. *He is of one mind, and who can turn him* †? *It were easier for heaven and earth to pass* ‡, for all nature to be unhinged, and the universe to drop into dissolution, *than for one jot or tittle of this unalterable law to pass without a perfect accomplishment* ‖ in every the minutest instance.

By *CHRIST*'s sufferings alone the law was not satisfied, says *Aspasio*. "Yes, it was," replies Mr *Wesley*. ——Then all the indefatigable and important labours of his life, all his exemplary and shining graces, must be mere superfluities. At least, they could have no merit, but were necessary only by way of setting us an example.

The prophet was of another mind; *The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake.* By this righteousness, not barely by his sufferings, *he will magnify the law and make it honourable* §.——The apostle was of another mind. *GOD sent forth his SON, made of a woman, made under the law.* What? only to bear its curse? only to undergo its penalty? not to fulfil its preceptive part? which is confessedly the principal part in every law; and to enforce which, all penalties are added.—You yourself *ought* to be of another mind. For your have already and truly observed, that pardon and acceptance always go together. "In the same mo-"ment that *GOD* forgives, we are the sons of "*GOD*." And wherefore? the reason is, because

* Sermons by JOHN WESLEY, vol. II. p. 173.

† Job xxiii. 13.

‡ Ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, a proverbial expression, to denote the utmost impossibility. See it explained *Luke* xvi. 17. In this connection, it signifies the absolute certainty of our LORD's declaration, both as to its truth and as to its accomplishment.—If I may borrow the language and the imagery of *Horace*, they will not unfitly express, what is affirmed concerning the law:

Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Immobilem ferient ruinæ.

‖ Ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται. "The word *all*," says Mr *Wesley*, "does "not mean all the law, but all things in the universe." How forced a construction! How contrary to grammar! Since the law, and the things which it comprehends, are the immediate antecedent.—How much more properly and consistently has Dr *Doddridge* explained the passage! "*Till all things*, which the law "requires, or foretells, shall be *effected*. The translation here given, "is most literal, and most comprehensive. The law *has its effect*, "when its sanctions are executed, as well as when its precepts are "obeyed."—Let me add; in case of a violated law, *then only* it is fulfilled, or has its effect, when both the former and the latter respectively obtain their end.

§ Is. xliii. 21. I am sensible, there are expositors, who give a different turn to these noble words. But I had rather take the voice from heaven for my guide, than all the expositors in the world; even that voice, which declared concerning CHRIST, and his work, CHRIST and his righteousness, In these *I am well pleased*. Which is one of the most capital sayings in the Bible, and a clue to lead us into its whole meaning.

* Matth. v. 17. Some expositors would persuade us, that the word πληρωσαι signifies *fully to explain*. This sense I am far from discarding; but in this sense I can by no means acquiesce. It neither gives us the whole, nor the principal part of our LORD's meaning. Let us place the matter in a different light; then I believe the scantiness of the interpretation, and the impropriety of the notion, will appear unto all men.—We will suppose an ungodly person, who has learned from books, the spiritual and extensive import of the divine law. Having a ready utterance, he explains it clearly, properly, fully. Does any mortal say of this lip-practitioner, that he *fulfils the law?* No such thing. A system of precepts can never be fulfilled, without a due and punctual obedience. To open, to adjust, to enforce a set of injunctions, is as far from fulfilling them; as to give a description of a battle and a conquest, are different from fighting the enemy, and gaining the victory.

the ſufferings of a ſinner, and the obedience of a Son, went together in the REDEEMER. And without this union, the redemption of man had not been complete.

"The law required only the alternative, Obey or "die."——Some of your errors are leſs conſiderable; this I take to be a firſt-rate miſtake. According to this ſuppoſition, *Cain* and *Judas*, and all the damned are righteous. Becauſe they *die;* they bear the curſe; they ſuffer everlaſtingly; and thereby conform to one of the law's alternatives.——One of the *law*'s alternatives? No, here I am wrong. It is one of *your* alternatives. The divine law knows no ſuch thing; no law on earth knows any ſuch thing. Sanctions and penalties annexed to a law, are never looked upon as equivalent to obedience, but only as preſervatives from diſobedience. In all the compaſs of your reading, have you ever met with a law, that makes ſuch propoſals to its ſubjects? "Conform to the regulations eſtabliſhed, and you ſhall "enjoy my privileges, you ſhall ſhare my honours. Or, "if you chuſe to violate all my wholeſome inſtitutions, "only ſubmit to the penalty, and you ſhall have an "equal right to the immunities and preferments."

"The law required no man to obey and die too."—But did it not require a tranſgreſſor to obey and die? If not, then tranſgreſſion robs the law of its right, and vacates all obligation to obedience.——Did it not require the SURETY for ſinful man, to obey and die? If the SURETY dies only, he only delivers from puniſhment; but this affords no claim to life, no title to a reward, unleſs you can produce ſome ſuch edict from the court of heaven, Suffer this, and thou ſhalt live. I find it written, *In keeping thy commandments there is a great reward.* No where do I read, In undergoing thy curſe, there is the ſame reward.——Whereas, when we join the active and paſſive obedience of our LORD, the peace-ſpeaking blood, with the life-giving righteouſneſs, both made infinitely meritorious, and infinitely efficacious, by the divine glory of his perſon; how full does our juſtification appear! How firm does it ſtand! It has all that the law can demand, both for our exemption from the curſe, and for our title to bliſs.

Before I take my leave of this topic, let me make one ſuppoſition, for which your way of thinking affords the juſter ground. Suppoſe our LORD JESUS CHRIST had yielded a perfect conformity to the precept, without ever ſubmitting to the penalty; would this have been ſufficient for the juſtification of a ſinner? Here is one of your alternatives performed. Upon the foot of your principles, therefore it would, it muſt have been ſufficient.——But this is ſo wild an opinion, ſo contrary to the whole current of ſcripture, that to produce it, is to refute it.

Where ſcripture aſcribes the whole of our ſalvation to the death of CHRIST, a part of his humiliation is put for the whole. To this Mr *Weſley* objects; "I can-"not allow it without proof."—I wiſh you would remember the golden rule, (of doing as you would be done by), and, ſince you inſiſt upon proof from others, not be ſo ſparing of it in your own cauſe: I wiſh likewiſe you would impartially conſider what *Aſpaſio* has advanced, upon the ſubject.——Has he not given you the proof you demand?—"No; he was obedient unto "death, is no proof at all."—But is that the only thing urged? If one argument is inadequate, muſt all be inconcluſive? Becauſe you have routed one detachment, have you therefore conquered the whole army? However let us ſee, whether this detachment, weak as you ſuppoſe it, may not be able to ſuſtain your attack.

Does not the ſcripture aſcribe the whole of your ſalvation to the death of CHRIST? To this queſtion *Aſpaſio* replies, This part of our *LORD*'s meritorious humiliation is by a very uſual figure put for the whole.——The death of CHRIST includes not only his ſufferings, but his obedience.—The ſhedding of his blood was at once the grand inſtance of his ſufferings, and the finiſhing act of his obedience; in this view it is conſidered, and thus it is repreſented by his own ambaſſador, who ſpeaking of his divine Maſter, ſays, "He was obedient "unto death, even the death of the croſs."—"This," "you reply, "is no proof at all, as it does not neceſ-"ſarily imply any more, than that he died in obedience "to the FATHER."

How do ſome people love to cramp the enlarged, and debaſe the magnificent ſenſe of ſcripture! Surely this text implies; and not implies only, but forcibly expreſſes both the active and paſſive obedience of CHRIST. It is not ἀπεθανεν, *he died;* but γενομενος υπηκοος, *he became obedient.*—Can you ſee nothing of his active righteouſneſs in theſe words? For my part, I can ſee very little beſides. This is what the following clauſe confirms—Let common ſenſe be judge—Obedient, not barely *in* death, but *unto* death, like that expreſſion of JEHOVAH, by the prophet, *Unto hoary hairs I will carry you.* Does not this give us a retroſpect view of youth and manhood, as well as lead your attention forward to old age! In like manner, *obedient unto death;* does not this refer us to all the previous duties and virtues of a righteous walk while it leads us to the cloſing ſcene of all, a reſigned exit? Does it not moſt naturally mean, obedient through the whole courſe of life, even to the laſt all-completing inſtance, a voluntary ſubmiſſion to death?—How eaſy and obvious is this interpretation? how grand and graceful is this meaning!

I can no more admire your taſte (conſidered) as a critic, than I can admire your doctrine (conſidered) as a divine. Give me the expoſitions of ſcripture, which act, not like the nocturnal damp, but like the morning ſun; not ſhrivelling and contracting, but opening and expanding thoſe flowers of paradiſe, the truths of the goſpel, that they may diſplay all their charming beauties, and breathe out all their reviving odours. I think, upon the whole, we have very ſufficient cauſe to aſſent, and to abide by our aſſertion; that when the ſcripture aſcribes the whole of our ſalvation to the death of CHRIST, a part of his humiliation is put for the whole; and in thus ſpeaking, the *HOLY SPIRIT* copies after himſelf. For if the death inflicted on the firſt *Adam* included every evil conſequent upon the fall; the depravity, as well as the miſery of the creature; it was meet that the death to which the ſecond *Adam* ſubmitted, ſhould include every good needful for our recovery; the obedience as well as the ſufferings of the *REDEEMER.* It was meet that the price expreſſed by the ſame word, ſhould be as extenſive as the puniſhment.

"But how does it appear that he undertook this "before the foundation of the world?" At what time does Mr *Weſley* ſuppoſe, that *CHRIST* undertook the work? Not till ſin entered and man apoſtatized; Was it then an incidental (upſtart) expedient, fetched in to remedy ſome unforeſeen diſaſter? Was it a device, which owed its birth to ſome unexpected contingency, occaſioned by the perverſeneſs of the creature? Far, far from it.—It was the grand, original, all-comprehending plan, the way in which *GOD*, long before time commenced, decreed to manifeſt the glory of his grace, and the luſtre of all his perfections. The world was made as a proper theatre, on which to diſplay and execute this moſt magnificent ſcheme; and all the revolutions of human affairs, like ſo many under plots in the drama, are ſubſervient to the accompliſhment of this capital deſign.—"Known unto "*GOD* are all his works," determined by *GOD* are all his counſels, from the beginning of the world, more eſpecially this grandeſt of all the divine diſpenſations;

ſations; this maſter-piece of his unſearchable wiſdom.

"But was this by a poſitive covenant between "CHRIST and the FATHER?" *Aſpaſio* proceeds to illuſtrate and confirm the doctrine of an everlaſting covenant between the almighty FATHER and his coequal SON. He produces ſeveral texts of ſcripture, to each of which you object as inſufficient for his purpoſe: each of your objections I ſhall anſwer, only by adding a ſhort comment, explanatory of their ſpirit and force —"This proves no previous contract;" that is, I deny it, and therefore it cannot prove your point. "Nei-"ther does this prove any ſuch thing." That is, I cannot or will not ſee the proof. And therefore there is none.——"That expreſſion does not neceſſarily imply "any more" than I pleaſe to allow.——"In the way or "method he had choſen;" of which I am the ſole complete judge, and my judgment ought to be deciſive in the caſe.——Thus would Mr *Weſley* have, not *Aſpaſio* only, but the public alſo, receive his dictates (*tanquam a tripode*) as abſolute oracles.——For here is only bare aſſertion, or bare denial, without any vouchers, but his own word; without any authority, but his own declaration.

In *pſalm* the xlth, the conditions of the covenant are circumſtantially recorded, which were the incarnation and obedience of the eternal SON. "A body haſt thou "prepared me—lo! I come to do thy will." Nay, "here is no mention of any covenant, nor any thing "from which it can be inferred." *How many times ſhall I adjure thee*, ſaid *Ahab* to *Micaiah*, *that thou tell me nothing but that which is true?* And how many times ſhall I entreat Mr *Weſley* to object nothing, without aſſigning ſome reaſon for his objection; at leaſt not to think of convincing my judgment, and converting me to his opinion by a bare *ſay ſo*.——But I have done—Perhaps I have treſpaſſed upon the patience of the reader, in expreſſing my diſappointment ſo frequently; perhaps I may alſo bear too hard upon Mr *Weſley* in aſking for proofs, when it may be no ſmall difficulty to produce them. To return—"Nay here is no mention of any "covenant, nor any thing from which it can be infer-"red."——That the word *covenant* is not mentioned, is very true; that there is no reference to any ſuch thing, is not ſo certain: let us conſider the whole paſſage.—— "Sacrifice and burnt-offering thou didſt not require." If ſacrifice and ſlain beaſts are not the object of the divine complacency, in what will the LORD delight? The next words declare, "A body haſt thou prepared me:" Since the law cannot be fulfilled without *doing*, nor juſtice ſatisfied without *dying*, "lo! I come," ſays the ſecond perſon in the TRINITY, "to undertake both: "ſince this undertaking muſt be accompliſhed by ONE "who is finite, that he may die; and infinite, that he "may conquer death; I will accompliſh it in the divine "and human nature. For this purpoſe a body haſt "thou prepared me; in this body lo! I come, willing-"ly and chearfully I come, to perform, to ſuſtain, to "fulfil all; and ſo to do thy great, thy gracious will." ——May we not rationally ſuppoſe this ſpoken by way of (reſtipulation, or) compliance with the FATHER's demands? that the matter is thereby brought to a ſolemn contract?

Dr *Hammond* thought this no irrational ſuppoſition; therefore gives us, upon the following words, a perfectly-correſponding comment. In the volume of the book it is written of me. "Which is no other than a "bill, or roll of contract between the FATHER and "CHRIST; wherein is ſuppoſed to be written the "agreement, preparatory to that great work of "CHRIST's incarnation, wherein he, undertaking to "fulfil the will of GOD, to perform all active, and alſo "all paſſive obedience, even unto death, had the pro-"miſe from GOD, that he ſhould become the author of "eternal ſalvation to all that obey him."

Thus ſays our learned countryman. And what ſays the bleſſed apoſtle? whoſe expoſition and application of the paſſage you ſeem to have forgotten, at leaſt, not to have thoroughly weighed. Having quoted the paſſage, argued from it, and diſplayed the benefits obtained by this all-ſufficient propitiation, he adduces a text from *Jeremiah* relating to this very ſubject, and explaining its nature: whereof the HOLY GHOST alſo is a witneſs; of what? of the juſtification and ſanctification of ſinners, both founded on, both effected by, the ſacrifice of the dying JESUS. Tranſactions, which both the prophet and the apoſtle conſider under the notion of a covenant, as is plain from the following quotation; "For after that he had ſaid before, This is the cove-"nant which I will make with them in thoſe days."—Hence it appears, that the author to the *Hebrews* ſaw ſomething in the words of the pſalmiſt, from which the doctrine of a covenant might be inferred.

Another copy of this grand treaty is recorded, *Iſ.* xlix. from the firſt to the ſixth verſe. "I have read them, "but cannot find a word about it in all thoſe verſes; "they contain neither more nor leſs than a prediction "of the ſalvation of the Gentiles." They contain a prediction, and ſomewhat more; they deſcribe the way whereby this moſt deſirable event ſhall be brought to paſs. This the LORD himſelf declares ſhall be by way of covenant; "I will give thee for a covenant to the "people."——This verſe we may look upon as a key to the preceding. It teaches us to conſider them as deſcriptive of the auguſt covenant; of its eſtabliſhment, its parties, and its terms. Indeed the verſes themſelves lead us to the ſame view; for what is a covenant? A contract, wherein a condition is preſcribed, a promiſe is made, and both are ratified by a mutual agreement.—— The condition is preſcribed in thoſe words, *Thou art my ſervant, O Iſrael**, *in whom I will be glorified*. The promiſe is made in thoſe words, *Thou ſhalt raiſe up the tribes of Jacob, reſtore the preſerved of Iſrael, and be my ſalvation unto the ends of the earth*. The agreement is ſpecified or implied in thoſe words; (*I have ſpent my ſtrength for nought, yet ſurely my judgment is with the* LORD, *and my work with my* GOD.

The great *Vitringa*, after having expounded the whole clauſe, concludes in this manner: "Antequam ab his "verbis, ſenſu fœcundiſſimis, ſummam doctrinæ evan-"gelicæ complexis, diſcedam, monere velim, eadem "clariſſime deformare totum myſterium conventionis "pacis, inter Deum patrem et Meſſiam filium ejus, in "humana carne appariturum, initæ, perinde ac in locis "quæ ex aliis excerpo, *Pſal.* xl. 7. *Zech.* vii. 13. Pa-"ter ut Dominus, filio ut Meſſiæ, offert gloriam longe "ampliſſimam, mediationis et ſalvationis Judæorum et "Gentium, quæ gloria, omnium quæ mente concipi "poſſunt, eſt maxima, ſub lege ſive ſub conditione pro-"fundiſſimi obſequii ſervilis; eaque ſtipulatio utrinque "ratihabetur †."

If upon a ſtricter review, this prophecy be found

* *Iſrael* is the name of the church, often given to her in this prophecy. CHRIST and his church, by virtue of the union between them, have the ſame names. As ſhe is ſometimes called by his name, "The LORD our righteouſneſs;"—ſo he is here called by her name *Iſrael*. See *Jer.* xxxiii. 16.

† *Vitring. in loc. Before I leave this paragraph, which is ſo rich in ſenſe, and contains the very ſubſtance of evangelical doctrine, I would obſerve, that it moſt clearly and exactly delineates the myſterious counſel of peace, planned between GOD the FATHER, and his divine SON. The FATHER as ſupreme LORD, offers to his SON the MESSIAH the higheſt glory, that which ſhall reſult from juſtifying, ſanctifying, and ſaving, with an everlaſting ſalvation, both Jews and Gentiles. This glory, the greateſt which thought can conceive, is propoſed on the terms, or under the condition of his deep humiliation, even to the ſtate and obedience of a ſervant. The whole paſſes into a ſolemn contract, and is ratified on either ſide.*

Here our author ſubjoins an extract from משנה תורה a rabbinical treatiſe. Which is very remarkable; for ſuch a writer, ſingu-

to expreſs no ſuch thing as a covenant, I am very willing to give up the proof; ſo much the rather as it makes no part of *Aſpaſio*'s diſcourſe, is only juſt mentioned in a note, and ſtands not in the main body, but only as a corps de reſerve.

By the covenant of works, man was bound to obey in his own perſon.——Here you take *Aſpaſio* up very ſhort, and reply, "So he is under the covenant of grace, "though not in order to juſtification."——This is the very thing he means. Nor could you eaſily have miſtaken his meaning, if you had only done him ſo ſmall a piece of juſtice as to read the whole paragraph; of which, ſince you ſeem either willingly, or through inadvertence, to be ignorant, I will beg leave to tranſcribe it: —"Between the covenant of works, and the covenant "of grace, this I apprehend is the difference. By the "former, man was indiſpenſably bound to obey in his "own perſon; by the latter, the obedience of his SU-"RETY is accepted inſtead of his own.——The righ-"teouſneſs required by both, is not ſincere, but complete; "not proportioned to the abilities of fallen man, but to "the purity of the law, and the majeſty of the LAW-"GIVER." You ſee the whole argument turns upon a *complete* righteouſneſs, ſuch as ſatisfies the law, and is an adequate ground for juſtification. This, I imagine, fallen man is not obliged, by the covenant of grace, to perform; if ſo, we ſhall be at a loſs to find any ſuch thing as grace; if ſo, we can have no hope of obtaining ſalvation with eternal glory. There will be too much reaſon for applying, to all mankind, thoſe awful words of the prophet; *In the day thou mayſt make thy plant to grow, and in the morning thou mayſt make thy ſeed to flouriſh; but the harveſt ſhall be a heap, in the day of grief and deſperate ſorrow.*

Bleſſed be GOD, the melancholy ſtrain is ſuperſeded. —Though the terms in the firſt covenant were a perfect obedience, though the terms once fixed continue unalterable; yet, in the new covenant, there is a change and ſubſtitution as to the performer, without any relaxation as to the performance. Inſtead of perſonal obedience, we are juſtified through the obedience of our MEDIATOR, *We are* made *the righteouſneſs of* GOD *in him.* That is, we are furniſhed with a plea, as prevalent for our juſtification and admiſſion into the divine favour, as if we had retained our innocence untainted; and, in every reſpect, conformed ourſelves to the righteouſneſs which the law of GOD requires *.——Thus the ſalvation of ſinners neither claſhes with the truth, nor interferes with the juſtice of the ſupreme LEGISLATOR.—On the contrary, it becomes a *faithful* and *juſt* procedure of the moſt high GOD, to juſtify *him that believeth on* JESUS.

The obedience of our Surety is accepted inſtead of our own. "This is neither a ſafe, nor a ſcriptural way "of ſpeaking."—That the obedience of CHRIST is accepted for our juſtification, is a doctrine warranted by ſcripture; it may therefore very juſtly be reckoned a ſcriptural way of ſpeaking. And if *his* obedience is accepted for this purpoſe, *our own*, was it ever ſo conſiderable, could come in for no ſhare of the work. Our own, though ever ſo gorgeouſly arrayed, muſt ſtand aſide, or be caſt into ſhades, juſt as the ſtars hide their diminiſhed, or rather extinguiſhed heads, when the ſun appears in his meridian ſplendour, becauſe the obedience of CHRIST is of infinite dignity and value. And infinite value is ſuch, as not only tranſcends all other ſervices, but renders them mere nothings in the compariſon. For this reaſon, the apoſtle counted all endowments but *loſs* for CHRIST, and the prophet repreſents all nations as nothing before GOD.

"I would ſimply ſay, We are accepted through the "Beloved."—If you rightly underſtood what is meant, when the apoſtle ſpeaks of being accepted in the BELOVED, you would have no fault to find with *Aſpaſio*'s comment. St *Paul* means we are accepted, not by any obedience performed in our own perſons, but ſolely by the obedience of that infinitely-excellent, and infinitely-beloved ONE CHRIST JESUS, whoſe righteouſneſs being imputed to us, and put upon us, cauſes us not only to be pardoned, but to be highly eſteemed, dearly beloved, and bleſſed with all ſpiritual bleſſings.

Here I cannot but obſerve, that you have changed the apoſtle's expreſſion. He ſays, "Accepted * *in* the "Beloved;" you ſay, "Accepted *through* the Belov-"ed." I am willing to believe this was an overſight, you had no ſiniſter deſign; but ſtill I think you ſhould take more heed to your pen, and not alter the inſpired word, leſt you blemiſh the language, or injure the ſenſe. Perhaps you will aſk, What difference is there between accepted *through*, and accepted *in*, the Beloved? I will illuſtrate the difference by a ſimilitude. A creditable houſekeeper gives a good character to a ſervant that leaves him, by virtue of which he is accepted, and admitted to ſome other valuable employ. This character is his introduction, yet this makes no addition to his real value. Acceptance through the Beloved, may import no more, than ſuch an admiſſion through ſuch a recommendation. Whereas, accepted *in* the Beloved, implies not only a recommendatory paſſport from CHRIST, but a real union with CHRIST, whereby we are incorporated into his ſacred body, and partake as truly of his righteouſneſs, as the members partake of the life which animates the head. By this our perſons are really ennobled; this imparts the higheſt dignity to our nature. We are not only recommended to, but rendered meet for, the favour, the complacency, the beatific preſence of GOD, being one with JESUS, and therefore loved even as JESUS himſelf is loved †.

The ſecond covenant was not made with *Adam* or any of his poſterity, but with CHRIST in thoſe words. "For any authority you have from theſe words, you "might as well have ſaid, it was made with the HOLY "GHOST."—No; CHRIST, not the HOLY GHOST, was the ſeed of the woman.—This is an anſwer much in your own ſtrain.—But let us conſider farther.

ſingularly juſt; one of the moſt curious, as well as valuable pieces of *Jewiſh* antiquities that ever fell in my way. I believe it will afford no unpleaſing entertainment, perhaps ſome ſpiritual benefit to the reader. For which cauſe I take leave to tranſcribe it.— "GOD began to enter into a covenant with the MESSIAH, and "ſaid, MESSIAH, my righteous one, the ſins of thy choſen peo-"ple are likely to bring thee into a ſtate of great toil and extreme "affliction; thy lips ſhall taſte gall, thy tongue ſhall cleave to the "roof of thy mouth, thy body ſhall be waſted with ſorrow and "ſighing. Is thy love to thy people inviolable? Art thou wil-"ling to reſcue them on theſe conditions? If thou undertakeſt "their recovery, well; if not, they are rejected from this mo-"ment, and periſh for ever.—To this MESSIAH replied, LORD "of eternity, I am pleaſed with the office, I accept theſe condi-"tions: and am willing to undergo all tribulation, that my people "may enjoy a reſurrection (to the life of grace and the life of "glory.)—Then ſaid the holy, bleſſed GOD, Be it ſo. Imme-"diately the MESSIAH took upon him our miſeries, as it is writ-"ten in the book of the prophet *Iſaiah*, He was oppreſſed and he "was afflicted."

* 2 *Cor.* v. 21. This is Dr *Doddridge*'s interpretation of the paſſage; and it ſpeaks a noble, a joyful truth, only it does not expreſs the whole truth. The righteouſneſs of GOD is more than equivalent to untainted innocency; is more than tantamount to the moſt perfect human obedience. It is a righteouſneſs of infinite worth, far ſurpaſſing the integrity of *Adam* in paradiſe, or the ſanctity of angels in heaven. It is a gift, incomparably, yea, incomprehenſibly great, efficacious, glorious.

* Εχαριτωσεν ημας εν τω Ηγαπημενω.

† *John* xvii. 23. They *in* me, ſays our LORD. Therefore, on this account, or viewed in this relation, *thou haſt loved them, as thou haſt loved me.*

You

You allow, I presume, that the first covenant was made with *Adam*, as our public fœderal head: That all his posterity were included in it, being to stand or fall together with him: Herein, says the apostle, "*Adam* was "a figure of him that was to come." If so, the second covenant must be made with CHRIST, as our public fœderal head. He and all his seed are included in it; and as it was impossible for him to miscarry, they must be joint partakers of the benefits. Accordingly, he is styled the MEDIATOR of the new covenant, by whose most acceptable and prevailing interposition, all its blessings are obtained; he is styled the Surety of the covenant, engaging to pay the whole debt for poor insolvent creatures; the debt of penal suffering, and the debt of perfect obedience.——The Testator of the covenant, whose are its riches, and whose are its privileges, who has also of his unbounded goodness bequeathed them as so many inestimable legacies to indigent men. Methinks those are such charming truths, such divinely-comfortable doctrines, that you should consider them thoroughly before you oppose them, lest you do a greater act of unkindness to your readers, than that which is charged, though very injuriously, upon *Job*: *Thou hast stripped the naked of their cloathing, and sent widows away empty.* And when you are disposed to consider these points thoroughly, ask yourself this question: Is it possible to conceive that CHRIST should be the MEDIATOR, the Surety, the Testator of the covenant, if it was not made with him, and the execution of it undertaken by him?—Or, is it possible to suppose, that the all-glorious SON of GOD should be the MEDIATOR, the Surety, the Testator of the covenant, yet leave others to perform the conditions; which are incomparably the most important, interesting, and difficult parts of the transaction?

"These words were not spoken to *CHRIST*, but of "him." True, *of* him as given for a covenant of the people. "There is not the least intimation of any such "covenant." You will not deny that CHRIST is signified by *the seed of the woman.* It is said, *He shall;* a language expressing authority, and requiring conformity. As *CHRIST* is the supreme uncontrollable GOD, this could not be required; and would never have been said, without his actual consent: here then is implied his approbation of the office. It is farther said, The serpent shall bruise his heel.—He shall become incarnate, and after a life of much sorrow, and many tribulations, shall be put to a most tormenting death. Here is the condition of the covenant. It is added, He shall bruise the serpent's head; shall destroy the works of the devil, and repair the ruins of the fall; shall deliver from the wrath deserved, and recover the inheritance forfeited. Here is the recompence or reward of the covenant.

Should you ask, Is it supposable that *Adam* understood the words in this compass of meaning? Perhaps not. But if we do not understand them in a more exalted and extensive sense than our first father, what advantage do we reap from the full revelation of the gospel? The full revelation of the gospel pours as much light upon this, and other of the ancient oracles, as the experiments of our modern anatomists have poured upon the structure and œconomy of the human body. ——This grand original text, read with the comment of the New Testament, speaks all that *Aspasio* has suggested; all that our fallen state could want, or our very hearts can wish.

You have mustered up several objections, yet there is room for more; I will therefore for once act as your auxiliary, and turn against *Aspasio*. "He supposes the "covenant to be made with CHRIST. Whereas the "scripture represents the covenant as made with va-"rious men, particularly and personally, in various "ages."—True, it is recorded, that *GOD* made a covenant with *Abraham*, with *Isaac*, with *Jacob*, and with *David* the father of *Solomon*; but were they in a capacity to enter into covenant with their Maker; to stand for themselves, or be surety for others? I think not. The passages mean no more, than the *LORD*'s manifesting in an especial manner, the grand covenant to them; ratifying and confirming their personal interest in it; and farther assuring them, that *CHRIST*, the great covenant-head, should be of themselves, and spring from their seed.

This accounts for that remarkable and singular mode of expression, which often occurs in scripture; *I will make a covenant with them*; or, *This is my covenant with them.* Yet there follows no mention of any conditions, only a promise of unconditional blessings; because the former have already been performed, and nothing remains but to confer the latter; so that the meaning of the divine Speaker is, I will admit them to an interest in this covenant, and make them partakers of its privileges.

I should now conclude, but Mr *Wesley* will not suffer me to quit the subject. He farther insists, "The words "manifestly contain, if not a covenant made with, a "promise made to *Adam* and all his posterity."—*If not*—He begins to hesitate in his assertion; to fluctuate in his opinion; and I could hope, to see his mistake.—— "The words contain a promise."—And have you never read, that the covenant of *GOD*, or the various renewals and ratifications of the covenant of grace, are styled *covenants of promise?* which consist of pure promises, and dispense free gifts?

Observe the tenor of the new covenant, as it stands ingrossed by the pen of inspiration. *This is the covenant, which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the LORD; I will put my laws into their mind, and on their hearts will I write them: and I will be to them a GOD, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for all shall know me, from the least of them, even unto the greatest of them. For I will be merciful unto their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.* Where are your conditions in this draught? Where are any terms required of impotent man? Is it not all promise, from the beginning to the end? That repentance, and that faith, for whose conditionality you plead, are they not both comprehended in this heavenly deed? and comprehended under the form of blessings vouchsafed, not of tasks enjoined? Does the contract run in this manner? I require and command; or in this strain? I grant and bestow. The *LORD* says, *I will put my laws; I will write them.* The work shall not be laid on my creatures, but done by myself. *They shall be my people, and I will remember their sins no more.* What? provided they perform such and such duties. I read no such clause. I see no such proviso.—All is absolutely free; dependent on no performance of ours; but flowing from sovereign, supreme, self-influenced goodness.

Just such is that delightful declaration, *I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me.*—What you call conditions must be comprised in *my fear.* This is represented as a singular benefit, which *GOD* imparts; as a gracious temper, which *GOD* implants; and both as dependent, not on the fidelity of man, but on the power and veracity of GOD.——Another of your conditions, I presume, is perseverance unto the end. This, in the covenant of grace, is not enjoined, but secured; secured, not by a strict prohibition of apostasy, but by the omnipotent interposition of *JEHOVAH. I will put my fear;* so put my fear into their hearts, *that they shall not depart from me;* shall never draw back unto perdition.—Thus the covenant becomes not transient, but everlasting. Thus the promise is not precarious, but sure to all the seed.

There ſeems to be as great a difference betwe en this evangelical, and your legal method of ſtating the covenant; between ſuſpending the benefits on human endeavours, and grounding them on divine agency, as between hanging the anchor on the top of the maſt, and fixing it at the bottom of the ſea.

Let me add one more text, which now occurs to my thoughts, *Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, ſaying unto Abraham, And in thy ſeed ſhall all the kindreds of the earth be bleſſed* *. Here the covenant is firſt mentioned in general; then particularly ſpecified.——*In thy ſeed ſhall all the kindreds of the earth*—be laid under conditions? be obliged to execute terms? No; but *ſhall be bleſſed*; bleſſed with all bleſſings, temporal, ſpiritual, eternal.——*In thy ſeed*; —that is, in *CHRIST*,—without any regard to qualifications or deeds of their own; entirely by virtue of an intereſt in his conſummately-excellent actions, and conſummately-precious ſufferings.——Then the apoſtle ſingles out one ſpecial and diſtinguiſhed bleſſing of the covenant; a converſion from *darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to the ſervice of GOD*; or, as it is expreſſed in the following verſe, *a turning from all iniquity*. ——This is ſtill exhibited to our contemplation, as the fruit of the covenant of grace; as the thing for which it makes proviſion, not introductory to, but conſequent upon, our participation of it.

If therefore, in ſpeaking of holineſs and obedience, we repreſent them as the promiſes, rather than the demands of the covenant, we evidently follow the apoſtle's example. Were we to take the contrary courſe, we ſhould act as prudently as the ſportſman, who entering his horſe for a plate, chuſes to have him walk backwards, rather than run forwards: Would this increaſe his ſpeed? Would this help him to outſtrip his rivals? or enable him to win the prize?—Shall we, in order to avoid the charge of *Antinomianiſm*, ruſh into this abſurdity? I am perſuaded you could not wiſh to ſee ſo egregious a piece of folly, even in your enemy; much leſs in,

Your, &c.

* Acts iii. 25.

LETTER IX.

REV. SIR,

I Wiſh you would conſider with ſome attention, that emphatical memento of the apoſtle, *Since ye knew the grace of GOD in truth.* Here he intimates, that we may have a knowledge of grace, which is not genuine; not free from corrupt mixture, not true.—It may be ſo diſcoloured with error, or blended with ſo much of the law, as no longer to appear like itſelf.—The language of ſuch perſons, is ſomewhat like the language of the *Iſraelites*, after their return from captivity, who ſpoke neither the *Hebrew*, nor the Heatheniſh dialect; but expreſſed themſelves half in the ſpeech of *Aſhdod*, and half in the ſpeech of *Zion*.

It is true, ſays *Aſpaſio*, I cannot perform the conditions.—"It is not true," ſays Mr *Weſley*. This is pretty blunt, and pretty bold too; for it is, in effect, affirming, that a man dead in treſpaſſes and ſins is able to perform conditions. Mr *Weſley* is not aware, that "*CHRIST* "ſtrengthening us," is one of the benefits of the covenant, comprehended in theſe words, *I will put my laws into their minds.*

"The conditions of the new covenant are, Repent "and believe." It has been already ſhewn, that they are repreſented by the *HOLY GHOST*, not as conditions, but as bleſſings; not as conditions required, but as bleſſings beſtowed; not as conditions on which depends the accompliſhment of the covenant; but as happy fruits, or precious effects, of the covenant; made, and making good to ſinners, who are wholly without ſtrength.

'Tis equally true, ſays *Aſpaſio*, this is not required at my hands. "'Tis equally true," ſays Mr *Weſley*, "that "is abſolutely falſe."—This is, doubtleſs, a *home*-thruſt. —It behoves us to provide ſome armour of proof for our defence; and this the ſcripture furniſhes abundantly. It furniſhes us with more than *robur et æs triplex*. The ſcripture ſets forth juſtification, ſalvation, and all bleſſedneſs, as things perfectly free; detached from all works; dependant on no conditions, but the gifts of ſovereign goodneſs, and infinitely-rich grace.

Though you, Sir, treat *Aſpaſio* in ſo unceremonious a manner, we will be more complaiſant; you ſhall receive ſuch entertainment from us, as the king of *Babylon*'s ambaſſadors received from *Hezekiah*. We will, on this occaſion, ſhew you *the houſe of our precious things, the ſilver and the gold, the ſpices and the precious ointment, and* if not *all*, yet ſome of *the houſe of our armour* *.

We are ſaved, that is, we have all the benefits of the new covenant—By grace—*By grace ye are ſaved.*——*It is of grace, and no more of works.*——*Who hath ſaved us, not according to our works, but according to his purpoſe and grace* *.

Freely—*Being juſtified freely.*——*The things that are freely given to us of GOD.*——*Whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely* †.

By way of gift—*If thou kneweſt the gift of GOD.*—— *The gift of GOD is eternal life.*—*The free gift came upon all men, to juſtification of life* ‡.

Without the law——*The righteouſneſs of GOD without the law.*——*That we might be juſtified, not by the works of the law.*——*If the inheritance were of the law* ‖.

Not by works—*Not of works, but of him that calleth us.* ——*Not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us.*——*Not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law* §.

By righteouſneſs, not performed, but imputed—— *Faith* (in *CHRIST*, as our all) *is imputed for righteouſneſs.* ——*GOD imputeth righteouſneſs without works.*——*To whom it* (that is, the merit of a dying and riſing *SAVIOUR*) *ſhall be imputed* ¶.

Not by guiltleſs behaviour, but by remiſſion of ſins— *Bleſſed are they whoſe iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered.*—*GOD was in CHRIST, reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.*——*To give knowledge of ſalvation by the remiſſion of their ſins* ⸸.

Not each by himſelf, but all by one—*They ſhall reign in life, by one CHRIST JESUS. By the obedience of one, ſhall many be made righteous. By one offering, he hath perfected for ever thoſe that are ſanctified* +.

By faith alone—*Being juſtified by faith. A man is juſtified by faith, without the deeds of the law. Through him, all that believe are juſtified from all things* ++.

Not on account of faith, as a condition performed; but on account of CHRIST, the pearl of ineſtimable price; which faith receives, applies, and uſes.—*Who has* by himſelf *purged away our ſins, by himſelf finiſhed our tranſgreſſions, made reconciliation for our iniquities, and brought in an everlaſting righteouſneſs* =.

This is the doctrine of ſcripture. Becauſe it is of the greateſt importance, you ſee, with what care it is ſtated, and with what copiouſneſs diſplayed, with what zeal it is urged, and with what vigilance guard-

* 2 Kings xx. 13.

* Eph. ii. 5. Rom. x. 6. 2 Tim. i. 9. † Rom. iii. 34 1 Cor. ii. 12. Rev. xxii. 19. ‡ John iv. 10. Rom. vi. 23. v. 18. ‖ Rom. iii. 21. Gal. ii. 16. iii. 18. § Rom. ix. 11. Tit. iii. 5. Phil. iii. 9. ¶ Rom. iv. 5. 6. 23. 24. 25. ⸸ Pſal. xxxii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 19. Luke i. 77. + Rom. v. 17. 18. 19. Heb. x. 14. ++ Rom. v. 1. iii. 28. Acts xiii. 39. = Heb. i. 3. Dan. ix. 24.

ed.—

ed.—How ſolicitouſly the ſacred writers uſe every form of ſpeech that may exclude all human works; may ſet aſide all conditions and pre-requiſites, in order to ſuperſede all glorying, and aſcribe the whole of our juſtification to the free grace of GOD, and the ſole merits of CHRIST.

After all theſe teſtimonies of ſcripture, ſhall we ſtill maintain that the covenant of grace conſiſts of conditions; depends upon conditions; is ſuch as we cannot expect to have made good till certain conditions are, by us, duly and truly fulfilled? *Dagon* may as well ſtand in the preſence of the ark, as ſuch a notion in the face of theſe evangelical texts.

All, all is free to us ſinners, though it was not free to CHRIST our SAVIOUR.——He paid the price; he performed the conditions. If you would know what *price* was paid; what *conditions* were performed, and on what *terms* we inherit the bleſſing; you, Sir, may receive information from Mr *John Weſley*, who ſays in his comment, "All the bleſſings of the new covenant are "ſecured to us by the one offering of CHRIST."—— According to this commentator, they are not only procured for us, but *ſecured* to us. How could either of theſe be true,—much more, how could the latter be fact, —if the bleſſings, were ſuſpended on any performance or any acquiſition of ours? If I am not to enjoy them *until* I diſcharge this or that duty, they are not procured for me; if I am not to enjoy them *unleſs* I become poſſeſſed of this or that quality, they are not ſecured to me; not ſecured to me, as the eſtate is to an heir, even whilſt he is a minor, but only as the prize is to a racer, in caſe, by exerting his ſpeed and his ſtrength, he arrives firſt at the goal; which was never yet called ſecurity, but allowed to be mere uncertainty.

As to this point, *others* may receive information from the prophet *Zechariah*. *By the blood of thy covenant, I have ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit, wherein was no water*. Thy priſoners*, thoſe wretched creatures, who were in a ſtate of guilt, and under the ſentence of death; ſubject to the tyranny of the devil, and liable to the damnation of hell. In this diſmal ſtate they were, as in a *pit* unfathomably deep; from which there ſeemed no poſſibility of eſcape, nor any method of deliverance: A pit, in which there is *no water*, nothing but abſolute miſery, without a gleam of hope, or a drop of comfort. *I have ſent them forth* into a place of liberty; where they obtain pardon, and enjoy peace, are ſatisfied with the plenteouſneſs of my houſe, and drink of my pleaſures as out of a river. All this, by the *blood of thy covenant*.—Blood was the righteous term, blood was the dreadful requirement, even that infinitely-precious blood of CHRIST, on which the covenant of our freedom was eſtabliſhed, and by which its rich bleſſings are procured. Which is called *thy covenant* †, *O daughter of Zion*, thou church of the firſt-born, becauſe it was made in thy name; made with thy divine Surety, and for thy unſpeakable good.

This is not only falſe, but "moſt dangerouſly falſe. "——If we allow this, Antinomianiſm comes in with "a full tide." Pray, Sir, what do you mean by *Antinomianiſm?* ſuch a contrariety to the law, as debaſes its dignity; deprives it of its proper honour and proper end ‡?

Surely then, not *Aſpaſio*'s, but Mr *Weſley*'s tenets, are chargeable with this kind of heterodoxy; ſince they would cauſe the law to be put off with a mite, when millions of talents are its due;—oblige it to be content with errant deficiency, when the moſt ſinleſs obedience, and the moſt exalted perfection are what it demands.

Do you mean by *Antinomianiſm*, ſuch a contrariety to the law, as diſregards its duties, and violates its precepts? Then the apoſtle *Paul* ſhall reply, *The grace of GOD, which bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared unto all men; teaching us, that, denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly.*——*The grace of* GOD, his infinitely-free favour, of which we have a ſpecimen in the preceding texts, which ſcorns to be ſhackled with conditions, or meanly dependent on human endeavours.——This grace, requiring nothing of the creature, but *bringing ſalvation*, ſpiritual and eternal ſalvation, finiſhed by the incarnate CREATOR, and free for the chiefeſt of ſinners. This grace being revealed in the goſpel, being diſcerned by faith, and thus appearing in luſtre, and with power, to *all men*—to men of every rank, every age, every character; making no difference between the ſervant and his maſter, between the ruddy ſtripling and the hoary ſire; between the the vile proſtitute and the chaſte veſtal, but opening its inexhauſtible treaſures, to be received by one as well as the other—This grace does what? "Cauſe Antino-"mianiſm," or practical ungodlineſs, "to come in with "a full tide?" Quite the reverſe.—It repreſſes it like an immoveable barrier. It *teaches us to deny* *, to renounce ungodlineſs, *all ungodlineſs*; not only external groſs abominations, but *worldly luſts* alſo, every vitious inclination, and every irregular deſire. Farther, it teaches us to live *ſoberly*, with regard to ourſelves, *righteouſly* towards our neighbours, and *godly* to our great CREATOR.

The original word is particularly beautiful and ſignificant; it is not τασσει, *preſcribeth*, by way of rule, nor επιλασσει, *enjoineth*, by way of authority; but παιδευουσα, *teacheth*, by way of inſtruction, pointeth out the effectual method of obeying the precepts, and conforming to the rule. A tyrant may command his ſlave to write, or make a proficiency in writing. A kind tutor forms him to it, ſhews him how to do it, and renders, what otherwiſe would be an irkſome, perhaps an impracticable taſk, both eaſy and pleaſant.—So this grace, clearly manifeſted in the underſtanding, and cordially apprehended by the will, renders every duty of holineſs both practicable and pleaſant; it gives us a heart and a hand, and ability to exerciſe ourſelves unto univerſal godlineſs.

CHRIST has performed all that was conditionary for me, ſays *Aſpaſio*. "Has he repented and believed "for you?" ſays Mr *Weſley*; a queſtion already anſwered in the dialogues.—"No;" replies Mr *Weſley*, "not "anſwered, but evaded. He performed all that was "conditionary in the covenant of works, is nothing to "the purpoſe; for we are not talking of that, but of "the covenant of grace." Give me leave to tell you, Sir, that you are greatly miſtaken here; we are talking, at leaſt we ought to be talking, of the covenant of works, when we talk of the covenant which CHRIST came under. It was a covenant of works to him, which, by his execution of it, became a covenant of grace for us. He became anſwerable for our debt; the debt was exacted, without the leaſt abatement. In this reſpect, GOD *ſpared not his own Son*. And is not this the tenor, are not ſuch the effects of a covenant of works?

CHRIST is called the *Surety of a better covenant*; that is, a ſurety provided and admitted by a better covenant: in this peculiarity, infinitely momentous

* Zech. ix. 11.

† *Thy covenant.* The words are not addreſſed to CHRIST, but to his church. As the *Hebrew* תך being in the feminine gender intimates.

‡ The end of the commanding law is righteouſneſs, *Rom.* x. 4. The end of the violated law is puniſhment, *Gal.* iii. 10. Both theſe ends are anſwered by the interpoſition of an obedient and crucified REDEEMER, but on no other ſcheme, and in no other manner whatever.

* The word is αρνησαμενοι, which does not ſignify, to aboliſh totally, or to deſtroy utterly; but to diſavow and renounce, to refuſe admittance, or not to yield compliance. There may be, even in the regenerate, ſome remainders of ungodlineſs; but, influenced by grace, they will conſtantly turn a deaf ear to its ſolicitations, or reſolutely ſay nay to its demands.

and

and comfortable, the new covenant is better; becauſe it brings in a ſubſtitute, to diſcharge what was contracted under the old, which neither provided, nor allowed, nor knew any ſuch thing.——It is written, CHRIST *was made under the law*, therefore not under a covenant of grace. If you can ſhew me, in the conſtruction of the law, any hint of faith in the merits of another, or any mention of repentance unto life, I will retract my opinion, that CHRIST performed whatever was conditionary; I will do honour to thoſe genteel expreſſions, and ſubmit to thoſe cogent arguments, "'Tis not "true—'Tis nothing to the purpoſe—'Tis abſolutely "falſe."

"If CHRIST's perfect obedience be ours, we have "no more need of pardon than CHRIST himſelf. "The conſequence is good, you have ſtarted an objec- "tion which you cannot anſwer."——It is anſwered in the dialogues;—whether in a ſatisfactory, or inſufficient manner, the reader muſt determine.——But ſuppoſe we admit the conſequence; it implies no more than the apoſtle affirms—*By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* Let me tranſcribe your own * explication of this paſſage.——"He hath done" (obſerve, you yourſelf ſpeak of CHRIST's doing, in this place *only* of CHRIST's doing; yet I would not be ſo injurious to your good ſenſe, as to imagine that you exclude his *ſuffering*) "all that was needful, in order to "their full reconciliation with GOD." This expoſition I approve, as far as it goes; only you have omitted one very weighty circumſtance, comprehended in the word "ever;" by this doing and ſuffering, believers are fully and perfectly reconciled, not for a day only, or for any particular time, but *for ever*. The pardon is irrevocable; the bleſſing unalienable. Not like the *moon*, which now waxes, and anon wanes; but like the *ſun*, which is always the ſame; ever ſhines with the ſame plenitude of rays; and needs only to appear, in order to appear unchangeably bright.

This reminds me of a more direct anſwer to your difficulty. The repeated pardon, which believers implore, is only a witneſs bearing to the truth, or a repeated manifeſtation of it to our conſciences.——Will you find fault with this doctrine? Might you not, for the very ſame reaſon, ſay, if the atonement of CHRIST's death was abſolutely perfect, there could be no need of his interceſſion at GOD's right hand? Yes, for the actual application of the great atonement, and the continual communication of its happy fruits, this interceſſion is neceſſary. So, though our juſtification is complete, though our ſins have all been laid upon our LORD, and are not to be done away by ſome duties of our own, but already done away by the *ſacrifice of* HIMSELF; yet the application of this bleſſing, the revelation of it to our hearts, is daily, hourly, inceſſantly needful. Therefore he ſaith, ſpeaking of his vineyard the church, *I will water it every moment.*——Whereby? in what manner? what ſpiritual bleſſings correſpond with watering the thirſty ſoil?—The diſcovery of complete pardon, of complete acceptance, of complete ſalvation in CHRIST. This will make the ſoul like a watered garden;—this will cauſe joy and holineſs to bloſſom as a roſe.

Both the branches of the law, the preceptive and the penal, in the caſe of guilt contracted, muſt be ſatisfied. "Not ſo."—If not, one of them muſt paſs unſatisfied and unfulfilled. Whereas, our LORD declares, that *heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, ſooner than one jot or one tittle of the law ſhall fail* of its accompliſhment. Will you undertake to prove, either that the preceptive, or elſe that the penal part of the law, does not conſtitute ſo much as one jot or one tittle of its contents? Then, and then only, your aſſertion may conſiſt with our LORD's declaration. This will be an undertaking as adventurous as your next is diſingenuous.

"Not ſo; CHRIST, by his death alone" (ſo our church teaches,) "fully ſatisfied for the ſins of the "whole world."—*By his death alone*, that is, in contradiſtinction to all human works, as efficient or adjutant cauſes: *fully ſatisfied*, that is, without having, and without needing the concurrence of any human ſatisfaction. —It is ſpoken in oppoſition to our endeavours, not to his own moſt glorious obedience.——But do you really want to be informed that our church means no ſuch thing, as you would inſinuate? Have you never heard her profeſs, and require to believe, what *Aſpaſio* maintains? If not, be pleaſed to read the quotations from her homilies, which he has produced, above, pag. 257 *. Read theſe, and I cannot but think, you have modeſty enough to bluſh at an attempt, to palm upon the public, ſuch an apparent miſrepreſentation of our venerable mother.

"The ſame great truth is manifeſtly taught in the "xxxiſt article."—What? That CHRIST, by his *death alone*, or by *ſhedding his blood alone, without fulfilling the law perfectly*, ſatisfied for the ſins of the world? Then the articles and the homilies moſt flatly contradict one another.—Upon this you aſk, "Is it therefore fair, is "it honeſt, for any one to plead the articles of our "church in defence of abſolute predeſtination?" Indeed, Sir, I know not what you mean by this interrogatory, or at what you aim. Does *Aſpaſio* plead the articles for any ſuch purpoſe? Not that he ſhould be afraid, in caſe there was an evident occaſion, to advance ſuch a plea, and perhaps might put Mr *Weſley* to greater difficulty than he is aware of, in order to elude the force of it.—But he does not in this place come within view of the point; nor ſo much as remotely hint at it. No, nor in any part of the two volumes, does he once touch upon *abſolute predeſtination*, much leſs does he plead the articles of our church in its defence. So that your inferential word "therefore," is a concluſion without premiſes.

Abſolute predeſtination is a phraſe not to be found in all the dialogues, or in any of the letters. But it is a phraſe which Mr *Weſley* thinks to be alarming and diſguſting, on which Mr *Weſley* has learned to ſay many horrible and ſhocking things; therefore be it right or wrong, be it true or falſe, *Aſpaſio* ſhall be charged with the obnoxious expreſſion.——When he mentions predeſtination, it is in the very words of ſcripture; without dwelling upon the ſubject; without reſting his cauſe upon it; without attempting either to explain or to eſtabliſh it. This he leaves, and ever will leave, to clearer heads and abler pens.——As to your "abſolute," this is not what *Aſpaſio* ſpeaks, but what Mr *Weſley* would make him ſpeak; a word, which in this connection he never uſed, nor ſo much as dreamed of uſing; for which reaſon, I call it, not *bis*,

* Explanatory notes *in loc.*

* As this book may poſſibly fall into the hands of ſome perſons, who have not the book, entitled *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, I will, for their ſakes, tranſcribe one of the teſtimonies, to which we are referred.

In the homily concerning the ſalvation of mankind, we read the following words.—"The apoſtle toucheth three things, which "muſt go together in juſtification. On GOD's part, his great "mercy and grace. On CHRIST's part, the ſatisfaction of "GOD's juſtice, or the price of our redemption, by the offering "of his body, and ſhedding of his precious blood, with fulfilling "of the law perfectly. On our part, true and lively faith in "the merits of JESUS CHRIST, which yet is not ours, but by "GOD's working in us." You ſee, according to the judgment of our reformers, not only the offering of CHRIST's body, and the ſhedding of CHRIST's blood, but alſo his perfect fulfilling of the law, are the adequate price of our redemption. Yet Mr *Weſley* is pleaſed to exclude the latter, and ventures to affirm that he has the authority of our church for ſuch an opinion, and for ſuch a practice.

but

…ours.—May I not then retort your own queſtion? …l aſk, Is it fair, is it honeſt, to put into your friend's …uth words which he never uſed, and then exclaim …inſt them?

What follows in this paragraph is prodigious indeed. "Seeing the xviith article barely defines the term;" …at is, the church does not believe the doctrine, nor …quire any ſuch belief from her members? Why then …s ſhe ſelect it for one of the articles? why pronounce …greeable to *GOD*'s word? why forbid diſputation …ainſt it? Pity, but we had been acquainted with this …e diſtinction when we were ſtudents at *Oxford*.—We …en declared our approbation of the academical ſta…tes; we engaged to obſerve them all, and confirmed …ur engagement with an oath.——But how eaſily …ight we have eluded the obligation, if, when called …pon for conformity and obedience, this ſalvo had come …to our heads; "The univerſity does not, in theſe ſta…tutes, ſet forth our duty, but barely defines the terms; …ſhe does not inſiſt upon a conformity, but only flou…riſhes a little upon terms, and leaves us to obey or …diſobey, as we ſhall feel ourſelves inclined."

"Barely defines the term, without either affirming …or denying the thing."——How! does ſhe not affirm …the *thing*, when ſhe ſtyles it an *excellent benefit of GOD?* …declares it to be *full of ſweet, pleaſant*, and *unſpeakable …comfort* to the godly? that it *greatly eſtabliſhes and confirms …their faith of eternal ſalvation*, and *fervently kindles their …love towards GOD?* "Not affirm the thing!"—when …ſhe expreſsly aſcribes ſuch fruits and conſequents to it! …This is not only affirming, but affirming with the higheſt …approbation, like proclaiming the king, and placing …the crown upon his head.

In one part of your *Preſervative*, you enumerate, and …very properly diſplay, what you call "the five benefits …of baptiſm."——Suppoſe a *Quaker*, upon reading …this paſſage, ſhould ſay, "Friend *Weſley*, thou barely …defineſt the term, thou neither affirmeſt nor denieſt …the thing.——This is no proof that thou thyſelf be…lieveſt a tittle of water-baptiſm, or wouldſt have thy …readers believe the reality of any ſuch ordinance." …Should the *Quaker* argue thus, he would argue juſt like …yourſelf. But I apprehend he would not be ſo boldly diſ…ingenuous, he would rather confeſs; Friend *John* doth …"certainly maintain and believe theſe things; but his …"opinion is miſtaken, and his arguments are inconclu…"ſive."—"The xxxiſt article totally overthrows pre…"deſtination, and razes it from the foundation." If ſo, …it makes one article contradict another; conſequently, …weakens the authority, and undermines the credibility …of them all. In this article are two points more particu…larly proper for our inquiry; The *great ſalvation*, and …the *number of the ſaved*.——I cannot but query, whether …you believe the former, or rightly underſtand the …latter?

The *great ſalvation*, expreſſed in the following words; "The offering of *CHRIST* once made, is that perfect …"redemption, propitiation, and ſatisfaction for all the …"ſins of the whole world, both original and actual." If I take theſe words as I am enjoined, in the literal and grammatical ſenſe, I muſt believe, that *CHRIST* engaged to ſatisfy offended juſtice, for every ſin which I have committed, or ſhall commit, throughout my whole life. My paſt ſins at that time had no more exiſtence, than my future ſins have at this hour; but both were equally laid upon my LORD.

Having undertaken this greateſt of all works, I muſt believe that he fully accompliſhed it; and actually ſatisfied for all my tranſgreſſions, of every kind and every date.——A poſſibility, or mere *chance* of being redeemed, can never be reckoned a perfect redemption; neither would our SAVIOUR have paid down a poſitive price for a precarious conditional good: much leſs would he have paid an immenſe, an infinite price, upon *a* bare uncertainty, whether it ſhould take an effect, or ever obtain its deſired end.——I believe therefore, that the ſatisfaction is made for *me*; that GOD has received the all-ſufficient atonement in behalf of all my provocations; and that there is no more ground of condemnation for me a vile ſinner, than there is room for the proſecution of an inſolvent, all whoſe debts are diſcharged, even to the very laſt mite.

The *number of the ſaved*, expreſſed in thoſe words——the *ſins of the whole world*. This I acknowledge to be the language of ſcripture; and I promiſe myſelf you will bear with me, while I offer my thoughts concerning the occaſion and the import of ſuch language.

In the *antediluvian* and *patriarchal* ages, the *LORD JEHOVAH* confined his favour to a few particular families. —When he formed his *Iſrael* into a common-wealth he choſe them to himſelf, and ſeparated them from all other nations. To them he gave his oracles, his ordinances, and his covenants; yea, he honoured and indulged them with his divine preſence: In this the *Iſraelites* gloried; they appropriated this privilege to themſelves, and held other people at a diſtance, looking upon them as ſtrangers, and without GOD in the world; hence that choſen ſeed ſpares not to ſay, "We are thine; thou "never bareſt rule over them; they were not called by "thy name."——At the commencement of the *MESSIAH*'s kingdom, the *LORD* purpoſed to change the ſcene, and vary the diſpenſation, by admitting both *Jews* and *Gentiles* to an intereſt in the great ſalvation; as they were equally chargeable with ſin, and equally liable to the curſe, they ſhould now ſtand upon a level, be equally ſharers in that divine *SAVIOUR*, who ſubmits to be made ſin, and to be made a curſe for both alike. This the *HOLY GHOST* expreſsly and repeatedly promiſed, *He* (that is, the REDEEMER which is to come) *ſhall ſpeak peace unto the Heathen; his dominion ſhall be from ſea even to ſea, and from the river even to the end of the earth.*

Notwithſtanding ſuch prophecies, and ſuch promiſes, our *LORD* himſelf, when he entered upon his miniſtry, acted a diſcriminating part, and kept up the *partition-wall*; in purſuance of that declaration, *I am not ſent, but unto the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael.* When he ſent forth his diſciples to preach and to teach, he gave them alſo a command to ſhew the ſame partial regard; *Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles.* This conduct of our *LORD*, both under the Old Teſtament and the New, confirmed the *Jews* in their ſelf-flattering notion, that they were, and ever ſhould be, a favourite nation, and a peculiar people. The *Gentiles*, on the other hand, were no leſs diſcouraged: apprehending, that as they were, ſo they ever ſhould be, *aliens from the common-wealth of Iſrael.* But in order to convince the *Jews* of their miſtake, in claiming the bleſſing of *Abraham* to themſelves, and in order to aſſure the poor diſcarded *Gentiles* that they ſhould be *fellow-heirs and of the ſame body*; our *LORD*, in his laſt charge to his apoſtle, alters the ſtyle of his commiſſion, and enlarges the ſphere of their ſeveral departments. It is now no longer, *Go not into the way of the Gentiles*; but quite the reverſe, *Go teach all nations, all the world*, yea, and *every creature; Whoſoever believeth*, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, *ſhall be ſaved.*

Still the *Jews* were hardly induced to give the right hand of fellowſhip to their brethren the *Gentiles*.—For St *Peter* cries, with ſome indignation; *Not ſo, LORD.* Still the *Gentiles*, hardly perſuaded that they ſhould be partakers of the grace, reaſoned againſt themſelves; *The LORD hath utterly ſeparated me from his people.* Therefore the *LORD*, to intercept all the deſponding objections of the *latter*, and to bring down the high diſdainful imaginations of the *former*, declares in a variety of places, that the difference no longer ſubſiſts, that *CHRIST* has thrown down the partition-wall,

and laid all plain, and common, and free.——Though the giving of the law pertained to *Israel only*, the *LORD JESUS* gave himself a ransom for ALL PEOPLE. Though the paschal lamb extended its influence only to the circumcision, the LAMB of GOD is a *propitiation for the sins of the whole world*, even though it be not circumcised. And now *GOD* would have all men, whether bond or free, *Jews* or *Gentiles*, *Greeks* or *Barbarians*, to be saved, by coming unto the knowledge of the faith.

This account gives us the true cause, and points out the intended use, of such universal phrases. They are calculated to abate the pride of the *Jews*, to encourage the despised *Gentiles*; and by excluding *none*, they give encouragement for *all* to come, because, though every *individual* person will not be saved, yet *whosoever cometh shall in no wise be cast out*.——By this interpretation, the phrase is neither inconsistent with other texts, neither does our church contradict herself.

Upon the whole, you will please to observe, that I should never have touched upon this subject, had not your objections, far-fetched and forced as they are, given me a kind of challenge. And now I have touched upon the subject, it is not as a champion for the cause, but only to shew the weakness and inconsistency of your arguing, how little you avail yourself even on a point, where you think opposition vain, and your arm irresistible.

"Believers, who are notorious transgressors in themselves, have a sinless obedience in *CHRIST*;" this passage you select as faulty, I presume, because it is opposite to your favourite tenet, "*perfection* in personal "holiness."——By *notorious*, I mean *acknowledged*, *confessed*, *indisputably such*. If you are not such a transgressor, why do you daily confess yourself "a miserable "sinner?" Why do you acknowledge, that you are "tied and bound with the chain of your sins;" and declare before all men, that "there is no health in you?" All this Mr *Wesley* speaks with his lips, and, I would hope, believes in his heart. Yet all this does not amount "to a *notorious* transgressor." Pray then, good Sir, inform us, what sort of transgressor is described by all these expressions.

You cry out, "O syren song!" The psalmist would have taught you a better exclamation. If this is the case, *let us rejoice with trembling*.——Are we notorious transgressors in ourselves? The consciousness of this is the strongest motive to humility.——Have we a sinless obedience in *CHRIST*? The belief of this is an abundant source of joy. When you add, "Pleasing sound "to *James Wheatly! Thomas Williams! James Reily!*" I am quite ashamed of your meanness, and grieved at your uncharitable rashness. How unworthy is such a procedure, either of the gentleman, the Christian, or the man of sense! Unworthy the *gentleman*, to stigmatize by name, and expose to the most public infamy.——Unworthy the *Christian*, whose charity concealeth, rather than divulgeth and proclaimeth upon the housetops.—Unworthy the *man of sense*, who knows that the miscarriages of a professor are no argument against the soundness of a doctrine. If they were, would not your own principles totter? Nay, how could Christianity itself stand?

Elijah failed in his resignation, and even *Moses* himself spake unadvisedly with his lips. "It is true," says Mr *Wesley*. "But if you could likewise fix some blot "upon venerable *Samuel*, and beloved *Daniel*, it would "prove nothing." I have no desire to fix a blot; but if I find it in the most accomplished character, this proves the proposition, which *Aspasio* maintains; "That the "very best of men fall short; that the very best of "men will be found *guilty*, if *tried by the righteous* "*law*:——That the very best of men have nothing "more to plead *for acceptance* with the *HIGH* and "*HOLY* one, than the criminal, who yesterday "murdered his benefactor, to-morrow is to be executed "for his crime, and is now flying to the redemption "that is in *CHRIST JESUS* for the chief of sinners."

"No scripture teaches that the holiness of Christian "is to be measured by that of any *few*." I should be afraid to advance such a position, after having read the general exhortation, *Be ye followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises*; and those more particular references to the ancient saints, comprised in the *eleventh chapter to the Hebrews*. Were not they *Jews*? Does not the apostle propose them as *patterns* for our imitation? Is not this his language, *Let us* act in conformity to their practice?—*The spirit of CHRIST was in them*; and "they obtained, (even from the supreme "*JUDGE*) a good report." Agreeably to this divine testimonial, we are directed to learn from *Abel*, a fiduciary dependence on the great atonement; and from *Enoch*, a life of communion with a reconciled *GOD*. The prophets are recommended to our contemplation as "examples of suffering affliction, and of patience." *Elijah* is set before us as an instance of persevering and successful prayer: and we are directed to walk in the steps of our father *Abraham*'s faith. This was the counsel of an apostle to others; this was the aim of an apostle with regard to himself; therefore I think, it can never be unworthy of you, or unfit for the most advanced among your disciples. For my part, I shall reckon myself truly happy; I shall bless the day, wherein I was born; if I may but be enabled to follow the footsteps of these illustrious leaders, though

— — *non passibus æquis.*

That Christians ought to rise above the level of the common *Jews*, I freely own. Mr *Wesley*'s mistake seems to lie in confounding the *common* with the *uncommon*, in not discerning the difference between *any* and *every*; between *some* and *all*. Some *Jews* were blessed with extraordinary endowments; they had distinguished communications of the spirit of wisdom and holiness. They were as the "stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his "land." Their great achievements and eminent attainments are described in the aforementioned chapter, which may truly be styled the *golden legend*; great things impossible to flesh and blood, they both performed and suffered; such as characterize a saint of the highest rank.——To imitate these, is the duty of *all* Christians; to equal them, is the privilege of *few*.

Let me *illustrate* this sentiment; the reader, I apprehend, will hardly think it needs *confirmation*.——Every graduate in the university, much more every minister of the gospel, ought to exceed the schoolboy in learning and knowledge.—Yet there have been schoolboys with whom few ministers, and fewer graduates, will venture to compare themselves. A recent instance of this kind we have in the famous *Baratier*. This wonderful youth when he was but four years old, spoke *French* to his mother, *Latin* to his father, *High Dutch* to his maid. At the age of six, he explained the *Hebrew* text, as ready as if it had been his native *German*. When other lads are scarce able to read with fluency and propriety their mother tongue, he was not only acquainted with, but master of five several languages. In his eleventh year he published a learned *Latin* dissertation, and translated a book of travels out of *Hebrew* into *French*. While a mere boy he was qualified to dispute with professors of the sciences, was honoured with a seat at an ecclesiastical synod, and admitted to the degree of doctor in philosophy. Upon this narrative I shall only observe, that many of the *Jews*, whose names are immortalized in scripture, were, in faith, in godliness, and all that is exemplary, so many *Baratiers*.

"Do not the best of men frequently feel disorder in "their affections? Do they not often complain, When "I would do good, evil is present with me?" "I "believe

believe not." What a proof is here! How well ſuited to its office! which is to control the current and overrule the evidence of ancient and modern conſent. But why don't you believe what *Aſpaſio* ſuppoſes? Is your diſbelief grounded on fact? Are you acquainted with any people, who feel no diſorder in their affections? who always do good in the completeſt manner? and never have evil preſent with them? If ſo, what are their names? where do they live? We would go many miles to ſee them. You have no averſion to the mention of names, when cenſure is the motive, and public diſgrace the effect; why ſhould you be ſo reluctant, when honour and diſtinguiſhed reſpect would be the conſequence?

Do they not ſay, *We groan, being burdened* with the workings of inbred corruption? "This is not the "meaning of the text. The whole context ſhews the "cauſe of that groaning was their longing to be with "CHRIST." You need not on this occaſion rummage the context, or take a journey to find what is at your door. The ſentence itſelf ſhews, as plainly as words can ſhew, the cauſe of their groaning. We groan, it is not ſaid becauſe we long to be with CHRIST. This might be a truth; but this is not the cauſe aſſigned. "We groan becauſe we are burdened. Burdened with what? *Aſpaſio* anſwers with a body of ſin and death, or with what the apoſtle himſelf ſtyles τὸ θνητὸν. This, whatever it means, was the load that encumbered them, oppreſſed them, and made them ſigh ardently for deliverance. Does not this ſignify all the infirmities and diſorders of the preſent mortal ſtate? Among which the ſad effects of inbred *corruption*, are none of the leaſt. Theſe gave thoſe magnanimous, but pious ſouls, more uneaſineſs than all other kinds of affliction whatever *. The cure of ſin will be perfected in heaven. "Nay, "ſurely in paradiſe."——*Aſpaſio* knows no difference between paradiſe and heaven. Paradiſe is the kingdom where CHRIST reigns; and is not this heaven? Paradiſe is the region where the tree of life grows; and is not this heaven? Heaven denotes the place; paradiſe deſcribes its nature, a place of conſummate bliſs and abſolute perfection, where is the fulneſs of joy and pleaſure for evermore.——However, if it can be proved, that they are different abodes, and imply different things †; then *Aſpaſio* would be underſtood to ſay, the cure of ſin is completed in paradiſe; or as ſoon as the believer drops his fleſh, and enters the inviſible world.

This (a perfect conformity to GOD) is a noble prerogative of the beatific viſion. "No;" ſays Mr *Weſley*. Though St *John*, one would think, had ſettled and aſcertained this point beyond all contradiction—*We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him, as he is.*——"We ſhall," which intimates, that at preſent we are not perfectly like him—"For," which denotes the efficient cauſe of this advancement and felicity; this complete transformation into the divine image—"We ſhall ſee him," no longer through a glaſs, but face to face. We ſhall receive the cleareſt manifeſtation of his ineffable holineſs and glory, which will have juſt the ſame effect upon our ſouls as the imprinted ſeal has upon the melting wax.

"It would then come too late. If ſin remains in us "till the day of judgment, it will remain in us for "ever." You ſuppoſe, that the beatific viſion is not enjoyed, till the day of judgment. But in this you ſeem to err, not knowing the ſcripture. I have a *deſire*, ſays the apoſtle, *to be diſſolved.*——And what is the conſequence, the immediate conſequence of diſſolution? *To be with* CHRIST; in his preſence; before his throne; and is not this the beatific viſion? *Willing* (ſays the ſame inſpired writer) *to be abſent from the body, and preſent with the* LORD.——Here is no hint of any intermediate ſtate, but the very moment in which the ſaints depart from their bodies, they are preſent with the LORD; and if with the LORD, then in the higheſt heavens; then at the fountain-head of felicity; then amidſt the *beatific viſion.*—To heaven *Elijah* was conveyed in his fiery chariot; and into heaven the firſt *martyr* was received by his compaſſionate SAVIOUR. Neither of them waited in ſome intervening manſion, as a kind of *lobby* to the heaven of heavens. This is the *Popiſh* notion, and very cloſely connected with the chimera of purgatory; ſo cloſely connected, that if you take away the former, the latter drops into nothing.—I am ſorry, your opinions, Sir, are ſo much like the errors of the man of ſin.

Our preſent bleſſedneſs does not conſiſt in being free from ſin. "I really think it does." Spoke like Mr *Weſley*. "I think," is ſtill the *argumentum palmarium*. "I think," is the heavy artillery, which is to demoliſh brigades at a blow; only here it is ſtrengthened and enforced by that emphatical word "really."—But if our preſent bleſſedneſs does *really* conſiſt in being free from ſin, where are your bleſſed perſons? We may truly ſay,

Apparent rari nantes in gurgite waſto. VIRG.

No; this can hardly be ſaid. *Virgil*'s deſcription is too full; inſtead of ſeeing a very *few*, here and there one, popping up their heads, in the great and wide ocean of the world, we are not able to find ſo much as an *individual*. Shew us *one*, only *one* of theſe angels in fleſh and blood, and it ſufficeth us. Whereas, if you perſiſt in maintaining your *ſinleſs perfection*, yet cannot produce a ſingle inſtance, to exemplify your notion, will you not give too juſt a handle for that ſarcaſtic reflection, uſed on another occaſion?

With witneſſes many this cauſe did abound,
With ſome that were hang'd, and ſome that were drown'd,
And ſome that were loſt, and ſome never found.

Theſe are *Aſpaſio*'s words—"It (our preſent imperfec-
"tion) perpetually reminds us of a moſt important
"truth, that our preſent bleſſedneſs conſiſts, not in be-
"ing free from all ſin, but in having no ſin imputed
"to us." He took particular care to guard his meaning from miſconſtruction, by adding the word *all*: leſt this word, becauſe it is little of ſtature, ſhould be overlooked, he printed it in *Italics*. But all this precaution is thrown away upon Mr *Weſley*. He takes no notice of this ſame little word; nay, he ſhuts it entirely out of his quotation; as though he ſhould ſay, "Where is
"the harm of clapping under the hatches ſuch a puny
"inſignificant monoſyllable? I would have it to know,
"I ſhall 'ere long turn adrift more plump and portly
"words than that."

Aſpaſio alſo took care to confirm his ſentiments by a reference to ſcripture; he ſupported himſelf by the authority of King *David*.—Mr *Weſley* having a little while ago laboured to depreciate, now ventures to contradict

* "We groan, being burdened, with a ſenſe of our ſpiritual infirmities, and with the working of inbred corruption." This *Aſpaſio*'s interpretation. "We groan, being burdened with numberleſs infirmities, temptations, and ſins." This is Mr *Weſley*'s interpretation, in his Expoſitory notes on the New Teſtament. Yet here he denies what there he affirms.—It is ſaid, I think of *Iſhmael*; *His hand will be againſt every man.* Mr *Weſley* goes a ſtep further. His hand is againſt *himſelf*, as well as againſt every body elſe.

† St *Paul*, I am aware, ſpeaks of heaven and ſpeaks of paradiſe, 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4. So does *David* ſpeak of *riſing up into the hill of the* LORD, and of *ſtanding in his holy place.*—But as the ſame thing, though variouſly expreſſed, is meant by the *Pſalmiſt*, I think we may not unreaſonably underſtand the *apoſtle* in the ſame manner. If they had been different habitations, methinks he would have mentioned *paradiſe* firſt, and then the third *heavens*. Otherwiſe he tells the ſtory but awkwardly; for he firſt mentions his arrival in the third heavens, and then at paradiſe; that is, according to Mr *Weſley*; firſt he was led into the *preſence*, and then introduced into the *antechamber*.

dict the royal *pſalmiſt*. *Bleſſed* (ſays the pſalmiſt) *is the man*—who is free from ſin? who is perfectly ſanctified? This is not the doctrine which the ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael* teaches; but bleſſed is he, *whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered.* Deeply impreſſed, and quite charmed with the contemplation of this moſt ſubſtantial happineſs, the ſacred writer proclaims it; repeats it; yes, a third time he celebrates it; crying out with ardour of joy, *Bleſſed is the man, unto whom the* LORD *imputeth no iniquity* *. Neither that iniquity which was formerly committed, nor that which ſtill defiles †.) Bleſſed indeed! May I live under a firm perſuaſion of my own particular intereſt in this unſpeakable privilege? May I find it made good to my ſoul, at the univerſal judgment! Then let others take the kingdoms of this world, and all the glory of them.—And as for *Aſpaſio*, he may reckon his credit ſafe, and his opinion fully authoriſed, while he eſpouſes the doctrine, and uſes the very words of the unerring SPIRIT.

"If we are not free from ſin, we are not Chriſtian "believers."—What an aſſertion is here! *Aſſertion*, for I dare not call it a *truth*.—If it was, who then could be ſaved? Not one of a thouſand; not two of a million; no, nor Mr *John Weſley* himſelf, ſince out of his own mouth he ſtands condemned. He makes this acknowledgment concerning himſelf and his followers, "We "know by melancholy experience what it is to neglect "works of righteouſneſs." To corroborate his confeſſion, he adds, "We know and feel by melancholy "experience, what it is to ſwerve from our firſt love. "We feel by experience."—He is willing to run the hazard of tautology, rather than any ſhould ſuſpect the ſincerity and truth of his proteſtation.—And can you after ſuch a confeſſion, after ſuch a proteſtation, pretend to be free from ſin? Is all this which you know of yourſelf, and *feel by experience*, conſiſtent with a *ſinleſs* ſtate? Juſt as much as a *lethargy* is conſiſtent with the vigour of *health*, or a ſhameful *flight* with a glorious *victory*.—See, Sir, how you are entangled in your own net; how, without being chaſed by an enemy, you run yourſelf aground. Nor will all your dexterity, ſo long as you avow ſuch palpable inconſiſtencies, be able to ſet you clear.

You attempt to confirm your opinion by the apoſtle's declaration; *Being made free from ſin.*——But he and you mean different things by the ſame words.—He means being freed from the *dominion of ſin*.—This is agreeable to his own explanation; Sin (ου κυριευσει) ſhall not lord it over you;—it may *aſſault* you; it may *baraſs* you; it may gain ſome *advantage* over you; but it ſhall not obtain a *final victory*, nor play the *tyrant* over you. To the expedience and neceſſity of this freedom, if ever we would approve ourſelves diſciples of CHRIST, or Chriſtians indeed, I readily ſubſcribe:—whereas, you mean being free from the very *remainders* of ſin.—— "Having a purity" ('tis your own explanation) "free "from all mixture of its contrary, and a reſignation ex- "cluding every degree of ſelf-will." Againſt the exiſtence, or the poſſibility of this freedom, ſo long as we ſojourn in a body of fleſh, I enter my proteſt.

If we were perfect in piety, CHRIST's prieſtly office would be ſuperſeded. "No, we ſhould ſtill need his "Spirit, and conſequently his interceſſion." But were we perfect, we ſhould receive the Spirit without an interceſſor.—An interceſſor implies an alienation between the two parties; ſomething which, without the intervention of a third perſon, would create alienation.—The prieſtly office, whether of atoning, or of interceding, is founded on a ſtate of guilt; to this it bears an eſſential and invariable relation.——Does CHRIST exerciſe his prieſtly office in behalf of angels? No, becauſe they excel in ſtrength, and are perfect in holineſs. Will CHRIST exerciſe his prieſtly office, when all his ſaints are received into glory? No, becauſe then there will be an abſolute conſummation both in body and ſoul, both in righteouſneſs and happineſs, and the mediatorial kingdom be delivered up to the FATHER.——Did CHRIST exerciſe his prieſtly office before *Adam* fell? No, becauſe ſin had no exiſtence then, and then the language was, *Let man be bleſſed*; not, *Deliver him from going down into the pit*.

The objections laid to my charge in this paragraph, and the whole ſide of the leaf, proceed upon your favourite notion; *perfection* of holineſs, even while we continue in houſes of clay. As I look upon your foundation to be a mere deluſion, I muſt of courſe conclude all that you build upon it to be chimerical and deluſory; therefore, till you prove your ſuppoſition, I have no reaſon to concern myſelf with any of your conſequences deduced from it, or with any of your allegations relating to it. On one clauſe, however, let me beſtow a ſlight animadverſion.

Aſpaſio ſays, a ſenſe of remaining inbred corruption will reconcile us to death; Mr *Weſley* replies, "Indeed "it will not: nor will any thing do this like perfect "love."——Here I think you have miſſed the mark. Nothing can reconcile us to death but that which takes away its ſting; and this is done only by the atonement of CHRIST. Nothing can reconcile us to death but that which delivers us from its terror; and this is effected only by the ſacrifice of our great HIGH PRIEST, which has converted the king of terrors into a meſſenger of peace: nothing can reconcile us unto death, but that which makes it deſirable to depart, and gain to die; and this is owing, wholly owing to him who died for us, that whether we wake or ſleep, we ſhould live together with him.

Old *Simeon* found, that nothing could reconcile him to death, ſo much as a believing view of the LORD CHRIST. Seeing GOD made fleſh; ſeeing him as his own SAVIOUR, he was enabled not only to acquieſce in the ſummons, but to welcome it as a deliverance.——He was enabled to ſay with compoſure and complacency, LORD, *now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace*—Not becauſe I am weary of this imperfect ſtate; not becauſe I am perfect in divine love; but becauſe *mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation*.——Though you may not like to imitate a *Jew*, I moſt heartily wiſh for myſelf, Let me die the death of this moſt venerable *Hebrew*, and let my latter end be like his!

If you ſtill perſiſt in your opinion, that nothing can reconcile you to diſſolution like the imagined *perfection* of your love, not the *blood*, by which the ſaints overcame; not the *righteouſneſs*, by which they reign in life; not the grace and power, which have ſwallowed up death in victory; I muſt then caution you to take heed leſt you croſs, or attempt to croſs the *river*, in the boat of *vain confidence*. You have abridged, if I miſtake not, the *Pilgrim's Progreſs*, therefore can be at no loſs to underſtand my meaning.

One clauſe, I ſaid,—but I correct myſelf.—There is another, ſo very extraordinary, that you might juſtly charge me with inattention little ſhort of ſtupidity, if I ſhould paſs it over without notice. Theſe are the words,—"If we were perfect in piety, (St *John*'s word "is perfect in love,) we ſhould ſtill be encompaſſed "with infirmities, and liable to miſtakes, from which "words or actions might follow, even though the heart "was all love, which were not exactly right."

This is ſtrange! wondrous ſtrange indeed! Perfect, yet "encompaſſed with infirmities!" Perfect, "yet "doing actions, and ſpeaking words not exactly "right!" You are as ſingular in your *idea*, as you are ſtrenuous for the *doctrine* of *perfection*.——I know no any *Proteſtant* writer that pretends to maintain the latter

* *Pſal.* xxxii. 1, 2. Should any objection ariſe from the next ſentence, the reader may ſee it anticipated, and ſuperſeded, in *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, page 177. of this edition.

† Pſal. xv. 3.

yourself only excepted; and as to the former, I think it could never enter into the head of any thing living, but Mr *Wesley* only. Perfect, "yet encompassed with infirmities," as just as sound divinity, as true, as addicted to lying, is sound morality.

This is not the worst property of your notion of perfection, that it is absurd and self-contradictory. A sentiment may be *absurd*, yet not very *pernicious*. But this is an error of the most malignant kind. This was at the bottom of the Pharisees pride, and spirited them on to seek justification by the works of the law. They knew full well, that their obedience was not complete, it did not come up to their sacred and exalted standard; but they had learned to soften and extenuate their disobedience, into matters "not exactly right." This is the cause, why people professing Christianity, see no form or comeliness in CHRIST, so as to desire him, with desires that cannot be uttered. 'Tis true they are not perfect, they often offend;—but then the offences are only human *infirmities*; words and actions "not exactly right." With this, which is indeed "the syren song," they lull their souls into an insensibility of their ruined state, and a disregard of the all-sufficient REDEEMER.

Cursed (says the law) *is every one, that continueth not in all things*, whether they be great or small.—And will you regard that as a mere infirmity, and consistent with perfection, on which the divine law denounces a curse, which the divine law threatens with all misery here, and with everlasting vengeance hereafter? The apostle would probably chastise the author or abetter of such a conceit, in the following manner: "Wilt thou "know, O vain man, that what thou calleft a matter "not exactly right," is most horribly odious in the eye of GOD's infinite purity; deserves eternal death in the estimate of his infinite justice; and could never "have been pardoned but by the atoning death of his "infinitely-majestic Son!"

"Encompassed with infirmities, yet the heart all love! "Words and actions not exactly right, yet the man all "perfection!" These are all paradoxes which I never saw equalled, only in the writings of some high-flown Papists. Mr *Wesley*'s words are not far from a translation; they are, to a nicety, the sense of those very offensive passages which I meet with in a couple of Popish zealots. *Andradius*, interpreter of the council of *Trent*, writes thus; "* Venialia peccata tam sunt minuta et "levia, ut non adverlentur perfectioni charitatis, nec "impedire possunt perfectam aut absolutam obedien-"tiam." ——*Lindanus*, another champion for the same bad cause, expresses himself in a more elegant, but in no less shocking a manner. "† Levicula vitiola lap-"suum quotidianorum, aspergines et nævulæ sunt: "quæ per se non maculant et contaminant, sed "quasi pulvisculo leviter aspergunt vitam Christianam: "ut nihilominus tamen per se sint perfecta, et undique "immaculata renatorem opera in hac vita."——If Mr *Wesley* pleases to consider these passages, I hope, he will be induced to alter his phrase, and rectify his notions. —If he pleases to translate these passages, his followers may have an opportunity of seeing, how nearly he approaches to some of the worst errors of Popery; and may hence be admonished not to imbibe, without due examination, his doctrines; nor submit, with an implicit credulity, to his dictates.

The charges of the law are all answered.—At this sentence Mr *Wesley* is highly offended. As the lion is said to lash himself into rage, so my objector stirs himself up into a graceful indignation; stirs *himself*, for there is nothing in the passage, or in the context to awaken such a flame of zeal. If Mr *Wesley* had understood *Aspasio*, according to the whole tenor of his discourse, there would have been no room for bringing Count *Zinzendorf* upon the carpet, nor for making that injurious conclusion, *Then neither GOD nor man can claim any obedience to the law.*—This is what *Aspasio* means: The claims of the law, as a covenant of works;—the claims of the law, as being the condition of life and glory;—the claims of the law, as requiring perfect obedience on pain of eternal death; these claims are all satisfied by our most blessed and gracious SURETY. —If not, they are still incumbent upon us, and upon every child of man. A burden this, which neither *we nor our fathers were able to bear*, which, heavier than the sands of the sea, would have sunk us all into the nethermost hell. This doctrine, therefore, is not "*Antinomianism* without a mask;" but it is the doctrine of *righteousness without works* *, and of justification *without the deeds of the law* †.

"Then neither GOD nor man can claim any obe-"dience to the law." Yes, GOD Almighty may, and GOD Almighty does claim our obedience to the law; as a rule of life, he requires a conformity to its precepts, as to the image of himself; he demands a performance of its duties, as the means of bringing glory to his name, and paying submission to his authority. And none will be so readily disposed, none will be so effectually enabled, to obey the *whole* law, as those who see themselves made righteous by the obedience of CHRIST, who are thereby delivered from that tremendous curse, denounced on all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

Aspasio thus exhorts his friend,—Let me desire you to imagine, rather may the blessed SPIRIT enable you to believe, that your sins are expiated, through the death of JESUS CHRIST; that a righteousness is given you, by virtue of which you may have free and welcome access to GOD.—"This is not "scriptural language," says Mr *Wesley*. Therefore it cannot be sound doctrine, is his way of arguing. Harmless enough I must own. But what follows is not quite so modest. "I would simply say," and surely what *I* would say, must be *unexceptionably right*. This is the conclusion we are to make; otherwise what you alledge, is of no weight at all. "I would simply "say, By him we have access to the FATHER." This is, beyond all objection, proper. It is taken from the apostle, and it includes what *Aspasio* expresses.—— The apostle's language is the ingot of gold, *Aspasio*'s sentiment is a thread drawn, or a leaf beaten from it. Methinks, before I dismiss this topic, I would desire you to turn back a moment, and reconsider what you have affirmed.—Your sins are *expiated*, is not this scriptural language?—What else meaneth that expression of the apostle? Εις το ιλασκεσθαι τας αμαρτιας του λαου "To "make expiation for the sins of the people ‡." A righteousness is given you, is not this the scriptural way of speaking? "They who receive *the gift of* "*righteousness*, shall *reign in life*."—"By which you "have *free access to GOD*;" is not this both the dialect, and the doctrine of the HOLY GHOST? "We "have access with confidence (not through our punc-"tual performance of any conditions, but) through "the faith of him;" by a fiducial reliance on our

* Venial sins are so minute and trivial, that they do not oppose the perfection of our love, nor can they hinder our obedience from being absolutely perfect.

† The little trifling faults which are owing to our daily slips or mistakes, or like specks, or almost imperceptible moles upon the body, which of themselves do not stain or defile; but as it were, with small particles of fine dust, lightly sprinkle the Christian life; so that nevertheless the works of the regenerate may be of themselves perfect, and in all respects immaculate, even in this life.

* Rom. iv. 6. † Rom. iii. 28.

‡ *Heb.* ii. 17. Εις το ιλασκεσθαι.—*Ad expiandum*, ut eas expiaret peccata populi, quibus expiatis, *Deus nobis redditus est propitius.*

LORD's moſt precious obedience, blood, and merit.

"I have ſeen ſuch terrible effects of this unſcriptural "way of ſpeaking."——Here I fancy you ſlip into a little miſtake; you forgot the diſtinction between the *uſe*, and the *abuſe* of a doctrine, a diſtinction which you can eaſily make on other occaſions. You have doubtleſs ſeen people, who uſe the moſt ſcriptural way of ſpeaking, yet act unſuitably to their language; what reflections aroſe in your mind, and what inference did you draw upon obſerving ſuch an inconſiſtency? You ſaid perhaps, "Their voice is *Jacob*'s voice; but their "hands are the hands of *Eſau*.—Hence it appears, that "they are hypocrites.—They pretend one thing, and "are really another."—Make the ſame reflection, and draw the ſame inference, when you hear people talking of *imputed righteouſneſs*, yet ſee them looſing the reins to ungodlineſs; then you will be conſiſtent with yourſelf, and with truth; aſcribing the terrible effects, not to the wholeſome doctrine, but to the vitiated mind.

Where ſin abounded, *&c.*—Mr *Weſley* rejects *Aſpaſio*'s interpretation of this text, and offers one of his own; one, which he had given us a little while ago; and now ſerves a ſecond time, without any conſiderable variation, at our table.——I ſhall only refer the reader to page 400, where he will find this text conſidered, and Mr *Weſley*'s expoſition canvaſſed.

In this and the two following paragraphs you find fault with the phraſe *imputed*; yet you ſay, "Concern-"ing the thing there is no queſtion." You would diſcard that particular form of expreſſion; yet you add, "As to the doctrine we are agreed." Then, according to your own confeſſion, all theſe your objections are a mere ſtrife of words. Surely ſuch a man as Mr *Weſley* ſhould know how to make a better uſe of pen, ink, and paper, than to litigate about letters and ſyllables.—If I thought myſelf contending only about the moſt preciſely proper form of expreſſing the ſame thing, I ſhould be aſhamed of my employ, and would this inſtant lay down my pen; whereas I apprehend, that we are not agreed as to *doctrine*, that there is a material and very wide difference between us.——My opinion, or rather, my *faith* is, that our *LORD*'s obedience to the moral law in profeſſed ſubmiſſion to its authority, and in exact conformity to its precepts; his performance of all holy duties, and his exerciſe of all heavenly graces, that all this is a moſt eſſential and diſtinguiſhed part of his merit, that this is of higher dignity and greater value than the whole world, and all the righteouſneſs in it. That the divine law is hereby more ſignally honoured, than it could have been honoured by the uninterrupted obedience of *Adam* and all his poſterity.—That *GOD*'s juſtice, holineſs, truth, receive greater glory from theſe unparallelled acts of duty, than from all the ſervices of angels and men in their ſeveral wonderful orders; that this *active* righteouſneſs, together with his moſt meritorious *ſufferings*, are the ground and cauſe of my acceptance with *GOD*, are the very thing which procures and effects my juſtification, making me not barely acquitted from guilt, but truly righteous, yea, perfectly righteous, and that before the *GOD* of infinite penetration and purity.—This is a view of the doctrine, incomparably magnificent and inexpreſſibly comfortable. If you agree with your friend in all theſe particulars, ſpeak and write conformably to ſuch agreement; then you will never again hear from him in this manner, neither will he receive any more ſuch favours from you as the letter now under conſideration; then we ſhall be perfectly joined together "in the ſame mind, and in the "ſame judgment."

Alas! this union, I fear, is not ſo eaſily to be effected.——Mr *Weſley* ſtill inſiſts, and ſtill urges, "The au-"thority of our church (which *Aſpaſio* pleads) and of "thoſe eminent divines (whoſe teſtimony *Aſpaſio* al-"leges), does not touch thoſe particular forms of ex-"preſſion."——Juſtification through imputed righteouſneſs, or being made righteous through the obedience of CHRIST, I ſuppoſe are the forms of expreſſion intended. Theſe it ſeems, none of the quotations *confirm*, *eſtabliſh*, no, nor *touch*, in Mr *Weſley*'s opinion at leaſt; but I am inclined to hope, that the generality of readers will be of a different perſuaſion, and allow that the quotations and the expreſſions touch and reſemble one another, as much as the wings of the cherubim in the ancient ſanctuary *.

"Does not touch." No! not yet? Then we muſt have recourſe to ſome other authority; and ſuch a one I have at hand as you would hardly venture, or even wiſh to gainſay; I mean the authority of *John Weſley*, M. A. who declares, in his expoſition of the New Teſtament—"This is fully conſiſtent with our being juſti-"fied by the imputation of the righteouſneſs of "CHRIST." Now I ſhall only remonſtrate, in imitation of the apoſtle; "If thou thyſelf uſeſt this phraſe, "why wouldſt thou compel others to lay it aſide? Or, "why art thou diſpleaſed with others, for a practice "which thou alloweſt in thyſelf?"

Surely you will not ſay, *imputation* of righteouſneſs is quite a different thing from *imputed* righteouſneſs.—Does not the former evidently include the latter? Can there be a proclamation of pardon, without a pardon proclaimed? Can there be the purchaſe of an eſtate, without an eſtate purchaſed? or the imputation of righteouſneſs, without a righteouſneſs imputed! If others ſhould affect ſubtile and ſelf-deluding evaſions, Mr *Weſley* cannot, Mr *Weſley muſt* not, he has precluded himſelf; nay, he has, with his own mouth, given a verdict againſt himſelf. Is it not recorded in thoſe lines, ſubjoined to your character of a methodiſt?

Let faith and love combine
To guard your valiant breaſt;
The plate be righteouſneſs divine,
Imputed and impreſt.

This *imputed righteouſneſs* was once a delightful theme; your ſong in the houſe of your pilgrimage. Why is it now a burthenſome ſtone, which you would fain ſhake off from yourſelf and others? Are you become *rich* in yourſelf, and *increaſed with goods* of your own acquiring? We know full well for what reaſon the *phraſe* and the *doctrine* are rejected, exploded, and reproached by the *Romiſh* ſuperſtition, becauſe they diſplay, in the brighteſt light, the beauty of FREE GRACE. They hold the door againſt all kind of human merit; they cut off every the moſt diſtant pretenſion for glorying in man, and refer all the honour of ſalvation to JESUS CHRIST alone. Admit juſtification through the imputed righteouſneſs of CHRIST, and the grand bulwark, or the main pillar of *Popery*, falls to the ground; while a ſolid foundation is laid for that triumph and gratitude, expreſſed in the inſpired hymn, *Let us be glad and rejoice* exceedingly, but *give the honour* (all the honour) *to HIM* †.

The righteouſneſs of GOD, ſignifies the righteouſneſs which GOD-man wrought out. "No;" ſays Mr *Weſley*. Your reaſon, Sir, for this negative? A child may deny; a man of judgment will diſprove.—Does not Mr *Weſley* diſprove, when he adds? "It "ſignifies GOD's method of juſtifying ſinners."——Juſt as forcibly as the "*Jews* diſproved the Meſſiah-"ſhip of JESUS of *Nazareth*, when they cried, "Thou the MESSIAH! No; thou art a *Samaritan*, "and haſt a devil." What they alleged wanted a proof, altogether as much as what they denied.—

* Both the cherubims were of one meaſure, and one ſize: and their wings touched one another in the midſt of the houſe, 1 *Kings* vi. 25. 27.

† Rev. xix. 7.

What

What Mr *Weſley* here alleges is a thread-bare objection, already conſidered, and already confuted. Yet, ſince it relates to a point of the utmoſt moment, and that which is the main hinge of our controverſy, I ſhall not be deemed officious, if, as the ſhot has been once again diſcharged, I once again lift up my ſhield againſt it.

"The righteouſneſs of GOD ſignifies GOD's me-"thod of juſtifying ſinners." We have already ſhewn, how low an interpretation this is; how inſipid in itſelf, and incompatible with the current language of ſcripture: on the other hand, how ſublime and conſolatory is the ſenſe which *Aſpaſio* gives! A righteouſneſs, which GOD HIMSELF has proved without any co-operation from his creatures:—The righteouſneſs of that moſt exalted, yet moſt condeſcending SAVIOUR, who is GOD and man in one CHRIST; a righteouſneſs, dignified with all the perfections of the GODHEAD, therefore worthy to be the comfort, the joy, the never-ceaſing boaſt of his people; and ſufficient, infinitely ſufficient, to ſave even the moſt vile, the moſt baſe, the moſt deſperately ruined ſinners.

This is a righteouſneſs, as much ſuperior to all human attainments, to all angelic accompliſhments, as the heaven of heavens is higher than a clod of the valleys.——This is a righteouſneſs which could never have entered into the heart of man or angel to conceive, but will be the cauſe of their admiration, and the ſubject of their wonder to endleſs ages.——This ſenſe fully accounts for thoſe rapturous expreſſions of the prophet, when ſpeaking of the all-ſurpaſſing gift, he thus addreſſes his fellow-ſinners; *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; ſhout, O daughter of Jeruſalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee:—he is righteous, and having ſalvation.* He is completely righteous in his nature, has fulfilled all righteouſneſs in his life and death, and has thereby obtained for thee, a full pardon, a finiſhed ſalvation, a ſure title to eternal glory.——This accounts for thoſe more rapturous expreſſions of the ſacred writers, when, in the fervour of their gratitude, they call upon the whole creation to celebrate the goodneſs of the incarnate JEHOVAH.—*Sing, O ye heavens, for the LORD hath done it; ſhout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into ſinging, ye mountains; O foreſt, and every tree therein, for the* LORD *hath* (in his own perſon, by his own obedience and ſufferings) *redeemed Jacob, and glorified* (not human abilities, not human works, but) *himſelf*, and his own righteouſneſs, *in* the reſtoration of *Iſrael* *.

In ſhort, this is a righteouſneſs, which exalts GOD's juſtice; which magnifies the law, diſplays all his awful and amiable attributes in their fulleſt luſtre.——To contrive it, was unſearchable wiſdom; to beſtow it, is invaluable treaſure.——It anſwers, in the completeſt manner, all the grand and gracious purpoſes both of GOD's glory and of man's ſalvation. True goſpel

* *Iſ.* xliv. 23. Should any one ſay, Is this the ſenſe of the prophet? I aſk, Is not this the fulleſt, grandeſt, divineſt ſenſe? Is it not a ſenſe perfectly true? Is it not warranted by the goſpel-revelation? Is it not demanded by that declaration of our SAVIOUR; *They* (the ancient ſcriptures) *teſtify of me?* Some writers, I am aware, interpret this and other ſimilar paſſages, without taking in the unſpeakable bleſſings of CHRIST and his grace. But theſe interpreters ſeem to act a very injudicious, and no leſs unfaithful part.—I will ſuppoſe them expounding and illuſtrating that great command of creating power, *Let the earth bring forth graſs, and the herb yielding ſeed.*—Will they model their expoſition, or fetch their illuſtration from what appears on the ground in the barren month of *December?* Surely, if they have any taſte or judgment, they will form their comment, by the fertility, the plenty, the unbounded luxuriancy of *April* and *May*. There is much the ſame difference between the righteouſneſs of an incarnate SAVIOUR and all other gifts of divine goodneſs, as there is between the vegetable productions of the vernal, and the almoſt total ſterility of the wintry months.

this! glad tidings indeed! an expedient for our recovery greater than our hearts could wiſh. We may truly ſay, while meditating on this gift of conſummate righteouſneſs; *Where ſin has abounded, grace has much more abounded.* The bricks are fallen down, but the moſt glorious repairer of our breaches has built with hewn ſtone. Well might the apoſtle, having this ſupremely-excellent righteouſneſs in his view, look down with the moſt ſovereign contempt upon every other (cauſe of) confidence; upon every other object of truſt; and reckon them *droſs* and *dung*.——Well might he declare that he would never be aſhamed of the goſpel, in which is this tranſcendently-noble righteouſneſs, in all its magnificence, riches, and glory.

Do you think me rather too warm upon the ſubject? Let me once again remit you to St *Chryſoſtom*; read his expoſition of that charming ſentence, *The righteouſneſs of* GOD, Πολυς, &c. This venerable father of the church ſpeaks the thing as it is. He does not mingle our wine with water, but gives us the genuine truth, and triumphs becauſe of the truth.

The doctrine of an imputed righteouſneſs ſeems to have been typically taught, by the remarkable manner of clothing our firſt parents. All they could do for their own recovery, was like the patched and beggarly mantle of fig-leaves; this they relinquiſh, and GOD himſelf furniſhes them with apparel; animals are ſlain, not for food, but ſacrifice; and the naked criminals are arrayed with the ſkins of thoſe ſlaughtered beaſts.——The *victims* figured the expiation made by CHRIST's death, the *cloathing* typified the imputation of his righteouſneſs. "That does not appear," cries Mr *Weſley*. *Aſpaſio* has produced an authority from the famous *Milton*. I could reinforce it by another from the elegant *Witſius*. If you are not ſatisfied with either, or both theſe teſtimonies, I will give you a reaſon for the ſentiment.—The victims moſt properly ſhadowed forth the expiation of guilt, by the Redeemer's blood; becauſe it is the peculiar end of ſacrifice, to make atonement for ſins; the cloathing moſt pertinently denoted the Saviour's righteouſneſs, which is deſcribed, both by the prophet and the apoſtle under this very image—*He hath covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs*, ſays the prophet *Iſaiah*. *The fine linen* which arrays the bride of the Lamb, *is the perfect righteouſneſs of the ſaints* *,—ſays the beloved diſciple. It is like a royal veſture, or a rich ſuit of apparel, *upon all them that believe*, adds the apoſtle *Paul*. The impartial reader, I promiſe myſelf, will allow theſe paſſages, if not to be abſolutely deciſive, yet to have ſomewhat more weight, than that atom in your ſcale, "This does not appear." As for ſanctification, this may very reaſonably rank among the effects of being cleanſed by the blood, and adorned with the righteouſneſs of CHRIST. Theſe bleſſings produce peace of conſcience, and love of GOD. Juſt as commodious cloathing produces warmth, and promotes health.—— And what is love of GOD, but holineſs of heart in the ſeed, and holineſs of life in the fruit?

As this (the nature of true holineſs) is a matter of the laſt importance; is a point, on which multitudes, I fear, are miſtaken; I will leave it uppermoſt in your thoughts, in the reader's, and in thoſe of, Rev. Sir, your, &c.

* *Rev.* xix. 8. Τα δικαιωματα, being in the plural number, I think may be tranſlated, *juſtitia omnibus numeris abſoluta*. A righteouſneſs of all kinds, and all degrees, or comprehending every kind, and defective in no degree.—Would you ſee the beauty of this fine linen, or the wardrobe in which it is depoſited, conſult *Iſ.* xlv. 24. *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, above, page 262. where the paſſage is explained, with copiouſneſs and particularity; O! that it was alſo explained with a propriety and energy ſuitable to its eminent importance!

LETTER X.

REV. SIR,

WE are now entering upon a new province. Our buſineſs will be chiefly of the *philological* kind. We ſhall treat principally of *words*. But as they are the words which the HOLY GHOST teacheth, they are like the combs erected in yonder hive. Not empty ſyllables, made only for ſound; but rich with divine ſenſe, and full of the honey of the goſpel, replete with the manna of heaven.——May this pen be, to the reader, like *Jonathan*'s rod, when, dipt in the delicious juice, it *enlightened his eyes*, refreſhed his ſpirits, and cheared his heart!

"Almoſt every text," you are pleaſed to affirm, "quoted in this and the following letter, in ſupport of "that particular form of expreſſion, (imputed righte-"ouſneſs,) is diſtorted above meaſure from the plain, "obvious meaning, which is pointed out by the con-"text."—Let us examine theſe abuſed and diſtorted texts, in order to diſcover, from whence the misfortune happened; how the violence was done; whether by Mr *Weſley*'s pen, or by *Aſpaſio*'s tongue.

The firſt is from the book of *Job*. Which, as it is greatly vetterable for its antiquity, and ſingularly to be regarded for its importance, I ſhall beg leave to conſider at large.—A ſinner is deſcribed, lying under a dangerous ſickneſs; and brought, by the force of his diſeaſe, to the brink of the grave; by the multitude of his ſins, to the very borders of hell. In this deplorable condition, *If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one of a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs; then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ranſom* *.

If there be with him a meſſenger of the living GOD; a faithful ambaſſador of CHRIST, who may adminiſter ſpiritual aſſiſtance to the poor afflicted creature.——*An interpreter*, who knows how to open the ſcriptures, and rightly to divide the word of truth; who is a preacher of righteouſneſs, and can properly apply the word of grace.——This is not every one's talent; nor within the compaſs of every man's abilities. He is *one of a thouſand*, to whom GOD hath given the tongue of the learned; enabling him to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon, and ſuit the condition of each reſpective patient.—*To ſhew unto man his uprightneſs*; that is, ſays Mr *Weſley*, "to "convince *him* of GOD's juſtice, in ſo puniſhing him."

But is this the inſtruction, which ſuch a diſtreſſed ſufferer wants? Is this the word of reconciliation, which every true miniſter, in ancient times, did preach, and in latter times does preach? Or is there any need of a choice inſtructor,—one ſkilled in the counſel of GOD, to teach what the common dictates of reaſon demonſtrate?—In this interpretation, I can neither diſcern the true critic, nor the clear reaſoner, nor the ſound divine.

Not the *true critic*. He would acknowledge, that the antecedent in this clauſe הוא, is not GOD, but man. To *man* therefore, if we regard grammatical propriety, the pronoun *his* muſt be referred.——Not the *clear reaſoner*; he would obſerve the emphaſis of the word *then* †. Implying ſome diſcovery, or ſome conviction, in conſequence of which, deliverance from death enſues, or with which it is connected. Can this be a diſcovery or a conviction of GOD's juſtice, in puniſhing him? No verily.——Much leſs therefore can I diſcern the *ſound divine*. He knows, and affirms conſtantly, that this is the conſequence of the MESSIAH's righteouſneſs alone; which, being imputed to the ſinner, becomes, for the bleſſed purpoſe of juſtification unto life, *his* *.

So that *Aſpaſio* ſeems to have the import of language, and the ſcope of the context, both on his ſide. And I may venture to add, he has the conſolatory genius of the goſpel, yet more ſtrongly pleading for his interpretation. It muſt yield but cold comfort, to tell a poor wretch, confined to the bed of languiſhing, and alarmed with apprehenſions of eternal vengeance; but cold comfort muſt it yield, to tell ſuch a one, that he has deſerved all this miſery, and is juſtly puniſhed. Whereas, to inform him of a righteouſneſs, ſufficient to do away all his tranſgreſſions; ſufficient to reconcile him, and render him acceptable, even to the chaſtiſing GOD; ſufficient to obtain his deliverance, very probably from death, moſt aſſuredly from hell; this is a reviving report indeed. This will make the bones, which ſin and miſery had broken, to rejoice.

Then, the ſinner and the ſufferer, attentive to this inſtruction, and applying this righteouſneſs, is made partaker of pardon. GOD, the ſovereign LORD of life and death, *is gracious unto him*; *and ſaith*, in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, as well as in the multitude of his mercies, *Deliver him from going down into the pit* of corruption, as a pledge of his deliverance from the pit of perdition. For *I have found a ranſom*, ſatisfactory to my law, and to my juſtice. I have received an atonement in behalf of this once obnoxious, now reconciled tranſgreſſor.

He ſhall receive the bleſſing from the LORD, and righteouſneſs.——This you will render *holineſs*. But have you no *Hebrew* lexicon to inform you, that the word which ſignifies holineſs, is very different from the expreſſion uſed by the pſalmiſt? He ſays צדקה, whereas holineſs is expreſſed by קדש.——Beſides, have you not obſerved, that *your* interpretation would betray the pſalmiſt into apparent tautology? He had, in the preceding verſes, diſplayed the duties of practical godlineſs, and the graces of inherent holineſs. The

* "*The uprightneſs*," ſays Mr *Caryl*, "chiefly intended here "is *the righteouſneſs of* CHRIST, in and by which we are recon-"ciled to and made one with GOD. We never ſee where our "uprightneſs is, till we ſee there is nothing that makes us ſtand "upright in the court of heaven, but only CHRIST our righte-"ouſneſs.——This is the great duty of the meſſengers and inter-"preters of CHRIST, to declare to man this righteouſneſs for his "uprightneſs. And that hence it is (as *Elihu* ſpeaks) that GOD "is and will be gracious unto him."

Mr *Caryl*, in expounding the book of *Job*, has acquitted himſelf like a maſter in *Iſrael*. His thoughts are beautiful and animated. His criticiſms are correct and judicious. His language, conſidering the time in which he wrote, is remarkably pure and ſtrong. His doctrines are truly edifying, becauſe, generally ſpeaking, they are evangelical.—What is a very neceſſary, but very difficult taſk, in explaining this part of ſcripture, the connection of the ſentiment is diſcovered, the bearings and dependencies of the argument are pointed out; and the tranſitions from one paſſage to another, ſhewn to be, not wild and diſorderly, but juſt, regular and graceful.

The only fault attending this work, is prolixity. I wiſh ſome ſkilful hand would, by rendering it leſs copious, render it more uſeful. I cannot but think, it might be a profitable employ for young ſtudents in divinity, to exerciſe themſelves in abridging Mr *Caryl*, Dr *Owen* upon the *Hebrews*, Mr *Charnock* upon the attributes, or ſome ſuch valuable, but voluminous authors. Theſe, and many other works of the ſame luxuriant growth, would, if put into the alembic, afford us the very ſpirit of the goſpel, and the richeſt cordials for our ſouls.

perſo

* *Job* xxxiii. 23, 24. I have the rather choſen to lay this whole paſſage before the reader, becauſe a new interpretation is given to the word *meſſenger*. Here, it is ſuppoſed to denote a faithful and ſkilful miniſter of the goſpel. In the dialogues it is ſuppoſed to deſcribe our LORD JESUS CHRIST himſelf. I ſcarcely know, which ſenſe to prefer. Perhaps, both may be included, the author, as well as the inſtrument, of comfort to the ſick and ſinful man.——However, the point in debate between Mr *Weſley* and *Aſpaſio*, is not affected by the different application of this word. *His uprightneſs*, according to either expoſition, *may* ſignify the MESSIAH's obedience and ſufferings; *muſt* ſignify theſe things; provided theſe are the only juſtifying righteouſneſs of a ſinner; the only way of obtaining the divine favour, and removing every evil.

† Verſe 24.

ſon he deſcribes, poſſeſſes the latter, and practiſes the former. To ſay, therefore, he ſhall receive holineſs, when he has it already, would not ſuit *David*'s correctneſs; however it may ſuit Mr *Weſley*'s fancy, or Mr *Weſley*'s deſign.——In this clauſe, the evangelical moraliſt touches upon another particular, which enters, as an eſſential part, into the character of a godly man; even *the righteouſneſs which is of faith*; denoted by the bleſſing of pardon, and the gift of righteouſneſs. Take away this, and there is no acceptance with *GOD*. Take away this, and the gates, mentioned in the cloſe of the pſalm, are unalterably ſhut. Unleſs we are furniſhed with this paſſport, the everlaſting doors never lift up their heads.——If you exclude this peculiarity, the deſcription is very imperfect, and the picture extremely deficient. Whereas, this adds the finiſhing touch, and gives *true* perfection to both.

Several paſſages are quoted, in which the word צדקה occurs. Sometimes you would have it ſignify *mercy*; ſometimes *juſtification*; ſometimes *ſpotleſs holineſs*. But what proof do I find, for eſtabliſhing any of theſe ſignifications; which differ ſo much from one another, and ſtill more from the truth? Nothing but the cuſtomary argument, "ſo it unqueſtionably means."—Now you muſt unqueſtionably know, at leaſt every novice in the language knows, that the genuine and native ſenſe of צדקה is *righteouſneſs*. The word expreſſive of mercy, is חסד; neither in ſenſe nor ſound alike.—As to *juſtification*, the phraſe never denotes that bleſſed effect, but the divine and meritorious cauſe which produces it.

Shall I, in this inquiry, appeal to the beſt lexicons, the moſt approved tranſlations, or the ableſt interpreters? No, I will refer you to the deciſion of an interpreter, who is ſuperior to all lexicons and all tranſlations; I mean, the author of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*. He tranſlates this very word, as it enters into the name of *Melchiſedec*. And he tranſlates it, not mercy, not juſtification, no, nor ſpotleſs holineſs, but righteouſneſs; even that righteouſneſs, whoſe fruit is peace with *GOD*, and peace in our own conſcience. Now, will you play the critic upon this inſpired writer? and ſay, Unqueſtionably it means, not what the apoſtle has determined; not what *Aſpaſio*, ſupported by his authority, has adopted; but what I think fit to dictate?

An oppoſer of our *LORD*'s imputed righteouſneſs, who had more diſcretion or more ſubtilty than Mr *Weſley*, would have argued in this manner. "The original word, I muſt confeſs, ought to be tranſlated "*righteouſneſs*. This is undoubtedly the principal and "leading ſignification of the term. But then the circumſtances and the context oblige us to underſtand "it, in the notion of mercy, of ſpotleſs holineſs, or of "any thing elſe that ſerves our purpoſe."——This would be more modeſt and more plauſible, though not more juſt and ſolid, than your confident aſſertion.

Suppoſe we ſhould admit this pretence, what does the critic gain thereby? Muſt he not have recourſe to that noble and comfortable doctrine, for which we plead? Let the word be tranſlated *mercy*. Why is mercy ſhewn to ſinners? Is it not on account of the righteouſneſs of their SURETY? Let it be tranſlated *goodneſs*. Wherefore is goodneſs exerciſed to rebellious men? Is it not becauſe of the ſatisfaction made by their crucified *LORD*? Render it whatever you pleaſe, provided it conveys the idea of favour vouchſafed, or of the benefits conferred, it muſt terminate, ſtill terminate, in that grand central point, the incarnation, obedience, and death of *IMMANUEL*.

Zion ſhall be redeemed with judgment—"After ſevere "puniſhment," you ſay,—The *Hebrew* prepoſition, ſignifying *after*, is אחר. I find no trace of any ſuch word in my edition of the Bible. You may as well render or interpret the paſſage, *in the midſt*. And then, if ſome other critic ſhould be inclined to tranſlate it, *before* or *round about*; we ſhould have a large compaſs of meaning; but where would preciſion and exactneſs be found?---But why is *Zion* to be redeemed *after* ſevere puniſhment? Has her puniſhment any influence or ſway in the work of her redemption? Does the puniſhment of man pave the way for the ſalvation of *GOD*? Are ſinners to wait for pardon and reconciliation, till they have been ſeverely puniſhed? This is very diſcouraging doctrine; and, bleſſed be *GOD*, it is abſolutely without foundation. The goſpel ſays, *To day, even to day*, ſinners, *if ye will hear his voice, ye ſhall enter into reſt*. You need not tarry till you have been ſeverely chaſtiſed; but this inſtant believe in the *LORD JESUS*, and you ſhall be ſaved. The *LORD JESUS* has been wounded and bruiſed in your ſtead. He has received all the puniſhment which you have deſerved. Yea, as a ranſomer, he has paid double, as a victim, he has ſuffered double *, for all your ſins.——Conſidering theſe things, I am ſtill diſpoſed to abide by *Aſpaſio*'s plain and obvious interpretation; not to go out of my way, in queſt of the pricking brier and grieving thorn, when I meet with roſes and lilies in the common road.

In the LORD have I righteouſneſs. This will not ſatisfy our critic. It muſt be *through* the LORD.——What piddling criticiſm is this, even in caſe it was true, and anſwered ſome ſpecious end! But it is by no means true. Every body knows, that the prefix ב ſignifies *in*; and every body but Mr *Weſley* would bluſh to aſſert the contrary. Neither does it anſwer any valuable end, but the reverſe. It degrades the exalted ſenſe, and impoveriſhes the rich bleſſing. To have righteouſneſs *in* the LORD, is abundantly more expreſſive of glorious grace, than barely to have righteouſneſs *through* the LORD. *Mordecai* had riches and honours *through Ahaſuerus*, and his royal favour; *Eſther* had riches and honours *in Ahaſuerus*, as her royal huſband; *he* by being a courtier, *ſhe* by being a conſort to the moſt magnificent monarch in the world.

If Mr *Weſley* piddled in the foregoing, he flaſhes in the following paſſage. He aſſures us that צדקה means *ſpotleſs holineſs*. This is really a bold ſtroke in criticiſm. But, like many other bold enterpriſes, it is likely to prove, not a birth, but an abortion.——צדקה *ſpotleſs!* You might as well have rendered it *toothleſs*. It has no more to do with the idea of ſpotleſs, than it has to do with the idea of an ivory tooth, or a poliſhed toothpick. Literally tranſlated, it ſignifies *ages*, and may denote the *perpetuity* of this righteouſneſs, and of its beneficial effects. It *was* from the beginning, it *is* at this day, and it *will be* even unto the end, mighty to ſave. It is the one refuge and hope of ſinners, in every age of the world, and under every diſpenſation of religion. Through all the changes of time it has been, and thro' the unchangeable eternity it will be their chief joy, and their crown of rejoicing.

What righteouſneſs ſhall give us peace at the laſt day, inherent or imputed? To this queſtion *Aſpaſio* has replied, in a very explicit manner, by preſenting us with a pertinent extract from *Biſhop Hall*, and by commenting upon a moſt important prophecy of *Iſaiah*, in both which, all human righteouſneſs is ſet aſide, and our peace is derived entirely from the glorious SHILOH †; from him, who made peace by the blood of his croſs, and whoſe name is *THE PRINCE OF PEACE*; having this heavenly bleſſing, and the right of conferring it, as the peculiar privilege, or unſhared prerogative of his crown.

Mr *Weſley* is pleaſed to deny this doctrine, and to aſſociate

* Iſ. xl. 2.

† *Gen.* xlix. 10. שילה *Schilo, Nomen Meſſiæ peculiare, tranquillatorem deſignans.* That is, the maker of peace, and the author of tranquillity, for rebellious and wretched men.

associate with the Papists *, in ascribing our peace (and if our peace, then our salvation) "partly to inherent, partly to imputed righteousness." But does our church so? Hear her own words. "We do not "presume to come to this thy table, O merciful LORD, "trusting in our own righteousnesses;" much less then will she dare to approach his judgment-seat, trusting in any such thing.—Does the apostle *Paul* do so? Hear his own protestation, *That I may be found in CHRIST, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law*; which consists of my personal obedience, and inherent holiness: but having this, as the source of my peace, and the strength of my salvation, *the righteousness which is of GOD by faith*; even that inconceiveably-precious righteousness, which GOD my SAVIOUR wrought, and which a sinner by faith receives.—Did Mr *Wesley* himself always do so? Let those lines bear witness; of which neither the poet nor the divine need be ashamed.

My righteous servant, and my SON,
Shall each believing sinner clear;
And all who stoop t' abjure their own,
Shall in his righteousness appear.

Will that righteousness give you peace, which you *abjure*? Or, is it pious, is it prudent, is it consistent, to trust in a righteousness, which you absolutely renounce? That which you abjure (a stronger word could not be used) you consider, not barely as despicable, but as utterly abominable. Whereas, that which gives you peace at the awful tribunal, must not only be excellent, but incomparably excellent and valuable.—See, my friend, how *thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testify against thee* †. O! that you may return to your first sentiments, and to your first love ‡! and no longer expose yourself and your doctrine, to be a by-word among the people. If you persist in such palpable inconsistencies, who can forbear taking up that taunting proverb, *A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways*?

* The doctrine of the Papists, avowed by a writer of their own, is; "Our confidence and hope in the day of judgment dependeth, "not only upon our apprehension of CHRIST's merits by faith, "but also upon our conformity to CHRIST, in charity and good "works." The reader may see this presumption rebuked, and this error refuted, in Dr FULK's *annotations on the Rhemish Testament*. 1 John iv. 17.

† Job xv. 6.

‡ That Mr *Wesley* may not be ashamed to retract a mistaken sentiment, I will break the ice, and lead the way. If it be shameful to renounce error, and sacrifice all to truth, I do very willingly take this shame to myself.—In a copy of verses, which I formerly wrote, sacred to the memory of a generous benefactor, I remember the following lines.

Our wants reliev'd by thy indulgent care,
Shall give thee courage at the dreadful bar,
And stud the crown thou shalt for ever wear.

These lines, in whatever hands they are lodged, and whatever else, of a like kind, may have dropt from my pen, I now publicly disclaim. They are the very reverse of my present belief. In which I hope to persevere, so long as I have any being.

Far be it from me to suppose, that any work of mine should, in order to create my peace, or cherish my confidence, *be coupled with CHRIST's most holy act*. I speak the words of our church, and I speak the sense of the prophet. *I will trust, and not be afraid*. Wherefore? Because I am inherently holy? Rather, *because GOD is my salvation*. GOD manifest in the flesh, has finished my transgression, and made an end of my sin. And in this most magnificently gracious work will I rejoice.——I speak agreeably to the declaration of the HOLY GHOST. *Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither shalt thou be confounded*. Why? because thy inherent goodness shall prevent thy confusion? No; but on a footing, infinitely more solid; for a reason, infinitely more satisfactory. *Because thy MAKER is thy husband*. The consequence of which is, all thy debts and deficiencies are upon him; all his consummate righteousness is upon thee.

But stop. A passage from St *John* is introduced, to support this opinion. "*CHRIST* died for us, and lives "in us, *that we may have boldness in the day of judgment*." ——That *CHRIST* died for us, and lives in us, I readily acknowledge. But where do you find any of the apostles, from these premises, drawing *your* conclusion? St *John*, whom you quote, has no such logic. His inference is deduced from a very different topic. You give us a fragment of the apostle's words; why don't you exhibit the golden bowl complete? We shall then quickly perceive, that it contains a more sweet and salutary draught, than you have provided for our refreshment.

Εν τουτω τετελειωται η αγαπη μεθ' ημων, ινα παρρησιαν εχωμεν εν τη ημερα της κρισεως.
Which we translate, *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment* *. As you are fond of criticising upon the original scriptures, here you might have done it justly and honourably. Here you might have altered and reformed our translation; while every capable judge would have owned your service to be seasonable and important. The true sense of μεθ' ημων, is *with us*, or *with regard to us*. That is, GOD's love celebrated with inimitable † energy and beauty in the preceding verse; *GOD*'s love towards us is herein made perfect; this is its grand and crowning effect, that we should have, not a bare hope, but an unappalled boldness at the day of judgment.

As though he had said, GOD, having reconciled us to himself, by the blood of his SON;—having renewed us after his own image, by his blessed SPIRIT, testifying of CHRIST in our hearts;——having carried us through all the dangers of life, and raised our bodies from the dust of death; he crowns and consummates all these most indulgent acts of his grace, by giving us an undaunted and triumphant confidence, at the day of universal audit.——According to this interpretation, your own text is against your opinion; and refers this joyful assurance, not to our love of GOD, but to his love of us; not to inherent righteousness, but to free grace ‡.

Aspasio thus translates St *Peter*'s words; *Who have obtained like precious faith in the righteousness of our GOD and our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST* ‖. Mr *Wesley* gives us to understand, that this translation is wrong. It should be faith *through*—and not through the righteousness, but through *the mercy* of our GOD and SAVIOUR.——He will not allow the *Greek* preposition εν to signify *in*; though I can prove it to have been in peaceable possession of this signification, for more than two thousand years. And the substantive δικαιοσυνη must not denote *righteousness*, though it pleads, as a warrant for this weighty sense, the incontestable authority of St *Paul*. Give me leave to tell you, Sir, that I can produce a multitude of proofs, to overthrow your first puny alteration; but produce, if you can, a single passage from the whole New

* 1 John iv. 17.

† Ο Θεος αγαπη εστι, *God is love*. This I call *inimitable*. Nothing can be more simple, yet nothing is more sublime. For my part, I know not how to attempt an illustration of the noble sentiment. It strikes the mind, as light strikes the eye. No art can make *this* more bright; and no paraphrase can make *that* more delicate, more majestic, more affecting.——How flat some of the finest things said by the ancient philosophers; how flat they read, when compared with this animated stroke of divine eloquence, the reader, if he pleases may see in CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE STARRY HEAVENS.

‡ Should it be said, in case you thus interpret the first part of the text, how will it connect with what follows? Perfectly well. —And none need wonder, that we shall appear with such boldness at his coming; since they cannot but observe, that *as he is, so are we in this world*. We are actuated by his SPIRIT; we resemble him in all our conversation; and hence it is evident, that we are one with him.

‖ 2 *Pet.* i. 1. Τοις ισοτιμον ημιν λαχουσι πιστιν εν δικαιοσυνη του Θεου ημων και σωτηρος ημων Ιησου Χριστου.

Testament,

Teſtament *, to uphold your laſt daring innovation.

Here I cannot but obſerve, you abandon your favourite commentator *Bengelius*; of whoſe merit and excellence you ſpeak ſo highly and ſo juſtly. He ſays, in his notes upon the place, The righteouſneſs of GOD our SAVIOUR, is the righteouſneſs of CHRIST; which faith apprehends, and which is oppoſed to a man's own righteouſneſs.——What is more ſurpriſing, you depart from your own comment; nay, you expreſsly contradict your own comment. To edify the readers of your expoſition, you inform and aſſure them, that this phraſe ſignifies "both the active and paſſive righte-" ouſneſs" of CHRIST. To gainſay what *Aſpaſio* has advanced, you more than inſinuate, that it ſignifies no ſuch thing, but only "the mercy of our LORD."—— Nay, to corroborate the true ſenſe, and determine the words invariably to the active and paſſive righteouſneſs of CHRIST, you add, "It is this alone, by which the "juſtice of GOD is ſatisfied." If then Mr *Weſley* would reconcile what he writes in his expoſitory notes, with what he writes in his animadverſions on *Aſpaſio*, he muſt maintain, that by the *mercy* of GOD alone, his juſtice is ſatisfied.

I will not exclaim, on this occaſion, as you have too freely and not very genteelly done, in your letter to Mr *Law*, "Exquiſite nonſenſe †!" But this I may venture to ſay, Contradiction, didſt thou ever know ſo truſty a friend, or ſo faithful a devotee? Many people are ready enough to contradict others. But it ſeems all one to this gentleman, whether it be another or himſelf, ſo he may but contradict.

Permit me, for a moment, ſeriouſly to expoſtulate the caſe. Why ſhould you be ſo averſe to the righteouſneſs of our GOD and SAVIOUR? Why ſhould you ranſack all the ſtores of your learning and knowledge; nay, deſcend to unwarrantable criticiſms, and quite unworthy your ſuperior abilities, in order to exclude this moſt glorious truth from the Bible? in order to exterminate this moſt precious privilege from the church? Attempt, if you think proper, to pluck the ſun from the firmament, to hide the light from our eyes, and withdraw the air from our lungs. But do not attempt to rob us of what is far more valuable than all theſe bleſſings, by depriving us of this ineſtimable treaſure, the righteouſneſs of CHRIST.——Which, being a righteouſneſs immaculate, all-ſurpaſſing, divine, ſwallows up and annihilates our guilt; as the immenſe waves of the ocean would ſwallow up and annihilate the drop of ink, that now hangs on the point of my pen.——Which, being a righteouſneſs immaculate, all-ſurpaſſing, divine, will preſent us before our GOD, and before his angels, without ſpot and blemiſh; in robes more beautiful than the colours of that reſplendent bow, which is bended on the ſkirts of yonder cloud.

Therein *is revealed the righteouſneſs of GOD*;—"GOD's "method of juſtifying ſinners." See this interpretation examined, and this objection anſwered before.

We eſtabliſh the law, as we expect no ſalvation, without a perfect conformity to it ‡,—namely, by CHRIST. "Is not this a mere quibble?" ſays Mr *Weſley*.—Quite the reverſe. It is no *low conceit*, but an exceeding ſerious and momentous truth. It is no *play upon the ſound* of words, but expreſſes a doctrine of great ſolidity, and of the laſt importance. Tell me, ye that cavil at this method of eſtabliſhing the law, by what other expedient you propoſe to effect it?—By your paſt conduct? That, you muſt acknowledge, has been more or leſs a violation of the law.——By the preſent obedience? That, you cannot deny, falls ſhort of the ſublime requirements of the law.—By your future behaviour? Well, I will ſuppoſe, that, in ſome future period, you reach the very ſummit of perfection. Still the law will have much to complain of, and will lay much to your charge. You have not magnified it by a holy nature. You have not preſented it with the conſummate righteouſneſs of your whole heart, and your whole converſation. You have not begun, from the firſt moment of your exiſtence, and perſevered in this perfect conformity, to the laſt breath you drew. In this caſe, either the law muſt recede from its moſt righteous demands, and the immutable GOD muſt compromiſe matters with his creatures, or elſe you can never enter into life. *Unleſs* you renounce all ſuch impotent attempts, and arrogant conceits; talk no more of "prac-" tiſing it, in its full extent," but betake yourſelf to CHRIST, *who is the end of the law* *, *for* accompliſhing that *righteouſneſs*, which its precepts demand, but which the frailty of man cannot perform.

Thus we eſtabliſh the law, as the conſummate ſtandard of righteouſneſs; as the original condition of life; and as that moſt venerable ſyſtem, with which, as well as with its divine Author, there is no variableneſs or ſhadow of changing.——And does this method of ſecuring the dignity of the law, hinder or diſcourage a dutiful obſervance of its commands? If not, your objection derived from that well-known text, *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the* LORD, is

——*telum imbelle ſine ictu.*

If this be the moſt rational, and the moſt ſure way of producing the love of GOD, which is the very eſſence of true holineſs, then your objection recoils, and falls upon the head of your own cauſe.——Can there be a more powerful, a more endearing motive to love the LORD my GOD, than a perſuaſion of his ineffable love to me, in giving his dear SON, ſo to fulfil, ſo to ſatisfy the law on my behalf, that I am thereby delivered from all my offences; am veſted with a perfect righteouſneſs; and on the foot of juſtice, as well as mercy, ſtand entitled to eternal life?

"Though I believe, that CHRIST hath *lived* "and *died* for me, yet I would ſpeak very tenderly "and ſparingly of the former."——How widely then does your practice differ from the apoſtle's? *We believe, and therefore have ſpoken*, confidently and inceſſantly, in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon. No, ſays Mr *Weſley*, "We believe, and therefore we ſpeak tenderly and "ſparingly,"——If you believe, that CHRIST has lived for you, and fulfilled all righteouſneſs in your

* *The righteouſneſs of GOD, the righteouſneſs of GOD our SAVIOUR*, never denotes, in all the apoſtolical writings, the attribute of *mercy*. If it denotes, and Mr *Weſley* can make it appear, I will confeſs myſelf miſtaken, and thank him for correcting my error.

† Mr *Weſley*, in the *abridgment* of his letter to Mr *Law*, inſerted in the *Preſervative from unſettled notions*, has expunged this and ſome other indecently-harſh expreſſions. In ſo doing, he has done well. Since the *contemptuous* and the *reproachful*, even when really deſerved, can have no tendency to confirm our argument, but to provoke reſentment. They are not the moſt promiſing means of joining us together, in the ſame mind and the ſame judgment; but rather the ſure way, to widen the breach, and increaſe animoſity.

‡ The reader is deſired to peruſe *Aſpaſio*'s own words, above, page 268. There his ſentiments are more fully explained; but the paſſage is not tranſcribed, on purpoſe to avoid increaſing the ſize of this piece; which already ſwells to a larger bulk than the writer propoſed.

* *Rom.* x. 8. CHRISTUS, ſaith *Bengelius*, *eſt τέλος νόμου εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι, juſtitiam et vitam, quam lex oſtendit, ſed dare nequit, tribuens.* CHRIST is the end of the law. How? By bringing in that righteouſneſs, and giving that life, which the law ſhews, and ſhews the want of, but neither itſelf gives, nor can enable us to acquire.

CHRISTUS, ſaith St *Auguſtine*, *eſt legis finis, interficiens et perficiens.* The ceremonial law he has ſlain, and taken out of the way. The moral law he has fulfilled for us, and we in him. Inaſmuch as, through faith in his name, his obedience becometh ours.

ſtead,

ſtead, ſurely you ſhould give him the honour of this wonderful loving-kindneſs, and both preach, and talk, and ſing of his goodneſs. It ſhould be as a fire ſhut up in your bones; and you ſhould ſpeak, that yourſelf may be refreſhed, and you LORD may be glorified.

But you "fear dreadful conſequences." What? where the divine holineſs fears none? and the divine preſcience ſees none? Are you then more deep-ſighted, to diſcern theſe diſtant evils, than omniſcience?—Methinks, I would not have ſpoken thus, unleſs I had been wiſer than the SPIRIT of inſpiration.——Do you not, by cheriſhing and avowing ſuch apprehenſions, find fault with the glorious goſpel, in which this righteouſneſs is revealed? revealed, as its moſt eminent article, and moſt diſtinguiſhing peculiarity?—A doctrine taught, and a bleſſing granted, and both from heaven! yet not fit to be diſplayed, inculcated, and inſiſted on? What a contemptible idea muſt this give of our holy religion, and of our holy revelation, to an inquiring infidel?

"I would never ſpeak of them (the active and paſ-"ſive righteouſneſs of CHRIST) ſeparately."—This inſinuates, what *Aſpaſio* diſavows; and what you cannot hint, without apparent injuſtice to his ſentiments.—"I would ſpeak of it (the former) as ſparingly as do "the ſcriptures."—Here you appeal to thoſe writings, which muſt either condemn your conduct, or their own propriety. At your leiſure conſider the caſe, and you will find the dilemma unavoidable.—In the mean time, be ſo candid as to read a ſhort note, inſerted in *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, above, page 273. where you may ſee, that the ſcriptures are far from ſpeaking ſparingly on this point. It is their favourite and fundamental topic. It runs through them, as a golden woof through a warp of ſilver; or as the vital blood through the animal ſtructure.——And whatever *you*, Sir, may be inclined to do, I hope, no lover of CHRIST will be perſuaded to ſecrete this invaluable truth of the goſpel. Shall *ſuch* a truth ſkulk in a corner, or ſpeak only in a whiſper? No; let us proclaim it upon the houſe-tops; and wiſh, that the joyful ſound may reach the very ends of the earth.

The gift of righteouſneſs muſt ſignify a righteouſneſs not their own.——*Aſpaſio*'s expreſſion is, not *originally* their own. Originally he ſaid, with a view of hinting, that, in ſome other ſenſe, it was and is their own; their own, by way of imputation, though not by way of operation. This word, in order to make the ſentence appear abſurd, Mr *Weſley* drops. But whether ſuch a practice be free from guile, or what the apoſtle calls *cunning craftineſs*, let the impartial reader judge.

Aſpaſio's interpretation of the phraſe, authenticated by the language of ſcripture, Mr *Weſley* ſets aſide; and introduces another, whoſe only recommendation to the public is, "I come from Mr *Weſley*'s pen."—Do you ſo? then we will allow you all proper regard. But becauſe you come from Mr *Weſley*'s pen, muſt you therefore diſplace propriety, and ſupplant truth? make an inſpired writer argue incorrectly, nay, jar with himſelf? This is rather too much for you to aſſume, even though you came recommended by a greater name.

"The gift of righteouſneſs, ſignifies the righteouſ-"neſs or holineſs which GOD gives to and works in "them." Let us obſerve the apoſtle's aim, and the proceſs of his reaſoning.—His aim is to illuſtrate the manner of our juſtification. For this purpoſe, he forms a contraſt between *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion, and CHRIST's obedience. *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion, which he himſelf committed, ruins all that ſpring from him. This is the leading propoſition. Now, if the ſacred diſputant knows how to reaſon accurately, or to draw a concluſion juſtly, the concluſion muſt be to this effect; ſo likewiſe CHRIST's obedience which he himſelf performed, recovers all who believe in him. Through *Adam*'s diſobedience, without the conſideration of their own miſdoings, the former are made ſinners; through CHRIST's obedience, without the conſideration of their own good qualities, the latter are made righteous.—Though I am far, very far from diſeſteeming the holineſs wrought in us, yet what place has it here? In the article of juſtification it is utterly excluded. It has no ſhare in the accompliſhment of that great work; and every attentive reader will ſee, that it enters not into the apoſtle's preſent argumentation.—Beſides, if the gift of righteouſneſs ſignifies the holineſs wrought in us, then we ſhall reign in life, by means of a perſonal, not of an imputed righteouſneſs, by means of an imperfect, not of a complete obedience.—Then all the people of GOD will be juſtified, not by the obedience of ONE, but each by his own, ſeverally and diſtinctly. Which is contrary, not only to a ſingle, but to many expreſs paſſages of this very chapter.

I ſaid, "every attentive reader will ſee."——Some perhaps may ſay within themſelves, Is not this ſpoken in Mr *Weſley*'s manner? the looſe preſumptive way of arguing, which you blame in him?—To which it is anſwered, I am far from reſting my point upon this preſumptive proof: it is not the pillar which ſupports my cauſe; but only a feſtoon which adorns my pillar.—However, was it accompanied with no proofs ſatisfactory to others; it muſt to Mr *Weſley*, whom I ſuppoſe one of the attentive readers, have the force of demonſtration. Hear his own words, in his comment on this very portion of ſcripture. "As the ſin of *Adam*, "without the ſins which we afterwards committed, "brought us death: ſo the righteouſneſs of CHRIST, "without the good works which we afterwards per-"form, brings us life*."—It is a righteouſneſs without the good works which we afterwards perform: therefore it is a righteouſneſs, not originally our own, but another's. It is not that which GOD works in us, but prior to it, and independent on it. If *Aſpaſio* had ſuborned an evidence, and put words into his mouth, he could not have deviſed a more direct and full confirmation of his doctrine, than this volunteer witneſs depoſeth.——I thank you, Sir, for giving me ſo valuable an explanation of the *gift of* righteouſneſs, and its bleſſed effects. I thank you likewiſe for furniſhing *Aſpaſio* with ſo inconteſtable a vindication againſt the objections of the author of *The Preſervative*.

The obedience of ONE, ſo highly extolled by the apoſtle, is CHRIST's actual performance of the whole law.——This you deny. I wiſh you had favoured me with your reaſons for this denial; but my wiſhes of this kind are conſtantly diſappointed. However, I will follow our LORD's direction, and do unto others, even as I would they ſhould do unto me. I will give you a reaſon for my own or *Aſpaſio*'s interpretation.——The apoſtle is treating of *Adam*'s actual breach of the law. If ſo, the proper antitheſis muſt be CHRIST's actual performance of the law.——In the following verſes he explains himſelf. Let *them* be the comment on our text, and the gift of righteouſneſs means, *the righteouſneſs of* ONE; *the obedience of* ONE. This righteouſneſs we have in JESUS CHRIST our LORD; all other is inherent in ourſelves. Juſtification by this righteouſneſs, is alone conſiſtent with free grace; juſtification by any other, is (inconſiſtent with it, is) ſubverſive of it.

Farther, as you are a critic in the *Greek*, you need not be informed, that St *Paul* uſes three ſeveral

* Here Mr *Weſley* ſpeaks in perfect agreement with St *Chryſoſtom*; Ο Χριστος τοις εξ αυτου, καθοτι και δικαιοπραγησαι, εσχον παρεχων την δικαιοσυνην.

words,

words, δικαίωμα, δικαίωσις, δικαίωσιν, ὑπακοη. Now can you shew any passage, in which all these words are used to signify sufferings or death? Nay, can you shew me any single passage, in which any one of them occurs in this signification? If you cannot, what shadow of authority have you, for putting this construction upon the words, in the present case? what shadow of authority for saying, with that unlimited confidence, *CHRIST*'s "dying for man, is *certainly* the *chief* part, if not the *whole* which is meant by that expression *?"—If you attend to the tenor of the apostle's argument, or inquire into the import of his language, perhaps you will see cause, not only to alter, but even to reverse, this your positive assertion.

Let me subjoin an extract from St *Chrysostom*, suited to this and the preceding paragraph; and worthy of our serious consideration. From which it will appear, that *Aspasio* is by no means singular in his sentiments, but speaks the doctrine of the ancient church. Τυπος ην Ιησου Χριστου ο Αδαμ· πως τυπος, φησιν; ὁτι ωσπερ εκεινος τοις εξ αυτου, καιτοι μηδεπω φαγοντας απο του ξυλου, γεγονε αιτιος θανατου δια την βρωσιν εισαχθεις εις ὁ Χριστος τοις εξ αυτου, καιτοιγε δικαιοπραγησασι, γεγονε προξενος δικαιοσυνης· την δια του σταυρου φησιν ημιν εχαρισατο· διο τελος αυτου και καλουσι ΕΝΟΣ ἑνεκεν, και στενοχωρει τελος εις μεσον φερει λεγων, Ωσπερ δι' ΕΝΟΣ ανθρωπου η αμαρτια εις τον κοσμον εισηλθε, και δια της του ΕΝΟΣ παραπτωματος οι πολλοι απεθανον· και, Ουχ ως δι' ΕΝΟΣ αμαρτησαντος, το δωρημα· και, Το κριμα εξ ΕΝΟΣ εις κατακριμα· και παλιν, Ει γαρ τω του ΕΝΟΣ παραπτωματι ὁ θανατος εβασιλευσε δια του ενος· και, Αρα ουν ως δι' ΕΝΟΣ παραπτωματος και εις παντας ανθρωπους το ΕΝΟΣ ανθρωπου αμαρτωλους κατεσταθησαν οι πολλοι· και ΕΝΟΣ, η ὁλη λεγει σπερματος, πως; ἑνος καλεσθωσαι τον Χριστον; δυναιτο αν τις λεγειν πως, ἑνος παρακουσαντος τον Αδαμ, πολλους αμαρτωλους κατεστησεν ὁ θεος.

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. That is, by our representative, and in our nature.——— "Amazing!" cries Mr *Wesley*. But why amazing? Is not this the common import of the most common actions? Do not you and I make laws in and by our representatives in parliament? May not every debtor, when his surety has given full satisfaction to the creditor, say, I have satisfied, I have paid, in my bondsman?

* The obedience of one, St *Chrysostom* expounds by, ἑνος καλεσθωσαι. Would Mr *Wesley* venture to affirm, that *dying well*, not *living well*, is *certainly* the chief thing signified in καλοποιησαντος? A pretty daring criticism this! Does not the word rather signify, a course of well-doing; terminated (if you please) in, not constituted by, a correspondent death?

† προξενος, an expressive word; it seems to denote such a procuring of righteousness for sinners, as corresponds with the provision made, by some hospitable householder, for the strangers who are come to be his guests. In which they bear no part, either of the expence, or of the trouble! προξενος και τελος. *Hujus rei fuit tibi auctor; hanc rem tibi comparo.* Steph. Thesaur. in voc.

‡ *Chrysost. tom.* III. page 71. 72. *Edit. Savil.* "*Adam* is a "type of *CHRIST*. How? In this respect; as the former was "the cause of death to all his descendents, though they did not "(like him) eat of the forbidden fruit; so *CHRIST* is the cause "(προξενος) author, procurer of righteousness to all his seed, tho' "they have not (like him) been personally obedient; even of that "righteousness, which he finished for us on the cross. For this "reason,—*to ascertain and appropriate the honour of this righteousness to CHRIST; as a work, not wrought by us, nor wrought in us, but completed for us on the cursed tree.*—He insists and dwells upon that very observable circumstance, *One*. He iterates and reiterates the emphatical word ONE. He introduces it again and again, and can hardly prevail upon himself to discontinue the repetition. As by *one man* sin entered into the world——— Through the offence of *one* many be dead—Not as it was by *one* that sinned, so is the free gift——The judgment was by *one* to condemnation—By *one* man's offence death reigned by *one*——— "As by the offence of *one*, judgment came upon all men unto "condemnation—As by the disobedience of *one* many were "made sinners.—Thus does the apostle again and again introduce the word ONE, and can hardly prevail on himself to discontinue the repetition. That if a *Jew* should ask, How can "the world be saved by the well-doing of one, or by the obedience "of *CHRIST*? You may be able to reply on his own principles, "How could the world be condemned by the evil-doing of one, "or by the disobedience of *Adam*?"

To invalidate this interpretation, you alledge, that the apostle "is not speaking here of the *cause* of our "justification, but the *fruits* of it. Among all the excellent things, which, in your studies and in your travels, you have learned; have you never learned, that between saying and proving there is a wide difference? Never did I meet with a person, who seemed so totally ignorant of this very obvious truth.—Well; we must take your word, without proof; but I hope, not without examination. "The apostle is speaking of the fruit." Is then the fulfilling of the law, the fruit of justification? This is the first time, I apprehend, that any such thing was deliberately affirmed. It is the cause, the adequate, the immediate, and indeed the only proper cause of justification. But the fruits are peace of conscience, and love of GOD; the spirit of adoption, and the hope of glory.

Shew me, Sir, where δικαιωμα, in conjunction with του νομου, signifies the fruits of justification; and not those demands of the law, which must necessarily be satisfied before justification can take place.——Especially, when the phrase is corroborated by that other strong expression, πληρωθη. An expression used by our LORD concerning himself, and the design of his coming into the world. Applicable to him alone, who is the end of the law for righteousness; and descriptive of that obedience, by which alone the law is magnified.

This sense, says *Aspasio*, agrees with the tenor of the apostle's arguing. "Not here;" replies Mr *Wesley*.——— Let us then consider the aim, and trace the progress of the apostle's reasoning. He is clearing up and confirming that great privilege of the gospel, *There is no condemnation to them that are in JESUS CHRIST*. This, you will allow, is not the fruit of justification, but justification itself. As this wants no argument to confirm it, let us proceed in our attention to the sacred writer. There is no condemnation to those who are true believers in *JESUS CHRIST*; who, in consequence of this belief, walk not after the flesh, but after the SPIRIT.

Perhaps, some man will say, How can this be? since even true believers fall short. Nay, they offend, and therefore must be liable to the curse.——*For* this reason, they are delivered from condemnation; because *the law of the SPIRIT of life in CHRIST JESUS*, that new dispensation, introduced in the room of the old law, promises the privilege of pardon, and the gift of the SPIRIT; in which things the true life and real happiness of mankind consist: promises both freely, without any works, purely on account of the righteousness which is in *CHRIST JESUS*. And hereby this new, gracious, blessed dispensation, *hath made me free from the law*; which convinced me of *sin*; condemned me for sin; *and* bound me over unto *death*.

These are glad tidings, doubtless; but are they not attended with two inconveniences? Does not this procedure deprive the law of its due honour, and screen the sinner from his deserved punishment?—By no means. *For that which was an absolute impossibility, on account of the* strictness of the *law, and the weakness of human nature*, GOD, to whom nothing is impossible, *has* most wonderfully *accomplished*; by *sending his own* SON, *in the likeness of sinful flesh*; to live among sinners; to come under their obligations, *and* perform the obedience demanded from them; by sending him also to be a sacrifice *for sin*; to be charged with its guilt, and undergo its punishment. By this grand expedient, he has provided for the honour and perfect accomplishment of the law. He has also *condemned* and punished *sin*, with the utmost severity: And

And both these *in the flesh*; in that very nature which was guilty, disabled, ruined.

Should you farther ask, Wherefore is all this? To lay the surest foundation, or make the most complete provision for our justification. *That the righteousness of the law*, both its righteous sentence and its righteous precepts, whatever either of suffering or of obedience it required from transgressors, being fulfilled in CHRIST, *might be fulfilled in us*; as it was all done in our name; and as he and we are one; one in civil estimation, for he is our Representative; one in legal estimation, for he is our Surety; one in social estimation, for he is our Bridegroom. For which cause, his righteous acts are ours, and his atoning death is ours.

There was a time, when you embraced these sentiments; when you had such views of things; when such language came out of your mouth, which even now stands upon record, under your own hand. See your "Principles of a Methodist." If you have forgotten them, permit me to remind you of them. "CHRIST," you say, "is now the righteousness of all them that "truly believe in him. He for them paid the ransom "by his death; he for them fulfilled the law in his life. "So that now, in him and by him, every believer may "be called a fulfiller of the law."——Since you pronounce *my* sense of the apostle's words unnatural, I adopt, I espouse *yours* *; and so much the more readily, as it will puzzle sagacity itself, to discern a difference between them.

"I totally deny the criticism on δικαιοσυνη and δικαιωμα." Then be so good as to suggest a better. Or, if this should be somewhat difficult, at least favour us with a reason for this your total denial. Not a word of either. Strange! that a man of ordinary discernment, should offer to obtrude upon the public such a multitude of naked, unsupported, magisterial assertions! should ever be able to persuade himself, that a positive air will pass for demonstration, or supply the place of argument! If this be to demonstrate, if this be to confute, the idiot is as capable of both as the philosopher.——May I not cry out, in your own strain? O how deep an aversion to the imputed righteousness of CHRIST does this *Arminian* scheme discover! since it will make a man gainsay, when he knows not why, or wherefore.

St *Paul* declares, that *the Gentiles who followed not after righteousness, had attained unto righteousness*. Upon which *Aspasio* observes, that the righteousness here mentioned, could not be any personal righteousness. To which Mr *Wesley* replies, "It was." And to render his reply quite irresistible, a perfect thunderbolt in argumentation; he adds, "*Certainly* it was."——How, Sir! did they attain personal righteousness without seeking after it! Are *you* becoming a *Calvinist?* you that had rather be an Atheist? Could the zealot of *Geneva* go greater lengths?—*Aspasio* will not deny, that these Gentiles were sanctified, as well as justified; but he will venture to affirm, that no degree of sanctification can make the persons righteous, who are once become sinners.—— CHRIST, like *Elijah*, first casts his mantle over them; and then, like *Elisha*, they forsake all and follow him.

The righteousness which the Gentiles attained, could not be a personal righteousness. "Certainly it was."——Then it was the righteousness of the law; whereas, the righteousness which they attained, is expressly said to be *the righteousness of faith*.——Then it was a righteousness consisting of good works and godly tempers. Whereas, their righteousness consisted in believing according to the apostle's own explanation. *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness*. Then it was the righteousness of man. Personal righteousness and implanted holiness pass, in the scriptures, under that denomination. Whereas, these Gentiles *submitted themselves to the righteousness of GOD*.——If what these Gentiles attained had been a personal righteousness, it would have been no stumbling-block to the *Jews*. Even they would have fallen in with such a system of religion, as should ascribe righteousness and salvation to their own duties and their own deeds.

You say, "It was *implanted*, as well as *imputed*." Here then, you acknowledge an imputed righteousness. You yourself use the phrase. You affirm it to be, if not the whole, part, at least, of the apostle's doctrine. I wish you had been of this mind when you began your letter. Then you would not have conjured me, by all that is venerable and important, to discontinue an expression, which conveys—your own—the apostle's meaning—and the meaning of the *HOLY GHOST*.

You join imputed and implanted righteousness. So, in case this address to yourself should pass through the printer's hand, would I join a handsome type and pertinent reasoning. Yet, I apprehend, when you sit down to examine the essay, you will regard only the latter.—What you associate, you associate properly. The first is the trunk, the last is one of the branches which spring from it; but the apostle seems, in the place before us, to be considering the first only. The last he reserves for some future occasion.——He is speaking of the righteousness, by which we are saved; and that is solely the imputed righteousness of CHRIST.—He is speaking of the righteousness, which was an eye-sore and an offence to the self-conceited *Jews*; and this was only the imputed righteousness of *CHRIST*.—He is speaking of a righteousness, contradistinguished to that righteousness which is described by *he that doth these things*; and this can be nothing else, but the imputed righteousness of *CHRIST*.——Therefore, though love of GOD, and conformity to his image; though the pure heart and the devout affection; are the inseparable concomitants, or rather the genuine produce of imputed righteousness; yet here they come not under consideration. To force them into this passage, is to make them appear out of due season. Such an exposition may bespeak a zealous officiousness, not a distinguishing judgment; because it confounds the order of the apostle's plan; it defeats the design of his argument, if it does not introduce self-contradiction into his arguing.

This righteousness came upon the Gentiles, *as the former and latter rain upon the earth*. To them was fulfilled the word spoken by the prophet *Isaiah*; *Let the skies pour down righteousness*. As the earth engendereth not the rain; has not the least influence in forming, or the least agency in procuring the refreshing showers; but only receiveth them, as the mere gift of Providence; so these Gentiles had not the least influence in effecting, nor the least agency in procuring this righteousness.—When the good news came into their territories, they were totally destitute of it; they were utterly unconcerned about it; they knew nothing at all concerning it. But seeing it revealed in the gospel; seeing it displayed, as the work of GOD, and hearing it offered, as the gift of GOD, they were not disobedient to the heavenly invitation. They believed the report, they accepted the blessing, and relied upon it for life and salvation.——Then, *as the rain coming down and the snow from heaven, returneth not thither again, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud; that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater*: so, this inestimable truth being admitted into the soul, *CHRIST*, and his righteousness, being received to dwell in the heart *; all the powers

* Should Mr *Wesley* say, Though I used these words, I never intended them for a comment on this passage.—If you did not, I imagine, the compilers of our homilies, from whom they are taken, did. At least they regarded this text as a foundation, a warrant, a proof of their doctrine.

* Eph. iii. 17.

of

of intellectual nature, or what St *Paul* call *the inner man*, are exhilarated, quickened, and fructified. They bud as the roſe, and bloſſom as the lily; they bring forth the fruits of inward love, of outward obedience, of univerſal godlineſs.

For inſtruction in righteouſneſs, in the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. "Was there ever ſuch a comment before?" May I not anſwer, in your own words, Was there ever ſuch a method of confutation uſed before?——But you add, "The plain meaning is, *for training up in holineſs* "of heart and of life." I wiſh you had thought of introducing this interpretation, by the following ſhort preface, "I take it for granted." You would then have been ſure of ſaying *one* truth.—But if this does not appear plain to me, as you ſee it did not to *Aſpaſio*, methinks, you ſhould lend me your ſpectacles, or favour me with your reaſons.

If you pleaſe to examine the paſſage, you will find holineſs of heart and life, comprehended in one of the preceding expreſſions. Προς επανορθωσιν ſignifies, For reſtoration of the man to a ſtate of moral uprightneſs; which muſt include a renovation of the mind, and a reformation of the conduct. After this comes, very properly, and without any tautology, very needfully, and to the exceeding comfort of the ſinner, another moſt valuable property of the ſcriptures. They inſtruct the reader in the *Chriſtian righteouſneſs*; in the juſtifying righteouſneſs; in that myſterious, but incomparably-precious righteouſneſs, which no other book in the world diſplays, mentions, or ſo much as hints. Yet, without which, we could never ſtand in the judgment, never find acceptance with GOD, nor be admitted into the realms of glory.——If you reject this ſenſe, the apoſtle's character of the ſacred volumes is very defective; it leaves out what is their ſupreme excellence, and moſt diſtinguiſhing peculiarity; what is firſt, and above all other things neceſſary for our fallen race.——A traveller undertakes to give an account of ſome celebrated picture-gallery. He deſcribes the dimenſions of the ſtructure, the form of the windows, the ornaments of the roof; but he quite forgets, at leaſt, he totally omits, the article of the paintings. Is this a maſterly execution of his deſign? is this ſatisfactory to the hearer's curioſity?

He ſhall convince the world of righteouſneſs——"That "I am not a ſinner, but innocent and holy." How flat and jejune is this expoſition! Nothing can be more ſo, to my taſte.——"Innocent and holy!" Is this all the SPIRIT witneſſes, concerning the moſt adorable and infinitely-deſerving SON of GOD? Does this come up to the inconceivable dignity of his perſon, and the immenſely-glorious perfection of his work? Is this ſufficient to comfort the conſcience, ſmitten with a ſenſe of moſt damnable guilt, and alarmed with the terrors of eternal vengeance?

The whole clauſe contains a platform or ſummary of evangelical truth; of that all-important truth, which miniſters are to teach and preach; which the HOLY SPIRIT will own and accompany with his influence; and which is thereby made the power of God to the ſalvation of the hearers.—He ſhall convince the world *of ſin*, of the guilty and miſerable ſtate, in which all mankind are plunged by nature; and in which every individual perſon continues, ſo long as he is deſtitute of an intereſt in *CHRIST*, ſo long as he believeth not in HIM who died upon the croſs, and is gone to the FATHER.——Of *righteouſneſs*; he ſhall reveal the REDEEMER's moſt perfect and magnificent righteouſneſs in their hearts. That righteouſneſs, which ſatisfies the juſtice of the MOST HIGH, and brings complete redemption to tranſgreſſors. Teſtifying, not barely, that he is innocent; ſuch was *Adam* in Paradiſe: not barely that he is holy; ſuch are angels in heaven. Shall the eternal CREATOR, even after his humiliation unto death, have no higher a teſtimony than a ſet of mere creatures? Yes, verily; the HOLY GHOST will convince the world, that *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs is the grand and capital bleſſing, which the prophets foretold; and which not only fulfils, but magnifies the law. That it is the righteouſneſs, the very righteouſneſs of the incarnate *JEHOVAH*; and therefore renders every ſoul, to whom it is imputed, unblameable, unreprovable, complete. Glorious office this! worthy to be the object of the almighty *COMFORTER*'s agency! in performing which, he adminiſters ſtrong conſolation.——Then he ſhall convince of *judgment*; ſhall condemn and caſt out the prince of this world, introducing a moſt happy change into the heart and life; ſhall begin and carry on the work of grace, ſanctification, obedience; and all, through the joyful knowledge, together with the perſonal appropriation, of this juſtifying righteouſneſs.

That we might be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him. Which cannot be intrinſically, but muſt be imputatively.—This interpretation *Aſpaſio* eſtabliſhes, attempts, at leaſt, to eſtabliſh from the tenor of the context, from the apoſtle's antitheſis, and from ſeveral venerable names. But what are all theſe to Mr *Weſley*? No more than the arrow and the ſpear to *leviathan*. Nay, not ſo much. That ſcaly monſter *eſteemeth iron as ſtraw, and braſs as rotten wood*. But Mr *Weſley*, caſed in his own ſelf-ſufficiency, eſteemeth all the aforementioned evidences as mere nothings. He totally diſregards them. Reaſon, grammar, precedents, are eclipſed by his bare negative, and vaniſh into an inſignificancy, not worthy of notice.

When *Aſpaſio*, ſupported by ſuch great authority, ſays, This cannot be intrinſically, but muſt be imputatively; Mr *Weſley*, ſupported by his greater ſelf, replies, "Both the one and the other."——But does he duly advert to the apoſtle's ſubject, or follow the clue of the context? The *ſubject* is reconciliation to *GOD*, juſtification before *GOD*, or *that*, whatever it be, which is implied in not imputing treſpaſſes. The *context* intimates, that intrinſic holineſs is not yet taken into conſideration, but is reſerved for the next chapter. There the apoſtle exhorts the *Corinthians*, *not to receive this* infinitely-rich *grace* of free juſtification, *in vain*; but to ſhew its efficacy, to ſhew its excellency, and recommend it to the unbelieving world, by an unblameable converſation, *giving no offence in any thing*.

Juſtification then is the only point which the apoſtle, in this paſſage, conſiders; and juſtification is the fruit of imputed righteouſneſs ſolely, not of inherent righteouſneſs in any degree. This we muſt allow, unleſs we prefer the impoſitions of *Trent*, before the confeſſion of our church. "Faith ſays unto us, It is not I "that take away your ſins, but *CHRIST* only; and to "him only I ſend you for that purpoſe, forſaking there-"in all your good words, thoughts, and works, and "only putting your truſt in *CHRIST*." Thus ſpeaks, and thus teaches, our reformed church.—"If any one "ſay, that man is juſtified only by the imputation of "*CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs, or only by the remiſſion of "ſins, without the co-operation of inherent grace and "holy love, let him be accurſed *." Thus dogmatizes, and thus anathematizes, that mother of falſehoods.—Chuſe now your ſide. For my part, I renounce and abjure the proud and iniquitous decree. If you perſiſt in your preſent opinion, there will be an apparent harmony between yourſelf and *Rome*, but an eſſential difference between yourſelf and *Aſpaſio*.

"*GOD, through him*, firſt *accounts*, and then *makes* "us righteous." How? Does GOD account us righteous, before he makes us ſo? Then his judgment is not according to truth. Then he reckons us to be

* *Si quis dixerit, hominem juſtificari, vel ſola imputatione juſtitiæ, vel ſola remiſſione peccatorum, excluſa gratia et charitate, anathema ſit.* Seſſ. vi. can. 11.

righteous,

righteous, when we are really otherwise. Is not this the language of your doctrine? this the unavoidable conſequence of your notion? But how harſh, if not horrid, does it ſound in every ear? Is not this abſolutely irreconcileable with our ideas of the ſupreme BEING, and equally incompatible with the dictates of ſcripture? There we are taught that GOD *juſtifieth the ungodly*.—Mark the words. *The ungodly* are the objects of the divine juſtification. But can he account the ungodly righteous? Impoſſible!—How then does he act? He firſt makes them righteous *.——After what manner? By imputing to them the righteouſneſs of his dear SON. —Then he pronounces them righteous, and moſt truly. He treats them as righteous, and moſt juſtly. In ſhort, then he abſolves them from guilt; adopts them for his children; and makes them heirs of his eternal kingdom. ——In the grand tranſaction, thus regulated, mercy and truth meet together. All proceeds in the moſt harmonious and beautiful conſiſtency, with the ſeveral attributes of GOD; with his whole revealed will; and with all his righteous law.

"The *righteouſneſs which is of* GOD *by faith*, is both "*imputed* and *inherent*."——Then it is like interweaving linen and woollen; the motley mixture forbidden to the *Iſraelites*. Or rather, like weaving a thread of the fineſt gold, with a hempen cord, or a ſpider's web.—— The righteouſneſs which is of GOD, is perfect, conſummate, everlaſting. Not ſo inherent righteouſneſs, your own ſelf being judge, and your own pen being witneſs.——In the righteouſneſs which is of GOD, the apoſtle deſires to be found, before the great and terrible tribunal of the LORD. His own righteouſneſs, or the righteouſneſs which is inherent, he abandons, as abſolutely improper for this great purpoſe; being no more fitted to give him boldneſs at the day of judgment, than dung and filth are fit to introduce a perſon, with credit and dignity, to court.——The righteouſneſs which is of GOD is unknown to reaſon; is revealed from heaven; and without the works of the law. Whereas, the righteouſneſs inherent, is diſcoverable by reaſon; was known to the Heathens; and conſiſts in a conformity of heart and life to the precepts of the law. ——By the latter, we act, we obey, and offer our ſpiritual ſacrifices unto GOD. By the former, we work nothing; we render nothing unto GOD, but only receive of his grace.

They are, therefore, not the ſame, but totally diſtinct. To blend and confound them, betrays unſkilfulneſs in the word of righteouſneſs; derogates from the honour of CHRIST, and tends to cheriſh a legal frame, or, what the ſcripture calls, *a ſpirit of bondage*.——If you would approve yourſelf a workman, that need not be aſhamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, thus you ſhould ſpeak, and thus you ſhould write; the righteouſneſs of GOD is always imputed. But, being imputed, it produces the righteouſneſs inherent. Being juſtified by the former, ſaved from hell, and rendered meet for heaven; we are ſanctified alſo, and diſpoſed to love the LORD, who has dealt ſo bountifully with us; and if to love, then to worſhip him, to ſerve him, to imitate him.

My faith fixes on both the *meritorious life* and *atoning death* of CHRIST. "Here we clearly agree."—— How can you clearly agree, either with *Aſpaſio*, or with yourſelf, or with common ſenſe?——How with *Aſpaſio*? Since you queſtion, in direct contrariety to his ſentiments, whether the death of CHRIST be not the whole of what St *Paul* ſtyles *the obedience* of ONE.—How with *yourſelf*? For did you not declare, a little while ago, that fallen man "is not juſtified by "perfect obedience?" Is not *CHRIST*'s meritorious life perfect obedience? If your faith fixes on this perfect obedience, is it not for the purpoſe of juſtification?—How with *common ſenſe*? Since you ſuppoſe, that the "ſcripture aſcribes the whole of our ſalvation to the "death of *CHRIST*," ſo entirely aſcribes it to the death of *CHRIST*, that "there was no need of his fulfilling "the moral law, in order to purchaſe redemption for "us;" what reaſon, or ſhadow of reaſon can you have, to fix upon what *we* call the merit of his life? If what you ſuppoſe and affirm be true, there was no kind of meritorious efficacy in his life. His life and all his labours were, in this reſpect, a mere ſuperfluity. Salvation might have been obtained, and redemption purchaſed, without their concurrence. Therefore to fix upon them, is to fix upon a phantom, and to reſt your hopes upon *a thing of nought*.

But ſtay. Am I not repeating the miſconduct, which proved ſo fatal to the famous Earl of *Warwick* and his forces? At the battle of *Gladmore*, while the ſcale of victory hung in ſuſpenſe, they ſaw a conſiderable body of troops advancing. Suppoſing them to be enemies, the bowmen made a general diſcharge, and galled them with their arrows. But they ſoon perceived their miſtake; that they had been oppoſing their friends, and annoying their allies. Perhaps, by this time, you are become my ally. You may have ſeen your errors; may have corrected your notions; ſaying, in ratification of both, "We agree."

That is, "I would no longer exclude the meritorious obedience of *CHRIST*. But this, together with "his atoning death, I look upon as the only cauſe of "my juſtification.——This I call his righteouſneſs; "and this, being imputed to me, becomes my plea, "my portion, and rational foundation for my everlaſting felicity.——This I receive by faith; which I now "look upon, not as conſtituting any part of my recommendation, but only as receptive of the fulneſs laid up "for me in *CHRIST*.——Though the law of works ſaith, Do and live; I am now made ſenſible, that the "law of faith ſays, Be verily perſuaded, that *CHRIST* "is ſufficient for thy acceptance, without any doing of "thy own at all.——Since *CHRIST* is given to me "in the ſacred record, given to me as a ſinner, to be "received without any conditions, I joyfully accept the "gift. I am ſatisfied with his doing and ſuffering; "they are divinely excellent, and infinitely ſufficient; "I neither wiſh for, nor think of any thing more, to "obtain my complete ſalvation.—This way of ſalvation "effectually excludes boaſting; and at the ſame time "produces thoſe deſirable effects,—that love of *GOD*; "that delight in his perfections; that conformity to his "will; which the law of works requires in vain."

If this is what you mean by "We agree," I would ſeal and ratify the agreement, with the laſt wiſh, and the laſt words of the celebrated Father *Paul*, *Eſto perpetua*. Be this the caſe, and you ſhall have not only the right hand of fellowſhip, but the right hand of preeminence.—Only I crave one favour in return. Diſmiſs thoſe injurious inſinuations, which cauſe your readers to ſuſpect, that *Aſpaſio* conſiders the meritorious life of *CHRIST*, ſeparate from his atoning death. Whereas, he affirms them to be inſeparable, like the correſpondence of motion between the two eyes. Try if you can make one of your eyes move to the right, while the other wheels off to the left. When you have done this, then, and not till then, may you have ſome reaſonable pretence for theſe your ſuggeſtions.

Alas! *quanta de ſpe deſidi!* I find my hopes were too ſanguine. We are not come to the deſired coalition. In this very paragraph, you begin to fly off. By talking of imputed righteouſneſs, you tell us, "We are expoſed to an exceeding great hazard; "the

* Agreeably to this, our church ſpeaks: *In juſtification, of unjuſt we are made juſt before GOD*; and adds, *This is the ſtrong rock and foundation of the Chriſtian religion.* Hom. of juſtif. part 2.

"the hazard of living and dying without holineſs."—Pray, Sir, have you ſeen a little piece written upon this ſubject by the Rev. Mr *Witherſpoon?* If you have not, let me recommend it to your peruſal. In caſe you are ignorant of that powerful influence, which juſtification through the righteouſneſs of CHRIST has upon ſanctification and true holineſs, from this treatiſe you may learn ſome valuable knowledge. In caſe the author of this treatiſe is miſtaken, in maintaining the indiſſoluble connection of juſtification with true godlineſs; and the never-failing efficacy of the REDEEMER's righteouſneſs, to bring forth willing obedience in the believer; you may have an opportunity of rectifying his ſentiments. You may give us, in your next publication, a preſervative, not only againſt *unſettled*, but againſt *unſound* notions in religion.

Theron, ſpeaking of *gems*, ſays, when nicely poliſhed, and prodigal of their luſtre, they ſtand candidates for a ſeat on the *virtuous* fair-one's breaſt.—This diſpleaſes Mr *Weſley*. Would he then have gems placed on the *vitious* or laſcivious breaſt? Or would he have them put to no uſe at all, but buried in darkneſs? Did the *ALMIGHTY* pour ſuch brilliancy upon them, only that they might be conſigned over to obſcurity? Did he not rather array them with luſtre and with charms, that they might diſplay ſomething of his own brightneſs; incite his rational creatures to admire his tranſcendent excellency, and teach his faithful people to apprehend the emphaſis of that animating promiſe, *They ſhall be mine, in the day that I make up my jewels.*

"I can't reconcile this with St *Paul*. He ſays, *not* "*with pearls*; by a parity of reaſon, not with dia-"monds."——Do you rightly underſtand St *Paul*? Don't you dwindle his manly and noble idea, into a meanneſs and littleneſs of ſenſe? ſuch as befits the ſuperſtitious and contracted ſpirit of a hermit, rather than the generous and exalted temper of a believer; *who ſtands faſt in the liberty, wherewith* CHRIST *hath made him free?*—Our LORD ſays not, they that are *ſplendidly apparelled*, are apparelled unſuitably to Chriſtianity, or in a manner inconſiſtent with the fear of GOD; but they *are in kings courts*, and their dreſs is adapted to their ſtation. Neither does St *Paul* forbid the *uſe* of pearls, or coſtly array, when a perſon's circumſtances will afford them, and his ſituation in life may require them. He rather cautions againſt the *abuſe*, againſt looking upon theſe glittering things, as any part of their true dignity, on which they value themſelves, or by which they would be recommended to others. The word is not ενδυσασθαι, *put on* *, nor φορειν, *wear* †, but κοσμειν, *adorn*——"Let them not place their excellency in ſuch mean "diſtinctions; no, nor covet to diſtinguiſh themſelves "by theſe ſuperficial decorations; but rather by the "ſubſtantial ornaments of real godlineſs, and good "works; which will render both them and their reli-"gion truly amiable."

The apoſtle *Peter* obſerves the ſame propriety of ſpeech, and the ſame correctneſs of ſentiment. *Whoſe adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of wearing of gold, or plaiting the hair, or putting on of apparel.*——Was this an abſolute prohibition of the ſeveral particulars mentioned, it would forbid all kind of cloathing, or the putting on of any apparel. Take the paſſage in your rigorous ſenſe, and it concludes as forcibly againſt garments, as againſt ornaments; we muſt even go naked, and lay aſide our cloaths, as well as our gems. Whereas, underſtood according to the natural ſignification of the words (ου το κοσμειν, not ου το ενδυειν) it conveys a very important, and a very ſeaſonable exhortation; "Chriſtians, ſcorn to borrow your recommendations "from the needle, the loom, or the toy-ſhop. This "may be the faſhion of a vain world. But let *your* "embelliſhments, or that which beautifies and diſtin-"guiſhes your character, be of a ſuperior nature. Let "it be *internal*; not ſuch as the ſheep have wore, or "the ſilk-worms ſpun; but ſuch as is peculiar to the "immortal mind, or *the hidden man of the heart*. Let it "be *ſubſtantial*; not ſuch as the moth corrodes, or ſuch "as periſhes in uſing; but *that which is not corruptible*; "which being planted on earth, will be tranſplanted "into heaven, and being ſown in time, will flouriſh to "eternity.—Let it be that adorning, whoſe excellency "is unqueſtionable, and *whoſe praiſe is of* GOD, even *the* "*ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit*; which will render "you, not indeed like the grandees of the earth, but "like the SON of the HIGHEST; ſhewing that you "are united to him; intereſted in him; and partakers "of his divine nature."

"In all things, I perceive, you are too favourable, both "to *the deſire of the fleſh, and the deſire of the eye.*"——I rather think, Mr *Weſley* is too cenſorious of others, and too indulgent to himſelf. Why may not *Theron* wear his richly-emboſſed gold watch, and his lady uſe her golden buckle ſet with diamonds, as well as you and I wear a ſilver buckle *, or make uſe of our ſilver watch? Why may not an earl or a counteſs † put on their robes, ſumptuous with embroidery, or their coronet, glittering with jewels, as inoffenſively, as you and I put on a beaver-hat, or trail after us a prunella gown?—There is no neceſſity for this our ſprueneſs. A fuſtian jacket would keep our backs warm, and a flannel cap our heads, as well as our more elegant array.—Methinks, therefore, we ſhould either abſtain from all needleſs finery in our own dreſs, or elſe forbear to cenſure it in others. Rather, we ſhould all, in our reſpective ſtations, and according to our reſpective circumſtances, uſe theſe things as not abuſing them; remembering, that the faſhion of this world paſſeth away. Looking therefore for that city of the living GOD, *whoſe builder and maker is* GOD, *whoſe wall is of jaſper, whoſe buildings are of pure gold, and whoſe foundations are garniſhed with all manner of precious ſtones*; but whoſe external ſplendor is infinitely ſurpaſſed by the glory of GOD, which lightens it, and by the preſence of the LAMB, which is the light thereof.——When we are bleſſed with clear apprehenſions of this ineffable glory——which ſhall be revealed; when we live under a delightful perſuaſion, that GOD hath given to us this eternal life; gems will have but little luſtre in our eye, and leſs and leſs allurements for our heart. All the pomp of this tranſient world will appear to us, as the palace of *Verſailles*, or the gardens of *Stowe*, would appear to ſome ſuperior being; who, from an exalted ſtand in æther, ſhould contemplate the terraqueous globe; and at one view take in its vaſt dimenſions, its prodigious revolutions, and its moſt copious furniture.

"You are a gentle caſuiſt as to every ſelf-indul-"gence, which a plentiful fortune can furniſh."——I would conſider the end for which theſe things were created, and point out and enforce their proper improvements. They were created, not to tantalize, but to treat us; not to enſnare, but to gratify us. *Then* they are properly improved, when we enjoy them with moderation, and render them inſtruments of uſe-

* Mark vi. 9. † Matth. xi. 8.

* That Mr *Weſley* may not ſuſpect I am pleading for ſelf-indulgence, I will give him my word, that I have never wore my ſilver buckles, ſince I was in mourning for his *Royal Highneſs*. Neither ſhall I have one uneaſy thought, if I never put them on again.

† Should it be ſaid, the perſons to whom St *Peter* wrote, were in mean circumſtances; therefore ſuch grandees are out of the queſtion. I anſwer, The perſons *for* whom St *Peter* wrote, were all Chriſtians to the very end of the world. Among theſe, though there may not be *many* grand, nor many noble, yet, bleſſed be GOD, there are *ſome*. And when theſe go to receive their celeſtial crown, we truſt, it will be ſaid,

——*Une ablata non deficit alter*
Aureus.

fulneſs; when they are regarded as pregnant tokens of our CREATOR's love, and act as endearing incitements of our gratitude.——What you call my caſuiſtry, is built upon a maxim, which will never be controverted; *Every creature of GOD is good, if received with thankſgiving.* It is nothing elſe, but an attempt to diſplay what is affirmed in the former clauſe, and to enforce what is preſcribed in the latter.

In the ſixth letter, in the ninth, and in other parts, *Theron* enumerates ſome of the fineſt productions, and moſt choice accommodations which the earth, the air, the ſeas afford.——In imitation of the apoſtle, who in one ſentence expreſſes abundantly more, than my three volumes contain; *HE giveth us all things richly to enjoy.* ——In imitation of the pſalmiſt alſo, who, in ſeveral of his hymns, eſpecially in *Pſalm* civ. celebrates the profuſe munificence of JEHOVAH; profuſe, even in temporal bleſſings, and with regard to our animal nature.——Does our nature call for ſomething to ſupport it? Here is *bread, which ſtrengthens man's heart*, and is the ſtaff of his life. Does our nature go farther, and covet ſomething to pleaſe it? Here is *wine, that maketh glad the heart of man:* regaling his palate, and exhilarating his ſpirits. Is our nature yet more craving, and deſirous of ſomething to beautify it? Here is *oil, that maketh the face to ſhine;* that the countenance may appear both chearful and amiable; that gaiety may ſparkle in the eye, while beauty glows in the cheek.——Now I cannot perſuade myſelf, nor is all Mr *Weſley*'s rhetoric powerful enough to convince me, that it is any diſcredit or any error to follow ſuch examples.

"But I mention the exquiſite reliſh of *turbot*, and the "deliciouſneſs of *ſturgeon*. And are not ſuch obſerva-"tions beneath the dignity of a miniſter of CHRIST?" Mr *Weſley* does not obſerve from whom theſe remarks proceed. Not from *Aſpaſio*, but *Theron*. To make *him* ſpeak like a miniſter of *CHRIST*, or like a Chriſtian of the firſt rank, would be entirely out of character. It would have betrayed an utter ignorance, or a total diſregard of *Horace*'s rule;

Reddere perſonæ ſcit convenientia cuique.

However, I am willing to take all upon myſelf, and be reſponſible for the obnoxious ſentiments. I would only aſk, Is any thing ſpoken of, which the *ALMIGHTY* has not made? and ſhall I think it beneath my dignity, to magnify the work of his hands? Is any thing ſpoken of, which the *ALMIGHTY* has not beſtowed? and ſhall I think it a diminution of my character, to acknowledge the various gifts of his bounty? Has GOD moſt high thought it worthy of his infinite majeſty, to endue the creatures with ſuch pleaſing qualities, as render them a delicious entertainment to our appetites? and ſhall I reckon it a mean unbecoming employ, to bear witneſs to this condeſcending indulgence of the DEITY?—— Particularity in recounting benefits, is ſeldom deemed a fault. It comes under no ſuch denomination, in *my* ſyſtem of ethics. If Mr *Weſley* has a better, in which neglect and inſenſibility are ranked among the virtues, I muſt undoubtedly, upon thoſe principles, drop my plea. Where *they* are commendable, my conduct muſt be inexcuſable; and if inexcuſable, I fear, irreclaimable. For I ſhall never be aſhamed to take a fiſh, a fowl, or a fruit in my hand, and ſay, "A preſent this from our "all-bountiful CREATOR! See its beauty, taſte its "ſweetneſs, admire its excellency, and love and adore "the great Benefactor. To us he hath freely granted "theſe, and other delights; though he himſelf, in the "days of his fleſh, had gall to eat, and vinegar to "drink."

"But the mentioning theſe in ſuch a manner, is a "ſtrong encouragement of luxury and ſenſuality." ——If, to enumerate a *few* of theſe dainties*, be a ſtrong encouragement to luxury, how much more, to create them *all*, and clothe them with ſuch inviting properties, and recommend them by ſuch delicate attractives?—But "the mentioning them in ſuch a man-"ner." What! Is this an encouragement to ſenſuality? to mention them, as ſo many inſtances of divine beneficence, and ſo many motives to human gratitude? This, methinks, is the way to prevent the abuſe of our animal enjoyments, and to correct their pernicious tendency. This is the way to endear their adorable GIVER, and render them incentives to love. And the love of GOD is a better guard againſt luxury, a better preſervative from ſenſuality, than all the rigid rules of the cloyſter or monaſtery.

Upon the whole, however well affected Mr *Weſley* may be to our civil, he ſeems to be a kind of mal-content with regard to our ſpiritual liberties; thoſe I mean, which are conſigned over to us in the *Magna Charta* of the goſpel.

We have liberty, through *JESUS CHRIST*, to uſe not one only, but every creature of *GOD*; and to uſe them in a *ſanctified* manner, ſo that they ſhall not ſenſualize our affections, but refine and exalt them, by knitting our hearts more inſeparably to their munificent CREATOR. According to that clauſe in the heavenly deed, *All things are yours.* This you would curtail and diminiſh.

We have liberty to look upon ourſelves as juſtified before GOD, without any works of our own; made perfectly righteous in his ſight, without any perſonal obedience whatever; entirely through our Repreſentative and Surety, what he has ſuffered in our name and in our ſtead. According to thoſe gracious declarations, *In the LORD have I righteouſneſs*; and, *By the obedience of ONE ſhall many be made righteous.* This you would ſuperſede and aboliſh.

We have liberty to claim and receive this unſpeakable privilege, without performing any conditions, or ſeeking any pre-requiſites; having no other qualification, than that of being loſt ſinners, and needing no other warrant than the divine grant, made and recorded in the word of the goſpel. According to that moſt generous invitation, *Come, buy wine and buy milk, without money and without price.* According to that moſt gratuitous conceſſion, *Whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.* This you would clog and embarraſs.

We have liberty, through our LORD's atonement, to look upon ourſelves as made free from all guilt; to conſider our ſins, as abſolutely blotted out, never to appear again, either to our utter condemnation, or to our leaſt confuſion.

The three firſt articles of the charge, I think, are made clear, too clear and undeniable, in the courſe of the preceding letters. Should you challenge me to prove the laſt, I refer you to your aſſize-ſermon. There you tell us, that the ſins of true believers, as well as of unbelievers, will be brought to light, and expoſed before the whole world, at the day of univerſal judgment.

Here, I muſt do you the juſtice to acknowledge, that you have not, as in your epiſtolary animadverſions on *Aſpaſio*, required your audience to aſſent, merely becauſe you affirm. You attempt to eſtabliſh your opinion by the authority of *Soſoman*; *GOD ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* But you ſeem to forget, that the ſins of the believer are τα μη οντα, *things that are not.* *CHRIST has blotted out, as a thick cloud, our tranſgreſſions; yea, as a thin cloud, our ſins* *.—Conſider them as moral ſtains, or

* The ſcripture calls them, *royal dainties*, *Gen.* xlix. 20.

* *If.* xliv. 22. סך *Nubes.* עב *Nubecula.* Thus *Houbigant* tranſlates the words; and, I think, very juſtly. The firſt ſeems to denote an immenſe arrangement of clouds, covering the ſky. The ſecond ſignifies a looſe detached fragment, floating in the upper regions. The firſt fixed like a vault; the laſt ſailing like a ſkiff. This ſenſe diverſifies the prophet's imagery; and,

causes of defilement; they are washed away by the blood of *JESUS*. And surely the blood of GOD must have as powerful an effect on our souls as the waters of *Jordan* had upon *Naaman*'s body *.—Consider them as contracting guilt, or deserving punishment; they are vacated; they are disannulled; and, like the scape-goat, dismissed into the pathless inaccessible wilderness, *when sought for, they shall not be found.*——Consider them in either of these respects, or under any other character, and they are, not only covered or secreted, but abolished. Just as the darkness of the night is abolished, by the splendor of this clear, serene, delightful morning.

Bring to our sight, if you can, the millstone that is cast into the depths of the sea. Restore, to its former consistence, the cloud that is dissolved in rain; or find one dreg of filthiness in the new-fallen snow. Then may those iniquities be brought again into notice, which have been done away by the High Priest of our profession; which have been expiated by the perfect, most effectual, and glorious oblation of himself.—His people, when rising from the bed of death, will *have no more conscience of sin* in themselves. They are fully and for ever free from the accusation of others; so free, that sin shall not so much as be mentioned unto them; no, nor even remembered by the LORD their GOD any more. They are made holy, unblameable, and unreprovable in his sight. And they shall be presented, at the great day, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Thus may we, and thus may our readers, be presented! so shall we meet each other with comfort at the awful tribunal, with joy amidst the angels of light, and with everlasting transport around the throne of the LAMB.——To promote this blessed event, is the sole aim of these remonstrances, and the unfeigned desire of,

Rev. Sir, Your, &c.

and, instead of tautology, presents us with a beautiful gradation.

* 2 Kings v. 14.

LETTER XI.

Rev. Sir,

MY last concluded with a sketch of our Christian *liberty*, extracted from the *charter* of the gospel. We have liberty——to use all the creatures, and in a sanctified manner—to consider ourselves, as made perfectly righteous, through the obedience of *CHRIST*—to receive this grand prerogative, without performing any conditions—to look upon all our sins, as totally and finally done away, through the blood of *JESUS*.

Perhaps you will ask, Where is your liberty from the *power* of sin? Does not this come within the extent of your charter? Most certainly. You injure our doctrine if you deny it: we are undone irreparably, if we cannot continue destitute of it. Every other immunity, without this crowning privilege, would be like the magnificent palace and the beautiful gardens of *Pharaoh*; while swarms of locusts filled them with their loathed intrusion.

But observe, Sir; freedom from the dominion of sin, is the result of all the preceding blessings. By revealing these in our hearts, and CHRIST the author of them, the HOLY SPIRIT acts as the SPIRIT of liberty.—You are a philosopher; you understand the theory of light. From the association of various rays, or the mixture of many *parent-colours*, springs that first of elements, and best of material gifts, *light*. So, from the union, and united enjoyment of all those heavenly treasures, springs that most desirable liberty, the *liberty of righteousness*.—This is that truth which makes us free.—This is that knowledge, by which we are renewed after the image of HIM that created us. And these are the exceeding precious promises, by which we are partakers of the divine nature. Hence we are taught to love the *LORD* our *GOD*, and to take delight in his adorable perfections. By this means, they look with a smiling aspect upon us, and are unspeakably amiable to us. Under such views, we say of sin, we say of all our evil and corrupt affections, *Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies.*

Our *SAVIOUR*'s obedience. This phrase disgusts Mr *Wesley*. Therefore he cries, "O say, with the good old "Puritans, our *SAVIOUR*'s *death* and *merits*."—*Aspasio* speaks with St *Paul*, *By the obedience of one.*—He speaks with St *Peter*, *Faith in the righteousness of our GOD and SAVIOUR.*——He speaks with the prophets *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*, *In the LORD have I righteousness*; and, *JEHOVAH is our righteousness.*——Having these precedents, he need not be very solicitous, who else is for him, or who is against him.

Though not very solicitous about this matter, he is somewhat surprized at your vehement address; that you should exhort him so earnestly to "speak with "the good old puritans." Has not your *Printer* committed a mistake? Did not the clause stand thus in your manuscript? "With my good friends the *Arminians*." They indeed disapprove this expression; because it is, when rightly understood, a dagger in the heart of their cause.—But as to the Puritans, they are, one and all, on the contrary side. Their language is a perfect union with *Aspasio*'s. They glory in the meritorious obedience of their great *MEDIATOR*. They extol his imputed righteousness in almost every page, and pour contempt upon all other works, compared with.

What will not an author affirm, who ventures to assert, or insinuate that the Puritan writers disuse this manner of speaking? For my part, I know not any set of writers in the world, so eminently remarkable for this very doctrine and this very diction. I said, in a former letter, we would inquire into this particular; but the inquiry is quite unnecessary. It would be like *Uriel*'s searching for the sun, while he stands in its orb, and is surrounded with its lustre.

"We swarm with *Antinomians*."——And we must swarm with persons, whose hearts are enmity against the law of *GOD*, so long as *your* tenets find acceptance. Who can delight in a law, which neither has been, nor can be fulfilled by them? which bears witness against them, and is the ministration of death unto them? testifying, like the hand-writing on Belshazzar's wall, *Thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting*:—Whereas, when we see it fully satisfied on our behalf, by our *SURETY*'s obedience; no longer denouncing a curse, but pronouncing us blessed; not pursuing us, like the avenger of blood, but opening a city of refuge for the safety of our souls; we shall then be reconciled to its constitution and design; we shall then take pleasure in its precepts and prohibitions. We shall say with the psalmist, *LORD, what love have I unto thy law! all the day long is my study in it.*

My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation—"Thy mercy which brings my salvation," says Mr *Wesley*, in opposition to the sense assigned by *Aspasio*. Which sense has been vindicated already. I shall therefore not renew my arguments, but only express my wonder.

As Mr *Wesley* is a minister of the gospel, I wonder, *that he* should studiously set aside, what is the peculiarity

rity and glory of the evangelical revelation. "Mercy "which brings ſalvation," is what an unenlightened *Jew* might have preached; nay, what a more ignorant Heathen might have taught. But ſalvation through a divine righteouſneſs, as the adequate and meritorious cauſe thereof, is the diſtinguiſhing doctrine and the ſovereign excellency of the goſpel.

As Mr *Weſley* is a ſinner, I wonder, he ſhould chuſe to weaken the foundation of his own and our hope.—Why mercy *alone?* Is it not better to put our truſt in mercy, erecting its throne on a propitiation, and thence holding forth the golden ſceptre? By the obedience of *IMMANUEL*, the law is ſatisfied, as to its penalty; is fulfilled, as to its precept; and is, in every reſpect, unſpeakably magnified. This ſhews us the inexhauſtible fountain of mercy unſealed, and every obſtruction to its free and copious flow removed.

As Mr *Weſley* is zealous for the honour of *GOD*, I wonder, he ſhould not prefer that method of ſalvation, by which every divine attribute is moſt abundantly glorified. This is not done, by expecting pardon and acceptance from mercy alone; but by expecting and receiving them, through our *REDEEMER*'s righteouſneſs and blood. Then we have a diſplay, not only of infinite love, but of inflexible juſtice, and incomprehenſible wiſdom. Here they mingle their beams, and ſhine forth with united and eternal ſplendour.

Conſidering theſe things, I am ſtill inclined to embrace *Aſpaſio*'s interpretation of this, and ſuch like paſſages of ſcripture, wherein ſalvation is aſcribed to divine mercy, exerciſed through the obedience and death of *CHRIST*, which gives as great a heightening to the bleſſing, as the atmoſphere gives to the rays of light, or as the light itſelf imparts to the ſcenes of creation.

Thoſe divine treaſures which ſpring from the imputation of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs. "Not a word of his atoning blood."——I wiſh, you would turn back to *Aſpaſio*'s definition of this phraſe, as it is laid down at the beginning of the conference, to be the groundwork of all the dialogues, and of all the letters. You will then perceive, that there is not a word of this kind, but CHRIST's atoning blood is included in it. Without this, his righteouſneſs had not been perfect. Without this, his righteouſneſs could not be imputed.——Some people have a treacherous memory, and really forget things. Others have a perverſe mind, and reſolve not to regard them. Which of theſe is Mr *Weſley*'s caſe, I preſume not to ſay, let his own conſcience determine.

'Tis true, we "love to ſpeak of the righteouſneſs of "*CHRIST*." Yet not becauſe "it affords a fairer ex-"cuſe for our own unrighteouſneſs." For indeed it affords no excuſe at all. On the contrary, it renders unrighteouſneſs quite inexcuſable, becauſe it yields new and nobler motives to all holy obedience.—But we love to ſpeak of the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, becauſe it is the moſt comprehenſive expreſſion, and the grandeſt theme in the world.—The *moſt comprehenſive expreſſion*; as it denotes all that he has done and ſuffered, both his meritorious life, and his atoning blood.—The *grandeſt theme*. Conſider all thoſe bleſſings, which have been vouchſafed to *GOD*'s people, before our SAVIOUR appeared on earth; add all the bleſſings which will be vouchſafed, until the conſummation of all things; conſider all that good, which is compriſed in a deliverance from the nethermoſt hell; together with all that bliſs which is contained in the pleaſures and glories of the heavenly ſtate. All theſe to be enjoyed through a boundleſs eternity, and by multitudes of redeemed ſinners, numberleſs as the ſands upon the ſea-ſhore. Then aſk, What is the procuring cauſe of all? whence do theſe ineſtimable benefits proceed?—From the righteouſneſs, the ſole righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST.——Is it not then worthy to be uppermoſt in our thoughts, and foremoſt on our tongues? Might not the very ſtones cry out, and reproach our inſenſibility, if we did not *dare* to talk of this divinely-precious righteouſneſs?

Faith is a perſuaſion, that *CHRIST* has ſhed his blood *for me*, and fulfilled all righteouſneſs *in my ſtead*. "I can by no means ſubſcribe to this definition."——You might very ſafely ſubſcribe to this definition, if you would ſuffer St *Peter* to ſpeak his genuine ſentiments. Deſcribing the faith of the primitive Chriſtians, he calls it πιστιν δικαιοσυνην, *Faith in the righteouſneſs*. He ſays nothing of the atoning blood; but does he therefore exclude it? He ſpeaks of nothing but the juſtifying righteouſneſs; and will you totally diſcard it? It is the central point in his faith, and ſhall it have no place in yours?——*Righteouſneſs*, he aſſures us, was the object of the believer's faith, even the righteouſneſs *of our GOD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST*. But how could this be the object of their faith, if it was not fulfilled in their ſtead? Or how could they truly believe in this righteouſneſs, if they did not regard it, as performed for them, and imputed to them?

"There are hundreds, yea thouſands of true believ-"ers, who never once thought, one way or the other, "of CHRIST's fulfilling all righteouſneſs in their "ſtead."—Then their faith is like the ſight of the perſon, *who ſaw men as trees walking*. He ſaw them indeed, but very dimly, indiſtinctly, confuſedly; and it is a pity but they were more thoroughly inſtructed unto the kingdom of *GOD*.—Not one of thoſe thouſands, provided he fixes his hope wholly upon the merits of *CHRIST*, would reject this delightful truth, if it was offered, with ſcriptural evidence, to his underſtanding. Reject it! No ſurely. He would joyfully embrace it, if offered, with that ſingle, but undeniable evidence; *CHRIST was made ſin for us, though he knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him.*

"You perſonally know many, who to this hour have "no idea of CHRIST's righteouſneſs." Surely then it behoves you, as a lover of ſouls, and as an ambaſſador of CHRIST, to teach them the way of GOD more perfectly *. So doing, you will be employed much more ſuitably to your function, and much more profitably to your brethren, than in your preſent attempt. By which, you would weaken the hands, and defeat the deſigns of thoſe, who endeavour to ſpread abroad the ſavour of this knowledge, in every place; and who, notwithſtanding all that you perſonally know, muſt unalterably perſiſt in their method. Which is, to regulate their definition of faith, not by the ſtate of your ſuppoſed believers, but by the expreſs declaration of the unerring word. And from this, they have authority to maintain, that faith in the imputed righteouſneſs of CHRIST, is a fundamental principle to every believer, who underſtands upon what foundation he is ſaved.

Theſe your acquaintance, though they have no idea of CHRIST's righteouſneſs, yet "have each "of them a divine evidence and conviction, CHRIST "*loved me, and gave himſelf for me.*" In this caſe, don't you take rather too much upon you? Have you then the apoſtolical gift of diſcerning ſpirits? If not, it will be impoſſible for you to know the man, excluſive of yourſelf, who is certainly poſſeſſed of this divine evidence. You may form a charitable judgment or a prevailing hope; which ſeems to be the utmoſt you can warrantably claim with regard to others. And while you entertain this hope, we ſhall allow it to indicate the benevolence of your heart; but cannot admit it as a proof of your point, That people may be full of faith and love, yet have no idea of CHRIST's righteouſneſs.——We would alſo caution you to take heed, leſt,

* Mr *Weſley* cannot ſay; What! Teach a doctrine, which I diſapprove? ſince he himſelf has allowed it, has approved it, has ſet his ſeal to it, again and again, in the courſe of theſe his remarks.

through

through an immoderate fondneſs for increaſing the number of your converts, you are led to deceive yourſelf and others; regiſtering thoſe as real believers, whom the LORD hath not regiſtered. By this means, you may be confirmed in your unſcriptural notion, that the righteous fall away, and the faithful apoſtatize.——Whereas, they who fall away, were righteous only in appearance; and they who apoſtatize, were no otherwiſe than profeſſionally faithful. What you ſee drop from the ſky, is not a ſtar, but a meteor only.

Faith is the hand which receives all that is laid up in CHRIST.—*Aſpaſio* expreſſes himſelf thus; CHRIST is a ſtore-houſe of all good. Whatever is neceſſary to remove our guilt, whatever is expedient for renewing our nature, whatever is proper to fit us for the eternal fruition of GOD, all this is laid up in CHRIST. And all this is received by faith, for our application, uſe, and enjoyment.——To this Mr *Weſley* ſubjoins a word of objection; but not in due ſeaſon. *Aſpaſio* is diſplaying the efficacy of faith; Mr *Weſley*'s argument is levelled againſt the indefectibility of faith. However, as it is your favourite objection, it ſhall not be treated as an intruder. "If we *make ſhipwreck of the faith*, how much ſoever is laid up in CHRIST, from that hour we receive nothing."

Have you never heard of the anſwer, which the *Spartan* ſtates returned to an inſolent and barbarous embaſſy from *Philip* of *Macedon*? You may read it in the book you are cenſuring; and may receive it as a reply to this, and your other ſurmiſes of this nature. It was all comprized in that ſingle monoſyllable IF.—A mere profeſſor may make ſhipwreck of the doctrine of faith; a true believer does not make ſhipwreck of the grace of faith. No, nor ever will, unleſs CHRIST's interceſſion be made of none effect; *I have prayed, that* ſuch *faith fail not.*

§10. Anſwered already, in number 311.

Aſpaſio, deſcribing the dreadful nature of the command given to *Abraham*, ſays, Thy hands muſt lift the deadly weapon; thy hands muſt point it to the beloved breaſt; thy own hands muſt urge its way, through the gulhing veins and the ſhivering fleſh, till it be plunged in the throbbing heart.——"Are not theſe deſcriptions far too ſtrong?" This is ſubmitted to the judgment of the reader. I would only obſerve, that the more ſtrongly the horrors of the tremendous deed are repreſented, the more ſtriking will the difficulty of the duty appear; conſequently the more efficacious and triumphant the power of faith.——"May not theſe "deſcriptions occaſion unprofitable reaſonings in many "readers?" What unprofitable reaſonings may be occaſioned, I do not pretend to gueſs. But the juſt and natural reflection, ariſing from the conſideration of ſuch a circumſtance, is; "What has faith wrought! It purifies and exalts the affections. It invigorates and "ennobles the ſoul; makes it bold to undertake, and "ſtrong to execute, every great and heroic work. I "ſee, therefore, it is not in vain, that the ſcripture ſo "frequently inculcates faith; lays ſo remarkable a ſtreſs "upon faith; and places it in the very front of all "Chriſtian duties." *This is the victory that overcometh the world*, overcometh ſelf, overcometh all things.

"How could he (*Abraham*) juſtify it to the world? "Not at all."——True; not to the unbelieving world. They will argue, as Mr *Weſley* on another occaſion, "What! ſtab his ſon, his beſt-beloved, his only ſon to the heart? Could the GOD of goodneſs command ſuch a piece of barbarity? Impoſſible! I could ſooner be a Deiſt, yea an Atheiſt, than I could believe this. It is leſs abſurd to deny the very being of a GOD, than to make him an almighty tyrant."——But to the believing world, who fear the LORD, and hearken to the voice of his ſervants, *Abraham*'s conduct will never ſtand in need of a vindication. By them it will be highly extolled, and greatly admired. It will be an undeniable demonſtration of the reality and ſincerity of his faith; of its very ſuperior elevation, and invincible ſtrength.

You take the direct and certain way to obtain ſubſtantial comfort. The righteouſneſs of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, after which you inquire, about which you are ſolicitous, is a never-failing ſource of conſolation. Thus *Aſpaſio* writes to *Theron*.——"What! "without the atonement?" cries Mr *Weſley*. To which he adds, in a following paragraph; "So the "death of CHRIST is not ſo much as named." This puts me in mind of an objection, no very formidable one, made againſt that introductory exhortation to the common prayer, Dearly beloved *brethren*. So then, ſaid a candid examiner, *women* have no part in your worſhip. They are not ſo much as named. But I forbear. If you are not aſhamed of repeating, I am aſhamed of refuting, ſo frequently refuting ſuch an empty cavil. And, I believe, the reader is tired with us both.

§16. I have no great objection to your alteration of *Aſpaſio*'s comment. Suppoſe, we compromiſe matters, and conſider the oil poured on *Aaron*'s head, and emptying itſelf from *Zechariah*'s olive-tree, as typical both of the merits and the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*; which, like light and heat in the ſun, are indiſſolubly connected; or, to make uſe of a ſacred illuſtration, are like the living creatures and the wheels in *Ezekiel*'s viſion. *When the living creatures went, the wheels went by them. When the living creatures were lift up from the earth, the wheels were lift up.* Whitherſoever the former were to go, the latter went alſo.——For the ſake of obliging Mr *Weſley*, I call this is a compromiſe. But if he can prevail on himſelf to read the paraphraſe on the two paſſages, without prepoſſeſſion, he will find this affectation of ſenſes anticipated by *Aſpaſio*.

"Has the law any demand, ſays *Aſpaſio*? It muſt go to *CHRIST* for ſatisfaction. From which you draw this injurious conſequence, "Then I am not obliged to "love my neighbour. *CHRIST* has ſatisfied the de"mand of the law *for me*." This objection has already received an anſwer.

I ſhall therefore content myſelf with ſhewing, why I call your concluſion injurious. Becauſe, like the deaf adder, it ſtoppeth the ear againſt my own explication of my own phraſe. A note is added, on purpoſe to limit its ſenſe, and obviate your miſrepreſentation. This you totally diſregard, and argue as if no ſuch precaution was uſed.—The note informs you, that the law—the commanding law is ſatisfied with nothing leſs than perfect obedience, and the broken law inflicts upon tranſgreſſion puniſhment. Now, if it muſt not, for ſatisfaction to both theſe demands, go to *CHRIST* our divine huſband, where will it obtain any ſuch thing? Who is able to give it, among all the children of *Adam*?

However, leſt we offend, needleſsly offend any reader, I promiſe, that, in caſe the providence of GOD and the favour of the Public call for a new edition, *Aſpaſio* ſhall alter his language. Thus the paragraph ſhall ſtand; "Does the law demand perfect purity of nature, "and perfect obedience of life? It muſt go to HIM "for ſatisfaction. Do we want grace, and glory, and "every good gift? We may look to HIM for a ſupply; "to HIM, *in whom it hath pleaſed the* FATHER, *that all "fulneſs ſhould dwell.*"

For all his people—With this phraſe Mr *Weſley* is chagrined. This he will not ſuffer to paſs without animadverſion. Though he *muſt* know, if prejudice has not blinded his underſtanding, that it is pure ſcripture. Why does he not ſhew the ſame diſſatisfaction with the angel that appeared unto *Joſeph*, and with *Zechariah* the Baptiſt's father? The former of whom ſays, He ſhall ſave *his people* from their ſins. The latter declares, He ſhall give knowledge of ſalvation unto *his people*, by the remiſſion of their ſins. Why does he not put the ſame queſtion unto them,

and draw the ſame inference upon them? "But what "becomes of *all other people?*"—Sometimes Mr *Weſley* is ſo attached to the ſcriptures, that nothing will pleaſe him, but ſcriptural expreſſions. Here he is ſo wedded to ſelf-opinion, that even ſcriptural expreſſions will not paſs current, when they ſeem to thwart his own notions.

For *all his* people—From this expreſſion, though uſed by a prophet, authorized by an angel, and to be found in many places of ſcripture, Mr *Weſley* deduces ſome very offenſive and dreadful conſequences; ſo dreadful, that he "would ſooner be a *Turk*, a Deiſt, "yea an Atheiſt, than he could believe them."—My dear Sir, let me give you a word of friendly advice, Before you turn *Turk*, or Deiſt, or Atheiſt—ſee, that you firſt become an *honeſt* man. They will all diſown you, if you go over to their party, deſtitute of common honeſty.

Methinks, I hear you ſaying, with ſome emotion, What do mean by this advice? or what relation has this to the ſubject of our preſent inquiry?——A pretty near relation. Out of zeal to demoliſh the doctrine of election, you ſcruple not to overleap the bounds of integrity and truth.——Myſterious ſtill! I know not what you aim at.——Then be pleaſed to review a paſſage, in your book on *original ſin*, where you have thought proper to make a quotation from my dialogues. It relates to that great doctrine of the goſpel, CHRIST becoming the repreſentative and federal head of ſinners. Upon this occaſion *Aſpaſio* ſays, "As *Adam* was "a public perſon, and acted in the ſtead of all mankind; "ſo CHRIST was a public perſon, and acted in behalf of *all his people*. As *Adam* was the firſt general "repreſentative of *this kind*, CHRIST was the ſecond "and laſt." Here you ſubſtitute the word *mankind*, inſtead of *this kind*; and thereby lead the reader to ſuppoſe, that *Aſpaſio* conſiders our glorious Repreſentative, as ſtanding in this capacity to the whole human race; than which nothing can be more injurious to the ſenſe of his words.

I at firſt thought it might poſſibly be the effect of inadvertency. But could a perſon of Mr *Weſley*'s diſcernment allow himſelf to nod over a paſſage, which he knew to be of a critical and controverted import?—— Perhaps, it might be the printer's fault; an error of the preſs. I would willingly have admitted one of theſe extenuating circumſtances, till I came to the bottom of the page; where, to my great aſtoniſhment, I found the following words, incloſed within the marks of the ſame quotation, and aſcribed to *Aſpaſio*. "All theſe expreſ"ſions demonſtrate, that *Adam*" (as well as CHRIST) "was a repreſentative of *all mankind*." Then I could no longer forbear crying out, *There is treachery, Ahaziah!* A falſe quotation, not made only, but repeated, cannot be owing to negligence, but muſt proceed from deſign. And this, I ſhould think, can never be defended, no, nor with a good grace excuſed, by Mr *Weſley*'s moſt devoted admirers. A ſtudious alteration of our words, and an evident perverſion of their meaning, are defenſible by no arguments, are excuſable on no occaſion.

Quite inexcuſable this practice. And is not your language equally offenſive? Is not your concluſion very precipitate? when you ſuppoſe *Aſpaſio*, though uſing the words of ſcripture, yet repreſenting GOD as "an almighty tyrant?"——Surely you had better forbear ſuch horrid and ſhocking expreſſions. Eſpecially, as you cannot deny, that many paſſages in ſcripture ſeem at leaſt to countenance this obnoxious tenet. As you very well know, that many perſons, eminent for their learning and exemplary in their lives, have written in defence of it, and bled for the confirmation of it. As we have proofs more than a few, that you are far from being infallible in your judgment; yea, far from being invariable in your opinion. Witneſs your former notions of matrimony: witneſs the character you formerly gave of the *Moravian* brethren; and the eſteem which you once had for the Myſtics, and their writings. —Conſidering yourſelf, therefore, it would better become you to be diffident on ſuch a ſubject, and ſay, "That which I know not, LORD, teach thou me." And I imagine, it can never become you, on any ſubject whatever, to break out into ſuch language, as ought not to be named among Chriſtians; ought to have no place but in the bottomleſs pit.—This is an admonition, which, while I ſuggeſt to you, Sir, I charge on myſelf.

The three following paragraphs relate to a doctrine, which *you* are fond to attack, and which *Aſpaſio* ſtudiouſly declines. It conſtitutes no part of his plan. It forms not ſo much as the out-works. Be it demoliſhed or eſtabliſhed, the grand privilege, and the invaluable bleſſing, of juſtification, through the righteouſneſs of CHRIST, remains unſhaken, ſtands immoveable.—In applying this to ourſelves, we proceed neither upon univerſal nor particular redemption, but only upon the divine grant, and the divine invitation. We aſſure ourſelves of preſent and eternal ſalvation, through this perfect righteouſneſs, not as perſons *elected*, but as perſons *warranted* by the word of GOD; bound by the command of GOD, and *led* by the SPIRIT of GOD.—— Therefore, while you are encountering this doctrine, I would be looking unto JESUS; be viewing the glory of my LORD; contemplating HIS perfection, and my own completeneſs in HIM.

If I divert, for a moment, from this delightful object, it is only to touch upon one of your remonſtrances.— You ſuppoſe, that according to the *Calviniſtic* ſcheme, GOD denies what is neceſſary for preſent comfort and final acceptance, even to ſome who ſincerely ſeek it. This is contrary to ſcripture, and no leſs contrary to the doctrine of your opponents. However, to confirm yourſelf, in this miſapprehenſion, you aſk, "Would *you* deny it to any, if it were in *your* "power?"——To ſhew the error of ſuch a ſentiment, and the fallacy of ſuch reaſoning, I ſhall juſt mention a recent melancholy fact.

News is brought, that the *Prince George* man of war, Admiral *Broderick*'s own ſhip, is burnt, and ſunk, and above four hundred ſouls that were on board, are periſhed. Six hours the flames prevailed; while every means was uſed to preſerve the ſhip and crew; but all to no purpoſe. In the mean time, ſhrieks and groans, bitter moanings, and piercing cries, were heard from every quarter. Raving, deſpair, and even madneſs preſented themſelves, in a variety of forms. Some ran to and fro diſtracted with terror, not knowing what they did, or what they ſhould do. Others jumped overboard, from all parts; and, to avoid the purſuit of one death, leaped into the jaws of another. Thoſe unhappy wretches, who could not ſwim, were obliged to remain upon the wreck, though flakes of fire fell on their bodies. Soon the maſts went away, and killed numbers. Thoſe who were not killed, thought themſelves happy, to get upon the floating timber. Nor yet were they ſafe; for the fire, having communicated itſelf to the guns, which were loaded and ſhotted, they ſwept multitudes from this their laſt refuge.—What ſay you, Sir, to this diſmal narrative? Does not your heart bleed? Would you have ſtood by, and denied your ſuccour, if it had been in your power to help? Would not you have done your utmoſt, to prevent the fatal cataſtrophe? Yet the LORD ſaw this extreme diſtreſs. He heard their piteous moans. He was able to ſave them, yet withdrew his aſſiſtance. Now, becauſe you would gladly have ſuccoured them if you could, and GOD ALMIGHTY could, but would not ſend them aid; will you therefore conclude, that *you* are above your LORD, and that *your* loving-kindneſs is greater than his? I will not offer to charge any ſuch conſe-

quence upon you. I am perſuaded you abhor the thought.

"The wedding-garment here means holineſs."—— Thus ſaying, you depart from *Bengelius*, for whom you profeſs ſo high a regard. *Bengelius*, overlooks your expoſition, and gives his vote for *Aſpaſio*'s. *Hæc veſtis eſt juſtitia CHRISTI.* Awed by ſo venerable an authority, you have not ventured to exclude this ſenſe from your comment. You have admitted it into your expoſitory notes, yet will not allow *Aſpaſio* to admit it into his diſcourſe with *Theron*. Theſe are your words; "The wedding garment, that is, the righteouſneſs of "*CHRIST*, firſt imputed, then implanted." Which, by the way, is not perfectly accurate, nor according to the language of the goſpel. The goſpel diſtinguiſhes between the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, and our own righteouſneſs. That which is imputed, goes under the former, that which is implanted, under the latter denomination.

However, let us conſider the circumſtances of the caſe, and we ſhall find, that our common favourite *Bengelius* has probability and reaſon on his ſide. The gueſts mentioned in this parable, conſiſted of poor outcaſts, collected from the highways and hedges. Now we cannot ſuppoſe, that people in ſuch a condition, and coming at a minute's warning, ſhould be able to furniſh themſelves with a dreſs of *their own*, ſuitable to the grand occaſion. Here then perſonal holineſs is put out of the queſtion.—But we muſt ſuppoſe, (which is conformable to the *Eaſtern* cuſtoms) that the king had ordered his ſervants, to accommodate each gueſt from the royal wardrobe. That each might have this additional token of his ſovereign's favour, and all might be arrayed in a manner becoming the magnificent ſolemnity. This exactly correſponds with the nature of imputed righteouſneſs.

Farther, the banquet, you will readily allow, is the pardon of ſin, and peace with *GOD*, the divine *SPIRIT*, and eternal life. From all which, uniting their happy influence, true holineſs ſprings. To ſay, that holineſs is the wedding-garment, neceſſary for our introduction to this banquet, ſavours of abſurdity; like ſaying holineſs is neceſſary to holineſs.—It is abſolute legality; for it makes the performance of all duties, the way to the *REDEEMER*'s grace.——It implies an impoſſibility; the ſinner, that can exerciſe holineſs, before he receives *CHRIST* and his SPIRIT, is like the dead man, who ariſes and walks, before he is reſtored to life.

The grand end which GOD propoſes in all his favourable diſpenſations to fallen man, is to demonſtrate the ſovereignty of his grace. "Not ſo."——Do you mean, *Aſpaſio* has not ſpoken ſo? that you have miſrepreſented his ſenſe? have clipped and diſfigured his coin? If this is your meaning, you ſpeak an undoubted truth. His words are, "To demonſtrate the ſove-"reignty, and advance the glory of his grace." Why did you ſuppreſs the laſt clauſe? Was you afraid it would ſupply the deficiency, which you charge on *Aſpaſio*, and expreſs the idea of imparting happineſs? If ſo, your fears are juſt enough.——Why did you not take into conſideration thoſe texts of ſcripture, with which *Aſpaſio* confirms his tenet? Ought you not to have overthrown thoſe teſtimonies, before you deny his doctrine? Otherwiſe, you oppoſe your own authority, to the deciſion of a prophet and of an apoſtle.

"Not ſo," proceeds Mr *Weſley*. "To impart happi-"neſs to his creatures, is his grand end herein."—— The devout prophet ſpeaks otherwiſe; *I have created him for my glory.* The wiſe moraliſt ſpeaks otherwiſe; *The* LORD *hath created all things for himſelf.* The holy apoſtle ſpeaks otherwiſe; *To the praiſe of the glory of his grace.* From which, and from innumerable other places of ſcripture, from the reaſon of the thing, and from the very nature of the SUPREME BEING, it appears, that the primary leading aim, in all GOD's works, and all GOD's diſpenſations, is his own glory. The felicity of his creatures, though not ſeparated from it, though evidently included in it, is ſtill ſubordinate to it. And ſurely it is very meet and right ſo to be. Can there be a nobler end, or more worthy of an infinitely-wiſe agent, than the diſplay of thoſe ſublime perfections, for which, and through which, and to which, are all things? Could GOD make any other being the principal end of his acting, he would *undeify* himſelf, and give his glory to another. Does any creature imagine his own happineſs to be a higher end than the divine glory? He thereby uſurps the *GODHEAD*, making, as far as in him lies, *JEHOVAH* the ſubject, and himſelf the ſovereign.

"Barely to demonſtrate his ſovereignty." The word *barely* is not uſed by *Aſpaſio*. But it gives another ſpecimen of Mr *Weſley*'s integrity, in ſtating truth, and doing juſtice to his opponents.——It is not ſaid, the *ſole*, but the *grand* end. Therefore, would any unprejudiced perſon conclude, there muſt be ſome other, though inferior purpoſe? No, ſays Mr *Weſley*; hence I infer, that it was *barely* to demonſtrate his ſovereignty. Do you ſo? Then your inference is of a piece with the quotation, *that* as valid, as *this* is faithful.

"Barely to demonſtrate his ſovereignty," is a principal action fit for the great Turk, not for the moſt high GOD. Such a fraudulent quotation I have not often ſeen, no, not in the Critical Reviewers. To mark the ſentence with commas, and thereby aſſign it to *Aſpaſio*, is really a maſter-piece, eſpecially, after you have thruſt in the word *barely*, and lopped off the word *grace*. You have treated the paſſage worſe than *Nahaſh* king of *Ammon* treated the ambaſſadors of *David*. They were aſhamed to ſhew their faces, under ſuch marks of abuſe and diſgrace. I am no leſs aſhamed of the clauſe, as you have mangled and diſguiſed it. But reſtore it to its true ſtate; let it wear its native aſpect; then ſee what is blameable, or what is offenſive in it.

The grand end which GOD purpoſes in all his favourable diſpenſations to fallen man, is, to demonſtrate the ſovereignty, and advance the glory of his grace.—— The *glory*, that it may appear rich, unbounded, and infinitely ſurpaſſing all we can wiſh or imagine.——The *ſovereignty*, that it may appear free, undeſerved, and abſolutely independent on any goodneſs in the creature.—That ſinners may receive it, without waiting for any amiable qualities, or performing any recommending conditions.——That, when received, it may ſtop the mouth of boaſting; may cut off all pretenſions of perſonal merit; and teach every tongue to ſay, *Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name,* be the praiſe.

And ſhould we not greatly rejoice in this method of the divine procedure? That the LORD orders all things relating to our ſalvation, *to the praiſe of the glory of his grace?* Can any thing be more honourable to our nature, or more tranſporting to our ſouls? Can any thing ſo firmly eſtabliſh, or ſo highly exalt our hopes? Angels, principalities, and powers; all intellectual creatures, in all ages, and all worlds; are to look unto *us*, unto us men they are to look, for the moſt conſummate diſplay of GOD's grace. *Our* exaltation and felicity are to be the mirror, in which the wondering cherubim and ſeraphim will contemplate the ſuperabundant goodneſs of JEHOVAH. How *great* muſt that honour and that happineſs be, which are intended to exhibit the fulleſt, faireſt, brighteſt view of GOD's infinitely-glorious grace! How *ſure* muſt that honour and happineſs be, which are ſo intimately connected with the glory of the omnipotent King! which can no more fail of their accompliſhment, than

than the amiable attributes of GODHEAD can be ſtripped of their luſtre!

GOD is a boundleſs ocean of good. "Nay that ocean "is far from boundleſs, if it wholly paſſes by nine "tenths of mankind."——What, if it had paſſed by *all* mankind, as it certainly did all the devils, would it have been the leſs boundleſs on that account? I wiſh, methinks, you would ſtudy the evil of ſin more, and not ſo frequently obtrude upon us a ſubject, of which neither you nor I ſeem to be maſters. Then we ſhould neither have hard thoughts of *GOD*, nor high thoughts of ourſelves.

You cannot ſuppoſe, *GOD* would enter into a freſh covenant, with an *inſolvent* and *attainted* creature *.—Theſe are *Aſpaſio*'s words. To which Mr *Weſley* replies; "I both ſuppoſe and know he did." *Satis cum inperſo.* Then be pleaſed, Sir, to ſhew us, *where* the Almighty entered into a covenant with fallen *Adam*; for of him we are ſpeaking. Produce the original deed; at leaſt favour us with a tranſcript. And we will take your word, when it is backed with ſuch authority.

GOD made the new covenant with *CHRIST*, and charged him with the performance of the conditions. "I deny both theſe aſſertions." And what is your reaſon for this denial? Is it deduced from ſcripture? Nothing like it. Is it founded on the nature of things? No attempt is made towards it. But you yourſelf affirm, that theſe aſſertions "are the central point, where-"in *Calviniſm* and *Antinomianiſm* meet." Or, in other words, they tend to eſtabliſh what you diſlike, and to overthrow what you have taught. This is all the cauſe which you aſſign for your denial. I cannot but wiſh, that, whenever I engage in controverſy, my adverſary may be furniſhed with ſuch arguments.

You deny the aſſertions now. But don't you forget what you allowed and maintained a little while ago; when you yourſelf, adopting a paſſage from *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, called *CHRIST* "a fœderal head?"——Pray, what is a fœderal head, but a perſon with whom a covenant is made, in behalf of himſelf and others?——Here your judgment was according to truth. Fit, perfectly fit for ſuch an office is *CHRIST*; whoſe life is all his own, who is able to merit, and mighty to ſave.—But abſolutely unfit for it, utterly incapable of it, is fallen man; whoſe life is forfeited, whoſe moral ability is loſt, and whoſe very nature is enmity againſt *GOD*.

"I have made a covenant with my choſen —"Name-"ly, with *David my ſervant.*" True; with *David* as in *CHRIST*, or rather as a type of *CHRIST*. You cannot be ignorant, that *CHRIST* is called by this very name. The LORD, ſpeaking by the prophet *Ezekiel*, ſays, *I will ſet up one ſhepherd over them, and he ſhall feed them, even my ſervant David.*——Was *David* beloved *?—*CHRIST* was incomparably more ſo.——Was *David GOD*'s choſen one? *CHRIST* was ſo likewiſe, and in a far ſublimer ſenſe, and for infinitely more momentous purpoſes.——Was *David GOD*'s ſervant? So was *JESUS CHRIST*; and, by his ſervices, brought unſpeakably greater honour to the *LORD* his *GOD*, than all kings on earth, and all the princes of heaven.—Several parts of this pſalm *muſt* be applied to *CHRIST*; and, if ſeveral of them muſt, the principal of them *may* and *ought.*

He will waſh you in the blood which atones, and inveſt you with the righteouſneſs which juſtifies.—"Why ſhould you thus put aſunder continually what "*GOD* has joined?" How difficult is it to pleaſe Mr *Weſley!* When *Aſpaſio* ſpoke of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs, without particularly mentioning his blood, you ſaid it was better to mention them both together; it behoved us never to name the former, without the latter. Yet here, when both are mentioned, and the particular uſe of each is ſpecified, you complain of his putting aſunder what GOD has joined; which, in truth, is no disjoining, but an illuſtration and amplification of the unſearchable riches of CHRIST.

GOD himſelf, at the laſt day, pronounces them righteous, becauſe they are intereſted in the obedience of the REDEEMER. "Rather, becauſe they are waſhed "in his blood, and renewed by his SPIRIT." GOD will juſtify them in the laſt day, in the very ſame way whereby he juſtified them in this world; namely, becauſe they are intereſted in the obedience of the REDEEMER. As for their renewal by the SPIRIT, though it will then be perfect, yet it will be no cauſe of their acquittal, but the privilege of thoſe who are acquitted.—A proof of this, at leaſt an atteſtation of it, the world has received from your own pen. "For neither our "own inward nor outward righteouſneſs is the ground "of our juſtification. Holineſs of heart, as well as ho-"lineſs of life, is not the cauſe, but the effect of it.—"The *ſole* cauſe of our acceptance with *GOD*, is the "righteouſneſs and death of CHRIST, who fulfilled "GOD's law, and died in our ſtead." Excellent ſentiments! In theſe may I ever abide! to theſe may you alſo return!

* *Inſolvent* and *attainted* creature, Mr *Weſley* has changed into "a rebel."

* *Beloved.* This is the meaning of דוד *David's* name.

The practical improvement of the doctrine of a ſinner's juſtification by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, taken from a little piece, entitled, A DISCOURSE UPON JUSTIFICATION; printed at London in 1740, which Mr HERVEY highly eſteemed, and warmly recommended.

Being no improper ſupplement to the doctrine contained in THERON and ASPASIO, and ASPASIO VINDICATED.

1. SINCE the *juſtification* of a ſinner is by the complete *obedience* of Jeſus Chriſt, *imputed* to him, and received by *faith*, unto ſuch great and glorious *effects*; we may hence learn, what reaſon we have to *admire* that infinity of *wiſdom*, which ſhines forth in the *contrivance* of this wonder; and to adore that immenſity of *grace*, which is diſplayed in this glorious *proviſion* made for the favourites of heaven! When the beloved *John* was favoured with a viſionary ſight of the *woman-bride*, *the Lamb's wife*, as *clothed with* Chriſt, *the Sun* of Righteouſneſs, and ſhining forth in the reſplendent rays of her Bridegroom's glory; he ſays, he ſaw *a* WONDER, *Rev.* xii. 1. And a wonder it is indeed; ſo great, that it calls for the admiration, both of men, and of angels. This is one of thoſe glorious *things*, that by the goſpel is revealed unto us, *which the angels deſire to look into*, 1 *Pet.* i. 12. And while ſinful men have *the forgiveneſs of* their *ſins through* Chriſt's *blood*, and the *acceptation* of their *perſons* in him, *the Beloved*, *according to the riches of* the Father's *grace*, *wherein he has abounded towards* them, *in all wiſdom and prudence*; it becomes them to admire and adore the ſame, and to cry out, with the apoſtle, *O the depths of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge*

which

knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Eph. i. 6. 7. 8. Rom. xi. 33. That the *obedience* of the Son of God, should be made our *righteousness*, the righteousness of a *sinner*, to his complete *justification* before God, is such a *project* of infinite *wisdom*, such a *provision* of infinite *grace*, for the *salvation* of God's chosen, that every way becomes the great JEHOVAH! and will be the endless wonder of men and angels!

2. Since the justification of a sinner is wholly by the righteousness of another, which is a *way of life above* nature, above being discovered by nature's *light*, and seen by nature's *eye*, or discovered by the light of the *law*, and discerned by natural *reason*; we may learn hence, what an absolute necessity there is of a supernatural *revelation* thereof, in order to the soul's receiving of this *righteousness*, and so of the grace of *justification* thereby. This is one of those *things* that God has *prepared* for his people, that never *entered into the heart of* the natural *man to conceive of*, which he has neither *known*, nor *can* understand; and therefore deems it *foolishness*, or a foolish thing, for any to think they shall be justified by the obedience of Christ, exclusive of all their own works. But the people of God *receive not the Spirit which is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that they may know the things which are freely given* them *of God*. And *this*, of *the free gift of righteousness, is revealed unto* them by his *Spirit*, though it is one of those *deep things of God*, which are hidden from the *natural man*; which are impossible to be known by any, but heaven-born souls, under a special *revelation* from above, 1 *Cor.* ii. 9. *&c.*

3. Since the *justification* of a sinner is by the *obedience* of Christ alone; we may hence learn, how greatly *important* the *knowledge* thereof is! The *knowledge* of this righteousness must needs be of the utmost *importance*, since *ignorance* of it, and *non-submission* to it, (which always go together), leave the soul in an *unrighteous* state, *Rom.* ix. 31, 32. and x. 3. All those miserable souls, who are *ignorant* of Christ's *righteousness, go about to establish their own righteousness*; and, alas! *the bed is shorter, than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower, than that he can wrap himself in it*, Is. xxviii. 20. There is no true *rest* for a *sinner*, from the *works* of its own hands; no *covering* for a *naked* soul, from the *fig-leaves* of its own *righteousness*, though ever so artfully sewed together. Our Lord told his *disciples*, that *except* their *righteousness did exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, they should in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*, Matth. v. 20. These *Scribes* and *Pharisees* were the *zealous*, the *religious* men of that *age*, the strict observers of *Moses*'s law, that trusted in *themselves*, that they were *righteous*, by their own *legal* performances, and thought to get to *heaven* by means thereof. But our Lord declares, that none shall ever come *there*, but those who have a *better* righteousness, a *righteousness* that exceeds a *Pharisaical* righteousness, *i. e.* such a righteousness that every way answers to all the extensive requirements of the *law*, in heart, lip, and life; and this is no other than the *righteousness* of Christ, imputed to poor *sinners*, or made *theirs* by *imputation*; in which, being completely *justified*, according to *law* and *justice*, they shall, as *righteous* persons, be admitted into the kingdom of *heaven*, or into the glory of the heavenly *state*; while all those who trust in their own *righteousness*, and think they have done *many wonderful works*, which they dare plead for acceptance with God, shall be sent away from Christ, into eternal *misery*, with a *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity*, Matth. vii. 22.

And as our Lord, in this his *sermon* upon the *mount*, had been expounding the law of God, in its *spirituality*, as extending to the *heart*, as well as *life*; and asserting the necessity of *keeping* the commandments, in the same extensive manner that the law *required*, in order to make a person *righteous*; so, in the conclusion thereof, he says, *Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock*, ver. 24, 25. These *sayings* of our Lord contain the *substance* of the moral *law*, and the *doing* of them unto *righteousness* before God, is by *believing*; as faith lays hold on Christ, who has *obeyed* the law perfectly, as the *representative* of his people: on which account, *they* may be said to have done, or *fulfilled*, the law in him; his *obedience* being *imputed* unto *them*, for their complete *justification* before God. As the *surety's payment*, among men, is accounted to the *debtor*, and is the same, in the eye of the *law*, and as effectual for his full *discharge*, as if he himself had paid the *debt*. And he that thus *doth* the law, or these *sayings* of Christ, he *likens* him *unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock*. It is a piece of natural *wisdom*, to lay a good *foundation* for a stately *structure*; and the most *firm* that any house can be built on, is that of a *rock*. And he that is spiritually *wise*, *wise unto salvation*, lays the whole *stress* of it, and builds all his *hope* of life, upon Christ, the *Rock* of ages; in which it appears, that he is *wise* indeed. For as in nature, a *house* that is built upon a *rock*, will stand the *storm*: so the *soul* that is built upon *Christ*, shall never be *removed*: *The rain may descend, the floods come, and the winds beat*; afflictions, temptations, and trials of all kinds, may *beat vehemently against* that soul; but shall never *destroy* its *salvation*, nor make it *ashamed* of its *hope*. No; Christ, the *Rock* of immutability, will hold it *unshaken*, in a state of *salvation*, through *life*, through *death*, at *judgment*, and for *ever*. Such a soul *stands*, as *immoveable*, in the grace of *justification*, and *life*, as the *rock* itself, on which it is founded. *Because I live*, saith our Lord, *ye shall live also*, John xiv. 19. Christ's *life* is the life of that *soul*, that depends upon him alone, for all its justification, and eternal salvation. And therefore the *wisdom* of faith is great indeed! in that it foresees the storm, and thus provides against it.

But he, saith our Lord, *that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not*, (*i. e.* that *heareth* the law's *requirements*, and endeavours to *obey* the same, for *righteousness* before God, and so doth them *not*; because his obedience cannot come up to that perfection which the law requires), *shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it*, ver. 26. 27. Oh, the *folly* of that poor sinner, who lays the *stress* of his salvation, and builds his *hope* of life, upon his *own* righteousness! For this *sandy* foundation cannot endure the *storms* of divine *wrath*, which shall be revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men; nor secure the soul from being driven away, by the tempest of God's *anger*, and the floods of his *indignation*, into the abyss of eternal *misery*. The *house fell*, that was thus *built* upon the *sand*, *and great was the fall of it!* Oh, what a miserable disappointment will it be to that soul, that *goes down to the chambers of* eternal *death*, *with this lie of his own righteousness in his right hand*; from which he had all along hoped for eternal life! when this *way that seemed right to him in his own eyes*, as if it would lead him to everlasting life, (by his *depending* thereon), shall *end* in eternal *death! The hope of the hypocrite* (or of him that trusts in himself, that he is righteous, by his own external performances, when yet his heart is far from that conformity to God, which the law *requires*), *shall perish at the giving up of the ghost. His hope* (i. e. his *salvation* hoped for) *shall*, then, *be cut off. He shall lean upon his house*, (i. e. his own *righteousness*,

which he had raised up, in his imagination, to *shelter* him from the *storm* of divine vengeance,) *but it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure*, Job viii. 13, 14, 15. No, this *house* of his shall be as soon destroyed, by the storm of God's indignation, as a *spider's web* is swept down, by the besom that comes against it; and the miserable soul, that trusted herein, shall be driven away into eternal perdition. Thus an error in the *foundation* will prove *fatal* to the building; and therefore the *knowledge* of *Christ*, as the alone way of a sinner's *justification*, and *life*, must need be of the highest *importance*; since no other *refuge* can stand the *storm*, but Christ, as THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, this glorious *hiding-place*, which God has prepared for poor sinners, whither they may *run*, and be for ever *safe*. And as for *those* who live and die in *ignorance* of, and *non-submission to* the righteousness of Christ, they will certainly *die in their sins*, and *perish* for ever. They will all be found *filthy*, at the day of judgment, that have not been enabled to *believe* in Christ's *blood*, for cleansing from all sin; they will all be found *unjust*, at that awful day, that have not *believed* in the Redeemer's *righteousness*, for their justification before God; and so must remain for *ever*. For concerning them, it will then be said, *He that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is unjust, let him be unjust still*; i. e. let him *abide* so, to an endless *eternity*. But,

4. Since there is but one *way* for a sinner to be *justified* before God, and that is by the *obedience* of Christ alone; this informs us, what great *folly* those persons are guilty of, who *press* poor sinners to obey the *law*, to make themselves *righteous* in the sight of God, when there is no law given that can give life unto them; and how *dangerous* it is for souls, to sit under such a ministry, that naturally *misleads* them; since while *the blind leads the blind, both fall into the ditch. If there had been a law given that could have given life*, says the apostle, *verily righteousness should have been by the law*, Gal. iii. 21. But as there is no law given that can give life to a sinner; it is a *vain, foolish* thing, to *press* such a soul, to get a *righteousness* by his own *performances*, which was never appointed of God, nor can be *attained* by man. No; *the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise* (of life) *by faith of Jesus Christ* (as a sinner's righteousness) *might be given to them that believe*, ver. 22. And those who receive it not in this *way*, shall never attain it in any *other*, but must go *without* it for ever. *The labour of the foolish*, says the wise man, *wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city*, Eccles. x. 15. A man may labour all his *days*, to make himself *righteous* before God, by his own *performances*, and to make his *peace* with him, by his *legal* repentance, and humiliation for *sin*; and yet *lose* all his labour at *last*, and so weary himself in *vain*, being never able to reach that *city*, that eternal rest, which God has prepared for his people; because he *knoweth* not *Christ*, the only *way* that leads thither; and so *walks* not by faith, in him, as such. All men by nature are ignorant of Christ's *righteousness*, as it is God's *way* of *justifying* and *saving* a sinner; and it is *dangerous* for souls, to sit under such a ministry, that presseth *doing*, and persuades them their *safety* lies there, instead of *believing*. For *how shall they believe*, saith the apostle, *in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?* Rom. x. 14, 15. How shall poor souls *believe* in Christ for *justification*, when they have never *heard* of his *righteousness*, which is the proper *object* of faith? And how shall they *hear*, without a *preacher* of that gospel that declares it? And how shall they *preach* the gospel to others, who have never *seen* that salvation it reveals for sinners, by the *righteousness* of Christ, themselves? How shall they declare the glory and efficacy thereof to *others*, that have never seen, nor experienced it *themselves*? And how does it appear, that they are *sent* by Christ, to preach the gospel, who neither *know*, nor *proclaim* his *righteousness*, for the *justification* of a sinner, which is such a main *doctrine* thereof? Have we not reason to fear, that many of those who are called *ministers* of the *gospel*, are rather *preachers* of *Moses*, than of *Christ*? and that their *ministry* rather tends to lead souls to the bondage and death of the *law*, than to the liberty and life of the *gospel*? But *how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good things!* that publish that *peace* with God, which was made for sinners alone, by the *blood* of Christ's cross; and is possessed only by *faith* in him! that proclaim the glad tidings of those good things, which God has prepared, to be enjoyed by *sinners*, through the justifying *righteousness* of his Son! And how great is the privilege of those souls, who sit under a *gospel*-ministry; since this is the *means* appointed of God, to work *faith* in them, and to bring *salvation* to them! Once more,

5. Since the *justification* of a sinner is by the *righteousness* of Christ, *imputed* to him, and received by *faith* alone; we may hence learn, how great the *obligation* of the *justified* ones is, to *live* to the *glory* of that *grace*, which has so freely and fully *justified* them, in and through Christ, unto eternal *life* by him! When the apostle had asserted the justification and salvation of God's people, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to be wholly of his free *mercy*, in and through Christ, *Rom.* xi. 32. and admired the riches of his *wisdom*, which was so brightly displayed in the dispensations of his *mercy* towards them, *ver.* 33. he thus concludes his discourse, *ver.* 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever*, Amen. 'Tis as if he should say, Since all things, relating to the justification and salvation of God's people, are *of* him, and *through* him, it is meet that the glory of all should, by them, be given *to* him. And therefore when he applies this doctrine of God's free mercy in Christ, to them who had obtained it, he thus addresseth them, *chap.* xii. 1. *I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.* I beseech [*you*,] says he, *you* that have obtained *mercy*, [*therefore*,] or, since it is God's design, to *glorify* his mercy, in the salvation of sinners, that you give him the *glory* of it; [*by the mercies of God*,] those *mercies* of God, which you are partakers of, in the *forgiveness* of all your *sins*, and in the *justification* of your *persons*, [*that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God*,] that ye continually offer up yourselves, as a whole burnt-offering, in the flames of *love*, unto him that hath *loved* you, in all holy and acceptable *obedience*, to the *glory* of that God, who has thus had *mercy* upon you; [*which is your reasonable service.*] For it is a most reasonable thing, or a thing for which there is the highest *reason*, that you should ever *serve* the Lord, to the *glory* of that *grace*, by which you are freely *justified*, and shall be eternally *glorified*. And thus, the apostle *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 9. *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood*, (who are washed from all your sins in Christ's blood, and clothed with his righteousness,) *an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.* And *you know*, says the apostle *Paul*, *how we exhorted and comforted, and charged every one of you* (i. e. of you, justified, saved ones,) *that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory*, 1 Thess. ii. 11, 12. And in short, as it was God's design to get himself *glory*, in the *justification* of sinners, by the *righteousness* of Jesus Christ; so the *display* thereof, throughout the whole gospel, lays *them* under the highest *obligation* to *live* to his *praise*. Does God the *Father*

Father impute the *obedience* of his Son to poor ſinners? did God the *Son obey* in *life* and in *death* for them? and does God the *Spirit reveal* and *apply* this *righteouſneſs* to them; and enable them to *receive* the ſame, as a *free gift* of grace, unto their eternal *life* in glory? What thanks, what praiſe, is due to God, in each of his glorious perſons, for this abundant grace! And let the language of the juſtified ones, in heart, lip, and life, in all kind of holy *obedience*, both now and always be, *Thanks be unto God, for the grace of* JUSTIFICATION! *for this his unſpeakable* GIFT! 2 Cor. ix. 15. *Amen! Hallelujah!*

A

DEFENCE

OF

THERON AND ASPASIO,

AGAINST THE

Objections contained in a late Treatiſe, entitled, *Letters on THERON and ASPASIO.*

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A ſeries of LETTERS from MR HERVEY, to the Author, authenticating this Defence with his entire approbation, and manifeſting it to be the only one that can be preſented to the Public with that authority.

PREFACE.

THE intention of prefixing Mr *Hervey*'s letters to this *reply*, is, in fact, to recommend it to the attention of the public, as ſuch a farther explication and defence of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, as was quite agreeable to his own judgment; ſuch as (in ſubſtance) would have appeared in the world, in his elegant and entertaining manner of addreſs, had it pleaſed the Sovereign Diſpoſer of all events to have continued him in life, and ſuch as the preſent ſituation of his writings require.

It has been already remarked, in the public intimation of printing Mr *Hervey*'s letters, that "when writers of diſtinguiſhed "ſuperiority have gained our admiration and applauſe, we are "fond of penetrating into their more retired apartments, and "aſſociating with them in the ſequeſtered walks of private life." A curioſity of this nature cannot be more *uſefully* gratified; we cannot be uſhered into Mr *Hervey*'s company to better purpoſe, than to hear him declare what he himſelf counted moſt valuable in all his writings; that which was his main deſign, and to which he would have his readers continually advert; thoſe ſentiments, which (as he expreſſes it in one of his letters) "I wiſh to have "written on my heart; ſuch as I wiſh to ſpeak and teach while I "live; and in my writings (if my writings ſurvive me) to teſtify "when I am dead." More eſpecially, if what he ſo eſteemed is the doctrine of our Lord and his apoſtles, otherwiſe Mr *Hervey*'s eſteem will be but of ſmall account.

It ſeems the more neceſſary that he ſhould be thus made to ſpeak for himſelf, ſince ſome who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves as his peculiar friends, and as very angry with Mr *Sandeman* in his behalf, and are at the ſame time very likely to be no friends to his defence. The reaſon is, whatever may be the motive for their profeſſed regard, they have for many years paſt, and do unto this day, manifeſt great ignorance, if not great enmity, in reſpect of the principles which formed and influenced Mr *Hervey*'s faith and practice; and on which he ventured his eternal concerns; ſtigmatizing, or, I ſhould rather ſay, honouring them, with the ſame kind of reproaches as the ancient oppoſers of Chriſtianity caſt upon our Lord and his diſciples. Perhaps it may awaken the attention of ſome to inquire of the unerring oracles, *What is truth?* when they find, by theſe letters, that there is no dependence to be placed elſewhere; and that thoſe in whom they have truſted as ſpiritual guides, applaud, or cenſure, with very little judgment, or with a worſe deſign.

After all, I am not ſo ſanguine in my expectation, as to think that by this, or any other method, the deſpiſed truth of the goſpel will prevail with many, againſt the ſtream of the reputed devout and highly eſteemed of this world. We muſt remember the treatment which our Lord and his diſciples met with; and as the world is not better now than it was in thoſe days, we have little reaſon to expect better ſucceſs.

Mr *Hervey* began to find he had been in a miſtake in this reſpect, and would have publicly acknowledged as much, had he lived but a few months longer. He began to be acquainted with that true grace of God, which is contrary to the courſe

of

of this world, in its devoutest form, for upwards of twelve years before our correſpondence commenced. He was willing to recommend it to their conſideration, and (if poſſible) make it appear lovely to their view. He dreſſed it up with all the beauties of eloquence, and all the winning arts of perſuaſion. He concealed whatever he thought might give his readers diſguſt, and even entreated his friend to conceal their correſpondence for the preſent, leſt the power of prejudice (raiſed by his profeſſed friends) ſhould prevent them from looking into his books: and all this in hopes to prevail, and give the deſpiſed goſpel of Jeſus a recommending appearance in their eyes. But alas! he died before he had accompliſhed this deſign; and perhaps, had he lived to the age of *Methuſelah*, he would never have brought it to paſs. So that we can only look upon this as his fervent deſire, that the important truth, in which he had found all he wanted, ſhould be as great a bleſſing to others as it had been to him. He gained a return of compliment for his favourable ſentiments and kind behaviour, but it was in vain for him to expect to prevail any farther.

His notion was, as he himſelf expreſſes it, that "the taſte "of the preſent age is ſomewhat like the humour of children, "their milk muſt be ſugared, their wine ſpiced, and their ne"ceſſary food garniſhed with flowers and enriched with ſweet"meats." His deſire that what he called his *principal point* might be, if poſſible, made thus palatable, engaged him in ſeveral correſpondencies, ſuited to the embelliſhment of his works; his ſuperiority, as a writer, cauſed many to covet an acquaintance and friendſhip with him; and his tender and complaiſant behaviour, even to thoſe who differed, gave ſome of them hopes of prevailing with him, or by him, to advance their own various and oppoſite ſentiments. Filled with theſe hopes, their behaviour towards him was accordingly reſpectful; which, together with his retired ſituation in life, prevented him, in a great meaſure, from diſcerning their enmity to his principles. Taking it for granted they meant as they ſpake, he judged them aiming to promote the ſame important cauſe. Had this been fact, they would have ſtill merited the regard he paid them; their profeſſed zeal would have been commendable, had it been ſubſervient to the *true grace of God* for which he pleaded; but bears as different an aſpect when their enmity and oppoſition thereto is diſcovered; even as *Paul's* moſt hardened wickedneſs, was to the piety and zeal of his Phariſaic ſtate.

No ſooner was he dead than conſultations were on foot, tending to bury his principles as well as him. His private letters were publicly advertiſed for, in order to be printed; which, by the uſe made of them, ſeems not done with any deſign to eſtabliſh the truths he contended for, but to pick out, if poſſible, ſomething to their diſadvantage; and, what is ſtill more unworthy, to eſtabliſh their own characters in ſuch attempts on the encomiums he had at one time or other beſtowed on them, for want of ſeeing them properly; for want of knowing that their ruling principle was a fixed enmity to that goſpel which was his ſole delight. Beſides this, ſeveral reports were ſpread, detrimental to the important truth he had ſo contended for. And knowing that all and every one of them could be fully diſproved by Mr *Hervey's* own hand-writing, I counted it my duty to print the defence, and to publiſh the letters to the author, to authenticate it with Mr *Hervey's* approbation. Though I was apprehenſive, at the ſame time, it might carry the appearance of oſtentation, to ſuch as did not know what was in hand, and ſo could not be ſenſible that the ſupport of the important truth, which ſhines through all his works, depended, in ſome meaſure, on the publication of theſe letters.

Notwithſtanding all this, the perſons concerned in the publication of two volumes, under the title of *The letters of the late Rev. Mr James Hervey*, have exerted themſelves, with uncommon boldneſs, in diſfiguring his principles; and, at the ſame time, introduce their own. This is evidently manifeſt from ſeveral notes annexed to theſe letters*. In theſe volumes they have inſinuated that the author of the defence of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio* was "on the *Antinomian* ſide of the queſtion, and that "Mr *Hervey* by no means approved of his ſentiments." Upon this there immediately appeared in the *Gazetteer*, *Aug.* 22. and *London Chronicle*, *Aug.* 26. a letter to the editor and publiſher of theſe volumes, ſignifying the ſhocking appearance of ſlander and detraction in volumes under the name of a man ſo averſe to ſuch proceedings; and proving, from Mr *Hervey's* own words, the moſt apparent falſehood in their aſſertions; there being no letter in the whole two volumes, ſo expreſſive of *fameneſs of ſentiment*, as the letters to the author of the defence of *Theron and Aſpaſio*; and concluding with theſe words, "The "ſecret ſtabs that are given to characters, by modern pretenders "to piety, would make a court of juſtice bluſh. And I am "perſuaded the real friends to Mr *Hervey's* memory, or writ"ings, will not be pleaſed to find his name made ſubſervient "to ſuch baſe purpoſes." The proceedings are a little more open, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for *Auguſt*; where we are told, that Mr *Hervey* himſelf "is by no means free of the "charge of ſtretching the principles of *Calvin* into *Antinomian*"*iſm*," p. 379. It is very evident Mr *Hervey* concerned himſelf with no *Calviniſtical* or *Arminian* diſputes. In one of his letters ſpeaking of Mr *W——y's* conduct, he ſays, "I am ſome"times apprehenſive that he would draw me into a diſpute "about particular redemption. I know he can ſay ſtartling and "horrid things on this ſubject; and this, perhaps, might be the "moſt effectual method to prejudice people againſt my *prin*"*cipal point*."

As to the charge of *Antinomianiſm*, unleſs the particular errors are pointed out, (which may as well be done without the aſſiſtance of reproachful names), it is no more than a very vague uncertain ſound, made uſe of by ſome leaders in the various claſſes of religious people as a political bugbear, whereby they diſguiſe and diſfigure the party they intend to reproach*. It is a term not confined to any dictionary-interpretation, but admits of a variety of definitions, according to the various ſentiments of the perſons who uſe it, from the moſt profeſſed preachers of Chriſt, down to the *Monthly Reviewers*, who eſteem no better of any that concern themſelves with the name of Jeſus, farther than what becomes a decent complaiſance to the profeſſion of their country. Theſe gentlemen can read the Bible as well as theſe volumes, "without the leaſt intellectual im"provement" in the doctrine of Chriſt; and can alſo give a ſolid reaſon for it, *viz.* that they have no taſte for this kind of reading; it is very diſagreeable to them. They judge, "that one "virtuous deſign promoted, one good action done, or one bad "habit ſubdued, is worth more than all ſuch trifling conſidera"tions" as the death and reſurrection of Jeſus. The ſcripture-language concerning ſalvation only by Chriſt muſt be *Antinomianiſm* in their eſteem. They expect to be ſaved in doing well; and the ſcripture aſſures them, that *if they do well, they ſhall be accepted*. Our Saviour declares, he never came to interrupt ſuch people in their good intentions; but to ſave the loſt, and worthleſs, ſuch as ought to periſh, according to every rule of equity; and the real goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt will ever prove *fooliſhneſs*, a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and *rock of offence*, to any but theſe ſort of people.

Any one who has read the letters on *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, or ever ſeen Mr *Hervey's* ſentiments of that author, will eaſily perceive that a reply to that performance was abſolutely neceſſary, or elſe, as he obſerves in one of his letters, "what is "not confuted by argument, is confirmed by ſilence!" It was

* When theſe religious politicians have raiſed an alarm, *Beware of the Antinomians!* the ignorant multitude are upon the inquiry to know, what this dreadful thing called *Antinomianiſm* is; they are told a hundred bugbear tales of monſters in human ſhape: when they inquire farther who are *Antinomians*, meaning who are the perſons ſo abandoned as to hold ſuch dreadful opinions or practices, they have nothing more to do, than to place the name upon whom they pleaſe; and it follows of courſe, by this artful ſhift, that the credulous and deceived multitude believe the perſons, ſo pointed out, to be guilty of whatever has been charged under that name. Were it not for this piece of artifice, they might perhaps be obliged, honeſtly and fairly, to point out the particular errors of thoſe they diſlike and accuſe; and, in ſo doing, might manifeſt, that they themſelves know not what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm.

Mr *Hervey* has very properly exhibited ſuch vain declaimers in the following note:

"This puts me in mind of what *Theodorus* replied to *Philocles*; who "was often inſinuating, that he preached *licentious* doctrine; becauſe "he enlarged, with peculiar aſſiduity, upon faith in JESUS CHRIST; "and frequently choſe ſuch texts as, *Believe in the Lord Jeſus, and thou "ſhalt be ſaved.*"

"I preach ſalvation by JESUS CHRIST; and give me leave to aſk, "whether you know what ſalvation by CHRIST means? *Philocles* "pauſed; he begun to bluſh; would have eluded the queſtion, and de"clined an anſwer. No, ſaid *Theodorus*, you muſt permit me to inſiſt "upon a reply. Becauſe, if it be a *right* one, it will juſtify me and my "conduct: if it be a *wrong* one, it will prove, that you blame you know "not what; and have more reaſon to inform yourſelf, than to cenſure "others.

"This diſconcerted him ſtill more. Upon which *Theodorus* proceed"ed: Salvation by CHRIST means, not only a deliverance from the "*guilt*, but alſo from the *power* of ſin. He gave himſelf for us, that "he might redeem us from all iniquity; *redeem us from our vain converſation*, as well as deliver us from the wrath to come.—Go now, *Phi*"*locles*, and tell the world, that by teaching theſe doctrines, I promote "the cauſe of licentiouſneſs. And you will be juſt as *rational*, juſt as "*candid*, juſt as *true*, as if you ſhould affirm, that the firemen, by playing "the engine, and pouring in water, burnt your houſe to the ground, "and laid your furniture in aſhes." *Note*, vol. II. dial. x. p. 357.

* Alſo theſe notes are thrown out of this edition of our author's works.

alſo

ble necessary, if possible, that this defence should be by himself, or by his approbation; and also that the public should be ascertained of this, that so it may be considered as a proper and necessary supplement to his volumes. As these particulars can be so plainly discovered by the letters prefixed, it is well that Mr *Hervey* was so open in his declarations.

As to our debate with Mr *Sandeman*, it seems to stand as follows:

The turning-point from despair to good hope, he observes, is the hinge of the controversy; and this point is with Mr *Sandeman* the finished work of Christ, as it is fully sufficient to vindicate the divine justice in saving the most guilty. All the hope he has by this, is represented by the hope a man has from hearing of the plentiful importation of corn in the time of famine; while it yet remains a hazard whether he shall ever obtain any; and his expectation to obtain, is by labouring in painful desire and fear till crowned with enjoyment.

Aspasio's turning-point is the finished work of Christ, revealed in the gracious declarations of the gospel, not only as supporting the divine justice in saving the most guilty, but also as the sufficient object of the sinner's immediate trust and confidence, agreeable to the repeated divine assurances that such shall not be confounded or disappointed. And the works and labour of love *Aspasio* pleads for, are works of love to God thus manifested and trusted in.

Aspasio's former opponents have objected to this immediate trust of a sinner upon Christ alone for everlasting life, by pleading for what they have conceived to be previously necessary, under the names of faith, repentance, sanctification begun, &c.

Mr *Sandeman* has undertook to prove, that all true sanctification, conversion, faith, &c. springs solely from the truth of Christ's sufficiency for the most guilty, without any addition whatever, as the central point of divine revelation, and that all other religion is not any part of Christianity; not any part of that doctrine which came from heaven; but only the vain efforts of the natural man to lower the divine character of the infinitely righteous and just God, and quiet his guilty conscience with a righteousness insufficient, or, in other words, a righteousness stained with sin; and that the names of conversion, faith, sanctification, applied to this kind of religion, are only fitted to deceive; and supposing our appropriation or trust to be a denial of this sufficiency of Christ alone, he opposes that also. This then is what we are concerned to defend.

To this purpose I have endeavoured to shew, that, in trusting to the sufficient righteousness of Christ alone for everlasting life, to keep clear of the charge of denying the sufficient righteousness, and of adding or mixing another righteousness with it. We may rather ask, How does it appear that any man believes it to be sufficient, when he dare not trust his soul upon it, but waits in painful desire and fear, to discover himself possessed of the distinguishing qualities of a believer? And as he carefully separates what he believes, from all foundation of hope or confidence therein for everlasting life, he appears to us involved in the absurdity of hoping for eternal life by Christ, because he discovers himself without any foundation of hope, either in himself, or in the gospel he believes.

He may say, "he trusts to be saved by what Christ has done, "if saved at all;" but that very *if* signifies, that he does not trust upon what Christ has done, but is waiting to discover something else as a more proper ground of his confidence. And what is that *something else*, but the difference he discovers betwixt himself and other sinners? So that after all our flourishes against self-dependence and Pharisaic doctrine, if we are not upon our guard, we shall be at last settled on no other foundation.

Mr *Sandeman*, in endeavouring to prove that his view of the gospel "quiets the guilty conscience of a man as soon as he "knows it," acknowledges with us, that the gospel is designed for that end; but fails in his attempt to make out, that the guilty conscience of that man is quieted who discovers no foundation in what he believes, to trust in Christ's righteousness for everlasting life. He supposes, that the uneasiness and dread of conscience arises only from the appearing impossibility of a just God being a Saviour; from whence he infers, that the revelation of a righteousness removing this seeming impossibility, brings the rest and peace the scripture speaks of; without revealing any ground for trust and confidence in that righteousness. But this supposition is not true; few or none are troubled with such apprehensions, nor does the scripture address men as though they were. It is self-evident, that the cause of our dread is an apprehension of *our want* of a righteousness acceptable to the divine purity; and what relieves must be *our having* such a righteousness either in ourselves, or by God's free gift. This Mr S——n himself seems to acknowledge, when he talks of "labouring in painful desire and fear," as the effect of his cramped view of the gospel. For why is this the effect? but because what he believes does not afford the proper satisfaction.

Mr *Sandeman*'s jealousy is, lest we, by pleading thus for a sinner's trust and confidence on Christ, should lead man into a self-dependence on his doing something to relieve himself from his dreadful circumstances, instead of being supported only by what Christ has already done. But how easy is it to perceive, that no man is or can be supported by what Christ has already done, but he that discovers it the object of his trust and confidence for everlasting life; and that so to depend on Christ, and what he has done, is the very opposite of all self-dependence, and inconsistent with our depending on our doing any thing either present or future?

It is true, a man that is at an entire uncertainty without any dependence whatever, is as clear of self-dependence, as he is of dependence on what Christ has done. So a man that neither eats nor drinks, is as much out of danger of dying with gluttony and excess, as he is of being poisoned with unwholesome food. But how long can a man live thus? And how long can a man support without having some dependence or other for his soul? It is as natural for the mind of man to depend on something against the fears of hereafter, as it is for his body to gravitate or sink till it meets with a proper support. Hence we find, that those who depend not on the truth, depend on some falsehood or other which they suppose to be true; and when a man is beat off from one false dependence, he is sinking to despair till he finds another, or is relieved by the *real truth*. And that *truth* which relieves, must reveal a foundation of dependence for everlasting life; to attempt to rest short of this, is to attempt to build a castle in the air. The discovery, that "God may, if he pleases, have mercy upon me as I at present stand," although it tends to remove the Pharisaic wish or want to know that I am distinguished from others, yet leaves me unsupported as to original and real dread of conscience arising from my personal deficiency. And as such slight the divine warrant for the sinner's trust and confidence in Christ's sufficient righteousness, they naturally sink to the hope of eternal life, not by what Christ has done, or what the gospel declares, but a hope that they are the sheep of Christ who hear his voice, which is in fact only a hope *in themselves*.

The generality of mankind are but little concerned about the truth of the foundation of their peace of conscience: so they have got some hope, it is enough; they do not care to be disturbed from it with such a controversy as this; especially if they can but conceit themselves holy, or feel themselves happy; not considering, that if their hope is founded on falsehood, their whole religion is a deceit: But they who are taught of God, are not led by fond conjectures; they will not be satisfied with any other reason of their hope than the voice of that God who speaks in the conscience; and Christ the Saviour of the guilty given to be trusted in, is the only foundation that God has laid in *Zion*.

I have only to add, that the manner in which the subject is treated, that is, by short remarks on the passages we are concerned with, was the way in which the subject was treated for Mr *Hervey*'s view; and as I could think of no shorter method of defence, it is so presented to the public.

LETTERS

FROM

MR HERVEY

TO

THE AUTHOR.

Dear SIR,

LAST night I received your kind letter *; and this morning I have but a moment's space, in which to acknowledge it. However, I cannot neglect the first opportunity.——Are you the author that has given us an abridgment of Mr *Marshall*? Truly, I think, you have well bestowed your labour, and well executed your work. I wish you had not given yourself the trouble of sending me the book, because I have it, and highly prize it.—The abridgment I mean.

I should be very glad if you would read that dialogue you mention with a critical attention, if you would point out the places where you think I am confused in my apprehensions, injudicious in method, or weak in argument. As you have so thoroughly studied the point, and so often taught the doctrine you must easily see where the essay lies most open to objection, and where the point might receive additional strength.—You would oblige me, if you would do this with the utmost impartiality and freedom; and, I hope, you would do service to the truth as it is in JESUS. Several persons, I find, are dissatisfied with my opinion on this head. Do, Sir, review dialogue xvi, and favour me with your free remarks, and friendly improvements. Whatever of this kind is done, I beg may be done speedily; because a new edition is in the press, and the printers will soon come to that part.—When I hear from you again, I will speak my sentiments with relation to your well-calculated design of an evangelical library †. At present I have leisure only to assure you, that I am,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate friend in JESUS CHRIST,

Weston, April 15. JAMES HERVEY.

Dear SIR,

I Received your present by the coach; I thank you for it; and I am much pleased with it.—The doctrine ‡ which you approve in my essay, and have clearly displayed and fully proved in your own writings, is not relished by every body; no, not by many pious people. I take the liberty to send you a couple of letters containing objections ‖. I wish you would be so kind as to consider them, and in your *concise* way, which I much admire, to make your remarks upon them.—One of the letters, in case it exactly coincided with my sentiments, I should think too diffuse and prolix. I love to have the force and spirit of a subject contracted into a small compass, and exhibited to our minds in one clear and easy view. Long discourses, and protracted arguments, dissipate the attention and overwhelm the memory.—I think you are very happy in expressing yourself with a brevity that is striking, yet perspicuous.

I am not shaken in my own opinion by these attacks; but I should be glad to deliver it more clearly, and establish it more firmly in another edition. If you can spare a little time from your own labours, I hope you will gratify me in this request; and I trust HE, whom you serve, will make it a blessing to me and to others.

I would beg of you to return these letters, and (if the LORD should enable you) with free observations on the MOST MATERIAL points, as soon as POSSIBLE; because our new edition goes on apace, and will soon come to dialogue xvi. I have some thoughts of enlarging it a little, and dividing it into two dialogues. At present it is rather too long to be read at once.

I heartily wish you success in your projected work. *I assure*

* When I perceived by his first edition of *Theron and Aspasio*, that he had so publicly disowned the truths for which I had incurred the displeasure of many of his professed friends and admirers, I wrote to him, signifying my fellowship with him in the despised truth.

† An intended collection of the most evangelical pieces from the beginning of the reformation down to the present day. And as nothing was designed but the marrow of each performance, so he judged it might be comprized in six volumes, and desired that an abridgment of *Theron and Aspasio* might have a place in one volume of it.

‡ This was a summary of doctrine, extracted from Theron and Aspasio, in Aspasio's own words.

‖ These objections were adding no revealed truth to our minds, but on the contrary were only attempting to overthrow the solid foundation laid for the hope, confidence, and salvation of guilty sinners; that which makes the gospel glad tidings indeed to such. They allowed, that the free and unconditional nature of the divine declarations concerning Christ, as an object of trust and confidence, was the only foundation upon which trust or confidence could be established; but then they immediately contradicted this freeness of the divine grant, by clogging it with the prerequisites of seriousness, sensibility of need, real desires, and in short every qualification that human pride could presume upon the divine favour with, provided no Saviour had ever been revealed: Whereas the man taught of God is made *sensible*, that no qualification in him is to be a stepping-stone to the Redeemer's righteousness. His real *desire* is daily to live by that righteousness, not by his own; and he is *serious* in this matter as being of the greatest importance, counting all things but loss and dung, that he may win Christ, and be found in him, not having on his own righteousness which is of the law. They allowed the gospel-declarations contained what might be compared "to a free welcome to an entertainment, by a friend's invitation;" but denied that this gave them leave to believe that this entertainment was theirs; and only served as an inducement for them to do something, called reception, in order to found a title. They were answered, it was not theirs as a property in their disposal to give away, or trifle with: but theirs to partake of, it certainly was, by virtue of the invitation. And this partaking of Christ, and salvation in him, could be neither more nor less, than living by him in virtue of these declarations, instead of seeking a title by inherent qualifications; which would be, in fact, living by our own righteousness, and not by him. That if they allowed he was free for us to trust in, then the trust and confidence we pleaded for was vindicated as no presumption, but rather an obedience to our divinely-gracious Benefactor. The difference between *Mr Hervey* and them, lay in their different sentiments about what was the truth of the gospel: what *they* counted gospel, left them to seek for a something in themselves under the name of faith, on account of which they might conclude themselves saved persons. What Mr *Hervey* counted gospel, was the revelation of the divine righteousness to the most guilty, warranting their immediate trust and confidence therein; assuring them such confidence should not be disappointed. It is easy to perceive, that such confidence must be essential to the real belief of such doctrine; as, on the other hand, no assurance or confidence can be essential to the belief of that doctrine which leaves me to seek for my ground of confidence in a something more than what Christ has already done, and God has so freely presented to me. Mr *Hervey*'s view was not to establish a standard for the hope of salvation of this kind, as depending upon our inherent qualifications, whether called convictions, faith, repentance, or by any other name; but rather to establish an important, comfortable, precious truth, concerning an open door of access to God by what Christ has done, and salvation in him, granted to the most guilty, on a supposition that every mouth is stopped, and all the world (in every pretension or plea unto righteousness) become perfectly on a level before him. This truth he apprehended was, when received, the conviction and faith of every true believer, and the foundation of immediate trust and confidence, and as such was necessary and essential to solid peace of conscience, and true holiness of heart and life; yet, at the same time, entirely opposite to the peace and holiness of men of the Pharisaic spirit. In short, we seemed to be only upon the old apostolic or reformation dispute still, *viz.* whether we are to be justified by faith in Christ without works? or whether we are first to find some righteousness in ourselves?

you,

you: it is my opinion, that such a work, if well executed, will be one of the most valuable services to the present age. You will, I hope, be too hasty. Mr *W*—— has huddled over his performance in a most precipitate, and therefore most imperfect, manner. One would think his aim was, not to select the best and noblest passages, but to reprint those which came first to hand.—If I live to see another edition of *Theron* and *Aspasio* published, I will desire your acceptance of a set; and I hope it will be improved and enriched with your observations: which will be a favour acknowledged by,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate friend in JESUS CHRIST,

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S. Pray don't spare my own performance; but freely animadvert upon *Aspasio*. I am sensible he sometimes speaks unguardedly, and sometimes seems inconsistent with himself.

Weston-Favell, Apr. 22. 1755.

Dear SIR,

I Received your last valuable letter, and sincerely thank you for the judicious observations it contained.—Your other letter also, which conveyed an answer to ——, came safe to hand.—How is it, dear Sir, that godly * people are so averse to this doctrine †? I have another letter from ——, containing remarks upon, and objections to, Mr *Marshall*. I would transmit it to you by this conveyance, but I remember you have already work upon your hands. In my next it shall wait upon you. My only aim, I trust, is to find out the truth as it is in JESUS; which, at present, I am convinced is with you. There is so much clearness and simplicity in your doctrine, it is so suitable to the goodness of GOD, and so eminently conducive to the comfort, recovery, and happiness of a sinner, that I cannot be persuaded to relinquish it.—I should be glad to maintain it in a convincing, yet the most inoffensive manner. I propose to allot two dialogues for this very important subject. How, in what form and order would you advise me to proceed? Pray don't scruple to express yourself with all possible freedom. Direct and correct, as a friend and fellow-labourer ‡, &c.

Dear SIR,

LAST night I received the favour of your two packets; and, I assure you, a real favour I esteem them. Your answers are so clear, so consistent, so comfortable; they very much tend to establish my mind.—I find by your experience, the "account "I mean of GOD's dealings with your soul," that you have incurred (but surely without any just cause) the displeasure of many. Now, as this is the case, my dear Sir, let us act prudently; be wise as serpents. Don't you think, I beg of you, that I am ashamed of your friendship. GOD forbid! But as I have some concern, and you have a greater zeal for these precious doctrines, let us use the most probable means to spread them. You know the power of prejudice is great; is almost incredible. Many people, were they to know, that you and I have been laying our counsels together, perhaps would never look into my book. We seem now to have a favourable opportunity of diffusing these sacred and delightful truths ||. My books have been well spoken of in three of the *London* Magazines successively; and there is printing a new edition. The LORD JESUS, the WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR, direct us in this truly-important affair.—I will now, relying on his unerring SPIRIT, set about preparing the xviith dialogue for the press; and I should be very desirous to have it pass under your examination before it is launched into the world. You will give me leave to expect an answer; and let me know from time to time, where a letter may find you, sent by,

Dear SIR,

Your obliged and affectionate brother in JESUS CHRIST,

Weston, May 8. J. HERVEY.

Dear SIR,

I Have been so poorly in my health, and so much engaged in company, that I could not possibly get the inclosed ready before this time: which is the cause, the only cause, of my deferring my thanks for your last favour.

As to the doctrine under consideration, I have given a favourable and attentive ear to all that is said against it; and yet the more it is attacked, the more I am convinced of its truth. The LORD JESUS enable me to deliver and testify, with clearness of sentiment, and meekness of temper, what I am persuaded in my own conscience, is the true gospel of grace!—The inclosed paper contains some of the alterations which I propose to make. Another sheet will comprise the remainder. Let me desire you, dear Sir, to examine them, and remark upon them, as freely and impartially as you have done upon other papers. Pray treat me with a kind severity. Whatever sentence or expression appears wrong, I beg of you, animadvert, correct, spare it not. I assure you, I can bear to be told, (by your friendly pen at least,) this is not evangelical; here you contradict yourself; this is redundant, and that ambiguous.—Please to make little marks of reference in the MS. and pen down your observations on a separate paper.

I think to drop my first design of dividing the essay into two dialogues, and answering the various objections. That I intend to postpone for the present; and would print no more than is needful to explain, establish, and guard the tenet.—I think to add in a note, a friendly invitation to any serious and ingenuous person on the other side of the question, to debate and sift this very important point; professing, that if it can be proved erroneous, I will retract and renounce it, not only without reluctance, but with pleasure and thankfulness. Truth, the truth of the gospel, is my pearl; where-ever I find it, thither (without respect to names or persons) would I resort, and there would I abide. May that gracious promise be fulfilled to us in our searches, "The LORD "shall guide thee continually!"—I hope to send you, very soon, the residue, and am,

Dear SIR,

Your obliged and affectionate friend in CHRIST JESUS,

Weston, May 31, 1755. J. HERVEY.

Dear SIR,

LAST night I was favoured with your second letter, and sincerely thank you for the freedom you have used, and the corrections you have made.—Herewith I send the remainder of dialogue xvi. those parts, I mean, that are to undergo some alteration. I wish you could borrow the larger edition; to that the numeral references are made, as from that the new edition is printing.—I hope you will be so kind as to examine this MS. also with a friendly severity. Spare no sentiment or expression, I beseech you, that so much as seems contrary to the sound words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. If you see any thing that may conveniently be omitted, I wish you would inclose it in a parenthesis; for, I fear, the dialogue will be too long, and overwhelm the attention.

I am sorry that I am so straitened in time, and can say no more; my servant waits, and if I delay him any longer, will be too late to dispatch some necessary business for the family. Be pleased to favour me with your observations as soon as possible, because the printers will, if they are delayed much long-

* Mr *Hervey* here uses the word *godly* in the common signification of it, as distinguishing the religious from those who profess no religion; but, in the scripture-sense of the word, it is confined to those whose religion is formed by the belief and love of that truth which came from God for the hope of the guilty.

† These godly people he mentions mistook him continually, by apprehending all he said in the light of the properly-qualified faith; whereas his apprehension was totally in the light of free salvation to the guilty, as the ground of immediate confidence: and as they could make no hesitation about confiding in the Lord, if (as they termed it) *their evidences were clear*; so he made no hesitation about confiding in the Lord as a guilty sinner; the divine declarations to the guilty answering to him as the foundation of his confidence, as their evidences would to them if they could conceive them to be clear; and as his confidence only arose from the truth believed, it stood in so near a connection with it, that he accounted it essential to it: as, on the other hand, their confidence depending upon what they found in themselves, as distinguishing characteristics of God's children, could only have existence when and while they could thus conceive of themselves.

‡ The remainder of this letter is lost.

|| How evidently does Mr *Sandeman* appear to be mistaken, in calling this the popular doctrine, or in judging that Mr *Hervey* had gained a public esteem on the account of it?

* Some of these recommendations were not to the advantage of the truth which it was his main design to communicate: of this Mr *Sandeman* has not failed to take notice; and it must be acknowledged, that a resentment of the offices of such a friend might not have been improper. But the same reasons which he had for desiring the silence of one friend for the present, may be justly supposed the reason he shewed no resentment to the officiousness of the other.

er, be tempted to impatience. I should be glad if you would make Weston in your way, when you return from *Norwich*. May the LORD JESUS strengthen your judgment, make you of quick understanding, and enable you to detect every thing, in my poor essay, that is not agreeable to his word!—I am in doubt whether this letter should be directed to you at *London*, or *Norwich*.—A mistake in this particular may cause a longer delay in the affair. The all-seeing GOD guide me in every thing! I chuse *London*, and hope it will come to your hand before you set out. I am,

Dear SIR,

Your obliged and truly-affectionate friend in CHRIST JESUS,

Weston, June 12. J. HERVEY.

Dear SIR,

I Should be very glad, and much obliged, if you could give me your company in your return from *Norwich*, that we may thoroughly canvass, and carefully examine the important subject of our correspondence. I have ordered the printers to keep their types, composed for this part of my work, standing; and to proceed with the remainder, before this is worked off. So that I hope to have the whole, in proof-sheets, to lay before you in one review, provided you could favour me with your company pretty soon.

A celebrated divine from abroad writes thus, in a private letter to his friend; in which he speaks the very sentiments of my heart, and, I apprehend, of yours also:

"I apprehend, *Mr Hervey's* definition of faith will expose him "most to the generality of divines, both of the church of *England* "and dissenters; though it is a very good one, when well ex- "plained. The persuasion or assurance which is in the very na- "ture of faith, must be carefully distinguished from that which "has, in a manner, appropriated the name of assurance to itself; "I mean that exercise of spiritual sense following upon saving "faith, whereby a believer sees, and, upon good grounds, con- "cludes himself to be in a state of grace and salvation, and that he "has an actual interest in CHRIST, and his whole purchase, "even eternal life. The foundation of this assurance of sense, is "that believer's experience and feeling of what the HOLY "GHOST has already wrought in his soul, and it runs into "this conclusion; I find the fruits of the SPIRIT planted in my "soul; I am a new creature; I love the LORD JESUS in sin- "cerity *; and it is one of the greatest burdens of my life, that I "have no love suited to so glorious a one †. From all which, I "am sure, GOD has given me CHRIST, pardoned my sins, I "am in a state of grace, and must go to glory. But the ground "and foundation of that particular persuasion and assurance, "which is in the nature of saving faith, is the glorious authority "and faithfulness of GOD in the gospel record, promise, and of- "fer; and it rises no higher than this, that GOD offers, and "thereby, as he is true and faithful, gives CHRIST, with all his "fulness, to me, to be believed on, and trusted in, for life and eter- "nal salvation ‡. So that I not only safely and warrantably may, "but am obliged ‖ to receive, apply, and make use of JESUS "CHRIST as my own Saviour, by resting on him, and trust- "ing to him as such. JEHOVAH's great gift, offer, and pro- "mise, gives every sinner a sufficient warrant to do this, and are "a strong immoveable foundation for this persuasion or assurance "of faith. Nor can any other solid satisfying answer be given to "a broken-hearted humbled creature §, who puts away from "himself the gracious promises and offers of the gospel upon this "ill-grounded imagination, that they do not belong to him. To "whom it always may, and ought to be answered, that they do "belong to him, in the sense I have mentioned."

This extract is, I think, the precise explanation of our doctrine. If you find any expression, not exactly suited to your opinion, please to observe it. I am,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate and obliged brother in CHRIST,

Weston, July 6, 1755. J. HERVEY.

* It must be remembered, that they who love the Lord Jesus, love him that came to save, not the righteous, but the guilty; not the qualified, but the lost.

† This manner of expression, which this friend never learned from the scriptures, but catched (as I suppose) through common custom, favours too much of the leaven of the Pharisees. The Christian, conscious to himself that he is guilty, makes no account of the degrees of imperfect love, but lives solely and entirely by the *righteousness* revealed for the hope of the guilty: and what he lives by, he loves; not as a talk proportioned by the worthiness of the object, but as an affection arising from the truth believed.

‡ This is well expressed, and evidently distinguishes his meaning of the word *offer*, from the *offer* of a bargain to any who will come up to the terms. He evidently means the *real grant* of the blessings, as when money, food, and clothing, are offered to the poor, famished, or naked.

‖ They who hear and understand this gospel-grace, find it their bounden duty, as well as their happy privilege, and heart's inclination, no more to seek to live by their own, but to live entirely by the divine righteousness.

§ If this gentleman, by *a broken-hearted humbled creature*, means some that seem thereby those qualified for mercy than the rest, he would differ from us widely; but if (as I apprehend) he only means those whose cri-

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Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

LAST night I received your favour, and, according to your request, have written to my excellent friend, without delaying a single post. The *LORD JESUS* accompany my conciliatory offices with his heavenly blessing!

I hope you had a good journey, and are well in health, and joyful through faith.—We shall be glad to hear, that —— bore his journey comfortably, and is returned home more and more established in the love of his blessed *LORD*.

I hope you do not forget me and my family, my people, and my work at the press.—May the good *LORD* prosper you, and your labours of life!

I am much straitened for time, and can add no more at present, but that

I am yours, most cordially,

Aug. 4. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

MR *W——d* has been with me, and went away last week. We had much talk concerning you. I told him what I thought of your conversation and doctrine. What I could urge seemed to make no impression. I assure you, my esteem for you is not diminished. I am more and more persuaded, that your method of stating that grand and precious doctrine—the doctrine of faith in *CHRIST*—is the truth of the gospel. Your company, whenever you come this way, will be truly acceptable to all my family.

I wish you would inform me of the mistakes which you apprehend to be in Dr *Crisp*'s sermons. I have the new edition; intend to read them very attentively; and should be glad of your cautionary hints.

Pray let me hear from you soon; and believe me to be,

Dear SIR,

Your cordial and faithful friend,

Weston, Sept. 9. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

I Received your welcome letter from *London*. I should have answered it much sooner, but I had quite forgot where to direct. The direction was given in the first letter you ever wrote to me, which, consisting only of kind and friendly expressions, I suffered to perish, as I do all letters of that kind. Your other epistolary favours I carefully preserve.—I have waited and waited one day after another, in hopes of seeing you at *Weston*, in your return to *Norwich*; and have been uneasy in myself, lest you should think I neglect your correspondence. Indeed I do not. Neither do I forget my promise. I have a set of the new edition, reserved on purpose for you; to be delivered into your own hand, if you call upon me. Or I will order a set to be left you in *London*, where-ever you shall appoint.

I sincerely thank you for the copy of your letter. The sentiments are such as I wish to have written on my heart; such as I wish to speak and teach, while I live; and in my writings (if my writings survive me) to testify when I am dead. May

minal remorse renders them absolutely destitute of every other hope than by Christ alone, we are of one mind.

¶ One of the most evangelical-appearing objections against this grant of Christ to be believed on, is, "That, according to this doctrine, the free "gift does not secure their reigning in life on whom it is bestowed; because "they may rise to damnation for all that abundance of the gift." To which it may be answered, That gift, though to sinners indefinitely, that they may live by it, yet is a non-entity to every one till he hears it, and no conveyance of righteousness to any man that does not believe it, according to that which is spoken. And on the other hand, where a man does really believe it, he unfeignedly lives by it; and there *grace reigns through righteousness to eternal life*, over all who are thus begotten again.

the

the good LORD bear witneſs to ſuch doctrine, by making it healing to the conſcience, and fruitful in the converſation.

Your treatiſe of *marks and evidences* I will attentively read. If any thing occurs, which ſeems to need explication or alteration, I will moſt freely communicate it.

Pray let me hear from you ſoon. Inform me how you go on with Mr ——. Depend upon it, I will do you all the ſervice that lies in my power. Not merely becauſe you are a friend, whom I eſteem, but alſo becauſe I am perſuaded, you work the work of the LORD JESUS.—To whoſe tender love I commend yourſelf and your labours; and am,

Dear SIR,

Your truly-affectionate friend,

Weſton, Oct. 9. JAMES HERVEY.

My dear friend,

YOUR welcome letter is now in my hand. I thank you for the remarks it contains. The LORD make us of quick underſtanding in the fear of the LORD!

I have read the treatiſe concerning *marks and evidences*. I am going, as ſoon as I have diſpatched this letter, to read it again. If to do the heart good be a ſign of its value, I can very confidently bear this teſtimony to its worth. It refreſhes my ſpirit and comforts my ſoul. I hope, when republiſhed, it will be attended with this bleſſed effect to multitudes of readers *.—I believe it would be adviſeable to ſend it abroad without a name, and commit it wholly to the diſpoſal of him, who is head over all things to the church.

Did you ever ſee a little treatiſe written by one Mr *Beart*, formerly paſtor of a church in the place where you now reſide? It is ſtyled *A vindication of the eternal law and everlaſting goſpel*: It is but very lately that it came to my hands. It appears to me a truly valuable piece.—I forgot to deſire, that you would preſent my moſt cordial ſalutations to Mr ——. It is not for want of eſteem that I do not write to him, but from want of health, and a multiplicity of engagements. I ſhould be very glad, if he would communicate with all freedom, any remarks that he himſelf has made, or has heard from others, relating to *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*.

Mr —— called upon me, about ten days ago, in his return to *London*. He ſtaid only to make a haſty breakfaſt, ſo that I had very little converſation with him. I hope the GOD of power, and the GOD of peace, will unite our hearts in the love of the ſpirit, and unite our hands in the work of the LORD.

There is no ſtage goes from *Northampton* to *Suffolk*. I believe I may convey a parcel by the *Cambridge* carrier. I will inquire of him, when he comes this way; and if it is a practicable thing, you ſhall have the books by his next return.

We ſhall be all glad to entertain you at *Weſton*, and my beſt prayers will always accompany your labours in the LORD.——I ſend a frank, leſt your ſtock ſhould be exhauſted.—Write to me ſoon, and pray for me ever, who am,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate brother in CHRIST,

Weſton, Nov. 8. 1755. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

I Sent, laſt week, by the *Cambridge* carrier, a ſet of my books. He promiſed me to deliver them to the *Bury* carrier; and, I hope, by this time, they have reached your hands.—Whenever you peep upon them, pray be ſo kind as to note down any expreſſions or ſentiments, that are not THOROUGHLY evangelical. I ſhall be pleaſed with them, and thankful for them, even though I ſhould not have, through the want of a new edition, an opportunity of inſerting them in my volumes.

I have been thinking of your propoſal to republiſh your treatiſe on *marks and evidences*. Suppoſe you tranſmit it, detached from any other piece, under a frank to me. Suppoſe I ſend it to an underſtanding and ſagacious friend; and learn his ſentiments, and get his critical obſervations on it. By this means, you will ſee what is likely to give offence, or meet with objection; and may, perhaps, be enabled ſo to form your arguments, ſo to draw up your forces, as to prevent or baffle any attack. If you approve of this ſcheme, ſend me a copy of the piece; tear off the title-page, and I will immediately convey it to a friend, who lives at a great diſtance from *London*, who knows nothing of the author, and will give me his opinion, without favour or diſaffection.

Leſt you ſhould not be furniſhed with a frank, I ſend the incloſed.—My ſiſter is gone from home; my mother is in health, and will always be glad of ſuch converſation as yours; which will be equally agreeable to,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate friend and brother in CHRIST JESUS,

Weſton, Nov. 25. 1755. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

I Received, with pleaſure and gratitude, your letter and its contents. Would have made my acknowledgments immediately; but waited a poſt or two, in hopes of tranſmitting to you ſome remarks on your treatiſe. But my friend has not ſent them. As ſoon as they come, they ſhall be forwarded to you.

I am very much pleaſed with your explanation of, *In the LORD have I righteouſneſs*. "I a ſinner, not a new or ſanctified creature." This is encouraging; this is delightful; it is like a door opened in the ark for me, even for me to enter. Bleſſed be GOD for ſuch truths! Such truths make the goſpel glad tidings indeed to my ſoul! They are the very thing which I want; and the only thing which can give me comfort, or do me good *.

When people inquire, whether ſanctification is an evidence of juſtification? I ſuppoſe, by ſanctification, they mean what St *Paul* calls the fruit of the SPIRIT; love of GOD, charity to man, meekneſs, temperance †, &c. Now, may we not allow theſe to be proper evidences of faith, but maintain that the appropriating faith, or the faith of perſuaſion ‡, is the appointed means of producing them? *The life which I live in the fleſh*, the life of holineſs, uſefulneſs, and comfort, *I live by the faith of the SON of GOD*. What this faith is, he explains in the next ſentence; by viewing the SON of GOD, *as loving me, and giving himſelf for me*.—Pray favour me with your opinion of 1 *John* iii. 19. This ſeems one of the texts, leaſt reconcileable with our doctrine ||.

I have a long letter from a new hand, wrote very fair, and drawn up in an elaborate manner, in oppoſition to my account of faith, and to ſeveral parts of *dialogue* xvi. It conſiſts of five ſheets, wrote on every ſide; too large I apprehend to come under a frank, otherwiſe I would tranſmit it to you for

* If Mr *Hervey* may be believed, nothing was more offenſive to him, than thoſe encomiums on his piety, which only ſerve to render his confeſſion of himſelf hypocritical, and his doctrine falſe. In all his thoughts, in all his practice, he found himſelf a ſinner; and in nothing more ſo, than in entertaining any good conceit of himſelf, or his own ſtate, by compariſon with other men. God had taught him he had no rule to meaſure by, but the perfect law, or will of heaven; and every ſingle deviation ſerved to render his plea of righteouſneſs vain, to claſs him among the reſt of mankind-ſinners, and ſubject him to eternal vengeance. In the view of theſe circumſtances, mercy revealed in Chriſt Jeſus to the guilty, was a precious joyful ſound, which he heard and lived by. Had he heard any one deſcribe the holy, heavenly, pious Mr *Hervey*, he would have replied, You have deſcribed a man that will never enter heaven: but in the guilty Mr *Hervey*, living only by the divine righteouſneſs, you find the man that is taught of God.

To love the divine righteouſneſs provided for the guilty as ſuch; to love God thus characterized as juſt, and the juſtifier of the ungodly, by the righteouſneſs of his Son; to love them that are of this truth, for the truth's ſake dwelleth in them, is, according to ſcripture-account, the diſtinguiſhing *holineſs of truth*, whereby the children of God are manifeſted from the children of the devil; and the works of love to this righteouſneſs, are the only works that will be openly rewarded and acknowledged in the great day. It is alſo evident, from ſcripture and experience, that men may compaſs ſea and land to make a proſelyte, may give all their goods to feed the poor, and even their bodies to be burned, yet want this charity; they may do all this, and at the ſame time manifeſt themſelves to be the children of them who crucified Jeſus, by their conduct towards the real goſpel, and the diſciples of it.

† They ſhould mean ſo; and the fruit of love, &c. which is evidently from this operation of the divine truth we plead for, is undoubtedly a confirming evidence of its having become our faith, and of its divine efficacy in working by love.

‡ By *appropriating faith*, he means the confidence ariſing from the belief of the truth, of righteouſneſs and ſalvation freely preſented to the guilty in Chriſt Jeſus, as their immediate ground of confidence; which he alſo ſtyles the *faith of perſuaſion*, to diſtinguiſh it from that which is deſcribed, not by what we are perſuaded of, but as a hidden, holy principle, diſcoverable only by the good qualifications which diſtinguiſh us from others.

|| *Hereby we* (the children of the truth, by loving one another for the truth's ſake alone, not in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth) *know* [perceive, or have an additional confirming knowledge] *that we are of the truth*, when we prove, by the fixture of our hearts

* This treatiſe, ſo uſeful to my worthy friend, was one of the moſt offenſive pieces to my opponents; which very plainly manifeſts, that whatever compliments and pretenſions of regard might be paid to Mr *Hervey*, they differed exceedingly in taſte and judgment of ſpiritual things.

your perusal. And I hope to see you 'ere long; then we may examine it together.

I am glad to hear that you are acquitted with Mr ——, and that he is so well acquainted with the truth as it is in JESUS. The LORD enable him, and raise up many more ministers, to spread abroad the joyful sound.—When you give me your company, do not forget to bring with you the evangelical piece on the work of the SPIRIT in bringing a soul to CHRIST.

There is one passage in *dialogue* xvi. which, I think, is very injudiciously inserted, and is really a mistake. The *note*, page 303. I observed it a good while ago, and expunged it from my copy; and my new opposer has not spared to animadvert upon it. What need have we to pray for that divine GUIDE, *who leads into all truth!* May this divine GUIDE dwell in us, and walk in us, be our counsellor and comforter even unto death!—Dear Mr *Cudworth*, I hope, will not forget in his prayers the weakest of ministers, and the weakest of believers,—but his

Affectionate brother in CHRIST,

Weston, Jan. 26, 1756. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

I Received your valuable remarks, and sincerely thank you for them. May our divine MASTER enable us, both to discern and to display the truth as it is in JESUS.

I am much pleased, and thoroughly satisfied, with your explanation of *Acts* ii. 39 *. The proposals seem to me clear, pertinent, and weighty. If I am able to make any slight correction in the style, it shall be transmitted in my next. I would now only ask, how far you have proceeded in the work? I think you should by all means get the greater part (the whole, I would rather say) completed, before you begin to publish. If this is not done, many unforeseen accidents may arise, which will probably straiten you in point of time, and oblige you to be precipitate in your preparations for the press. And I am inclined to query, whether it is not a piece of justice we owe to the public, not to engage them in purchasing a piece, till it is put beyond the power of common casualties to render it imperfect.—Pray, therefore, let me know what progress you have made. I could wish to have it judiciously executed, and not performed in that confused, inaccurate, slovenly manner, which must be a continual discredit to Mr *W*——'s *Christian library*.

I rejoice to find, that the gospel of our salvation is spreading. May it have a free course and an extensive circuit! till the fountain becomes a river, and the river widens into a sea!

before him, saying with Peter, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that we love thee:* For *if our hearts condemn us*, that we love not those who are of this truth, or that our love to them is not for this truth's sake, whatever pretensions we may make to the faith, and of comfort, joy, holiness, &c. yet *God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things*; therefore cannot be deceived by our pretended regard to him and his truth, while we love not them who are of this truth. But, *beloved, if our hearts condemn us not*, (if the law of the New Testament, *Jer.* xxxi. 33. to believe on Christ, or live by his righteousness, and love one another for this truth's sake, is written on our hearts,) *then have we confidence towards God.*

* *Acts* ii. 39. The persons mentioned, were pricked in their hearts at hearing that God had made that same Jesus, whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ, and said, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* We don't find that *Peter* had been preaching to them any such doctrine as that, "If "they were much affected with their sins, and wounded at heart with a "godly sorrow for them, they had an interest in the promise of life and sal-"vation." This would have been only introducing the *Pharisaic* distinction, which our Saviour constantly opposed. On the contrary, when *Peter* declared, that God had made *that same Jesus*, who opposed such distinctions in the *Pharisees*, and was rejected on that account, that God had made him *both Lord and Christ, they were confounded.* All their pretensions to righteousness, and acceptance with God, forsook them. They were pricked in their hearts at these tidings and cried out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* If Jesus is Lord and Christ, what will become of us? Then *Peter* exhorted to the assurance we plead for, in these words, *Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, for the remission of sins*; (for the words thus circumstanced bear evidently this sense:) "Your case is undoubtedly des-perate; you have been to this moment God's enemies; even so far have you carried your opposition, as *with wicked hands to crucify and slay the Lord's* Christ, sent for your deliverance. Nevertheless, *in this man's name is preached unto you remission of sins*: therefore *repent* of your wickedness in opposing him; submit to him as your free given righteousness and salvation; be baptized in his name *for the remission of your sins*, and live from henceforth by him, as your proper righteousness; assuring yourselves of *remission of sins* by him alone; and you shall receive the promised gift of the *Holy Ghost* as it has come upon us: *For the promise is to you and to your children.*" And *with many other words did he exhort them, saying*, (by flying to this same Jesus as your proper refuge,) *Save yourselves from this outward generation. Then they that gladly received his word*, out of the mixed multitude, *were baptized; and the same day were added about three thousand souls.*—— From the whole thus considered, there is nothing to contradict the call and promise of God directed to sinners as such; but, on the contrary, a foundation for calling upon the most guilty to live immediately by the Redeemer's righteousness.

The inclosed came a little while ago.—My friend is very severe. It will give you an opportunity of exercising forbearance and gentleness. He knows nothing at all of the author. When your other affairs will allow leisure, please to return the letter with your observations; which will oblige, and, I trust, edify,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate friend,

Weston, Apr. 21. 1756. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

I Have only time to beg of you, if you have the letter of remarks on Mr *Marshall*'s book, to return it to me as soon as you can. If there are any observations that are just, and such as animadvert upon passages *truly exceptionable*, be so kind as to give me your opinion on them. The reason of my desiring this is, a prospect of a new edition of *Marshall*.—A bookseller is inclined to print one, and sell it at half a crown price; I believe encouraged thereto by my recommendation of it. The recommendation has been printed in our *Northampton* news-paper, and immediately there was a demand for twenty-three of your abridgments. But the printer could not procure enough to supply the demand. Mr *K*—— desires you would send a fresh supply to him.

In the greatest haste, but with great sincerity and affection,

Yours,

May 27. JAMES HERVEY.

My dear friend,

THIS comes to inform you, that Mr —— has begun an edition of *Marshall*; in much the same size, and exactly the same letter, as *Theron* and *Aspasio*. If you have any thing to observe, pray let me have it with as much speed as you can make. If you have Mr ——'s objections, examine them attentively; and, I hope, you will be enabled to obviate what is material. I should be glad if you could, after you have digested your notes, give me your company, that we might talk them over. Now is the time, in all probability, to make *Marshall* a well-known spreading book.—I hope the LORD will enlighten your understanding; fructify your invention; strengthen your judgment; and enable you to write "sound words, such as cannot be condemned."—I am,

Very affectionately yours,

Weston, June 17. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

YEsterday I received your letter, and am much obliged to you for it. Pray do not mention Mr ——'s name, nor shew his letter. I hope to adhere to the truths of the gospel; but yet I would endeavour to live in harmony, of affection and friendly intercourse at least, with those who differ.—I cannot think, that Mr —— could have any knowledge of the author of the discourse *against marks and evidences*.—I would read your treatise over again, with my best attention. For, I assure you, it always does me good. I will also compare it with your remarks on Mr ——; which, in my opinion, are solid and satisfactory: I am sure they are encouraging and comfortable.

When *Marshall* was advertised in our news-paper, the gentleman that inserted my recommendation, added this note to explain one sentence.—"By uncommon road, 'tis presumed, the recommender means the very evangelical nature, and remarkably-instructive method of the directions laid down by Mr *Marshall* (than whom no man, perhaps, was ever better acquainted with the human heart) for the effectual practice of holiness, as likewise somewhat of obscurity, which is confessedly in his 3d and 4th direction."

I apprehend, the obscurity of chapter 3. and 4. arises, not from any improper manner of treating the subjects, but from the mysterious * nature of the subjects themselves.—I will write to the bookseller to suspend his procedure of the press, till he hears farther. But let this *hasten* you, my dear friend, in communicating what you have to observe. I should be glad to have our common favourite, as clear and unexceptionable as possible, &c. &c. †.

* Mysterious, because contrary to our natural notions, the *natural man not receiving the things of the Spirit of God.*

† The remainder of this letter is lost.

My

My dear friend,

THE cauſe of my writing is this, Mr —— is upon the point of publiſhing a new edition of *Marſhall*. I have given him the incloſed letter, to introduce it into the world; but was deſirous to have you peruſe it and correct it, before it goes to the preſs. Be ſo kind, therefore, as to examine it ſtrictly; and where-ever you think it ſhould be altered, uſe it with the freedom of a friend. The more rigour, the more kindneſs.

I ſend a frank to be the vehicle of your obſervations, together with the printed half-ſheet.

As ſoon as I have finiſhed what you mention, it ſhall be tranſmitted. Though I would fain ſee one of the books completely abridged, before any propoſals or advertiſements appear. It is a matter of great importance, pray let it be executed with care and correctneſs. May the Keeper of *Iſrael* protect you in your journeys, and the Light of the world guide you in your work!

affectionately yours,

Weſton, Oct. 6. 1756. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

MR —— told Mr *W——d* that I *offered* to write a *preface* to your remarks on his ſermons. I told Mr *W——d* the whole of the affair. That you informed me of your deſign, and what I anſwered. That I deſired it might be conducted in a tender and reſpectful manner. That the title ſhould be more friendly and benign. That you read what you propoſed to ſay concerning my mentioning of *Marſhall*; which I obſerved was inexpreſſive. If you ſaid any thing, I thought it ſhould be more weighty and ſignificant. This was all the concern I had in the affair.

—That I had promiſed, not offered (for I don't remember I ever did ſuch a thing in my life) to write a recommendatory introduction to the work, which you have in hand. That it was at your requeſt, but with the real approbation of my judgment; for I apprehended, that your deſign when well executed, would be a valuable preſent to the world.

This comes by a gentleman who knows you. Let me hear what Mr —— ſays about the affair. And remember to give me a direction where to write to you. You date from *Margaret-ſtreet*; but this I ſuppoſe is not particular enough. I can add no more, leſt the bearer ſhould be gone. Only I wiſh you much ſucceſs in preaching *CHRIST*.

Yours affectionately,

Weſton, Dec. 24. 1756. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

I Received your parcel containing ſeveral copies of *The Friendly Attempt*, &c.* My thanks ſhould have been returned ſooner; but I have been under that indiſpoſition and languor of ſpirit, which renders me unfit for every thing.

I think there is rather too much aſperity in the cloſe; and I wiſh that expreſſion "refined idolatry," had been a little ſoftened. This I mention only to yourſelf, and to give you a ſpecimen of that openneſs and freedom, which I would have take place in all our perſonal and epiſtolary intercourſes.

I have read your manuſcript again and again, with my beſt attention, and with much delight†. I have made here and there a ſmall alteration with regard to the language, only to render the ſenſe ſomewhat more perſpicuous, not to vary the peculiar caſt of your diction.—I heartily concur in receiving and embracing theſe doctrines. I think them to be truths of very great importance, and ſhall be truly glad to ſee them in print, that they may be ſpread and be univerſally known.

If I ſhould be enabled to finiſh a fourth volume of dialogues, I propoſe to have one conference on the aſſurance of faith‡; to ſtate it more clearly, and to eſtabliſh it more ſtrongly. In this, I ſhall be glad to borrow ſeveral of your thoughts, and will make my acknowledgments accordingly; declaring, at the ſame time, my opinion of the piece, which lends me ſuch valuable aſſiſtance.

Preſent my moſt affectionate ſalutations to —— ——. I

* A friendly attempt to remove ſome fundamental miſtakes in the Rev. Mr *W——d*'s ſermons.

† *Aphoriſms on the aſſurance of faith.* The ſubſtance of them originally was what Mr *Hervey* takes notice of in his letter, dated *Oct.* 9. 1755. Afterward Mr *Hervey* deſired me to draw up the ſubſtance of the whole that had been canvaſſed, in as conciſe a manner as poſſible, for his own uſe. This, ſome time after, I propoſed for printing, and is the manuſcript here mentioned.

‡ Or in other words, the confidence that is founded on the truth we believe concerning Chriſt given to be *believed on*, or confided in.

received his obliging letter; I moſt ſincerely wiſh him ſucceſs, in diſplaying the unſearchable riches of grace, and the infinitely-glorious righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. I hope he will not be diſpleaſed with my ſilence. It proceeds from no diſreſpect, but from a multiplicity of engagements, and a poor pittance of ſtrength, utterly inſufficient to fulfil them.—Pleaſe to thank —— for his very encouraging and comfortable letter. I wiſh, when he is at leiſure, he would favour me with another on this ſubject, how holineſs ſprings from faith, or a view of ſanctification as the effect of juſtification.

When ſhall I ſee you?—If —— writes to me on the ſubject you mention, he ſhall have a ſpeedy anſwer.—You need not ſend me the twelve queries, becauſe they have been tranſmitted me from *Scotland*. But ceaſe not to ſend up your prayers and ſupplications in behalf of your truly-affectionate friend,

J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

I Have, with attention and delight, read over your pamphlet. A ſlight alteration or two, relating to the language, I have made. But I deſire you will follow the determination of your own judgment.—As ſoon as they are printed, ſend me a quarter of a hundred; not as a preſent, but as a purchaſe.

The LORD has lately viſited me with a dangerous fever; which confined me to my room many days, and excluded me from the pulpit ſeveral *Sundays*. I am ſtill extremely weak in body. Pray that I may be ſtrong in the faith of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*.—In his moſt precious and everlaſting righteouſneſs, I remain,

Affectionately yours,

J. HERVEY.

P. S. Send me a dozen of your *Aphoriſms*, when they are publiſhed.

My dear friend,

ONE principal cauſe of my long ſilence, I do aſſure you, was my ignorance of the place of your reſidence in *London*. I knew not, till Mr ——, yeſterday, gave me a direction where to write to you.

I thank you for your laſt packet. But you muſt give me leave to inſiſt upon paying for the contents, when I have the pleaſure of your company, which I want much. Can't you make *Weſton* in your way, and contrive to ſpend a couple of days with me? I cannot be ſatisfied with a ſhorter ſtay.—I have much to ſay to you; but as I will hope to ſee you, and converſe face to face, I ſhall not attempt to communicate my thoughts by ink and pen.

I have juſt publiſhed three ſermons. If you will call upon Mr *R——'s*, in St *Paul's* church-yard, or ſend a meſſenger with the note ſubjoined to this letter, he will deliver two of my pieces. Let me beg of you to peruſe them, with your pen in your hand; and to tranſmit whatever obſervations may occur.—I have ſome remarks upon your *Aphoriſms*, which you ſhall ſee, when you give me your company.—Have you ſeen a couple of volumes, lately publiſhed, and entitled, *Letters on Theron and Aſpaſio*? You come in for a ſhare of chaſtiſement. What is your opinion in general of this performance? As to particular paſſages, we will poſtpone the examination of them, till GOD's providence grants us a perſonal interview*. Do you know who is, or who is ſuppoſed to be the author of this piece?

May the work of the *LORD JESUS* proſper in your heart, your tongue, your pen, and in thoſe of your truly

Affectionate friend,

Weſton, Sept. 8. 1757. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

I Received your letter, and return you my very ſincere thanks for your remarks†. I only wiſh that there had been more of them.

I hope it will not be long, before you give me your company at *Weſton*. Then we will examine the three dialogues, as they appear in their new form; and will conſider, and determine, concerning their publication‡; or rather will beſeech the

* The reſult of this conſideration, and of my after correſpondence with Mr *Sandeman*, at Mr *Hervey*'s requeſt, ſee in the defence of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*.

† Remarks on *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, conſidered with regard to the objections raiſed by the author of the letters.

‡ The publication of the 15th, 16th, and 17th dialogues corrected with regard to the objections of Mr *Sandeman*.

only

only wise GOD our SAVIOUR to over-rule and guide our determination. Contrive to stay some time with me.

Try if you can get me *Taylor*'s book; or any of those which you shewed me: *Neonomianism unmasked*, if you can light on, purchase for me.—I wish you growing consolation in CHRIST, deliverance from all your troubles, and abundant success in spreading abroad the savour of our REDEEMER's name. In whom I am,

Dear SIR,

Your true and affectionate friend and brother,

Weston, Feb. 22, 1758. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

YESTERDAY your favour came to hand. I hope to see you at *Weston* 'ere long, and then I will deliver the letters * into your own hand.—I have sent you a couple of franks. If you want more, when I see you, I will endeavour to supply you.—I am glad you are debating the important point with Mr *Sandeman*. He seems to be an acute person; and if there is a flaw in our cause, he will be likely to discover it. But, as far as I can judge, he has found no such thing hitherto.

May the GOD of grace and truth be with you; and enable you to understand and defend the first; to experience and abundantly enjoy the last.

Please to present my very affectionate respects to your worthy kinsman Mr ——, and recommend to his prayer, and remember in your own,

Dear SIR,

Your brother in CHRIST,

Weston, March 1, 1758. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

THIS comes to desire you will inform me how I may direct a large letter to you; which I will send, as soon as your answer is received. It is a manuscript †, which wants your examination, and it is of some importance. Therefore I am somewhat solicitous, that it may not miscarry.

Yours affectionately,

Weston, July 15, 1758. J. HERVEY.

P. S. You may direct your letter, to stop at *Northampton*.—Don't use any of your franks. You will have greater occasion for them. Or, if your stock is spent, let me know.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

THIS day I received your letter, with the two MS. sheets inclosed. Accept my thanks for your remarks, and let me beg of you to examine the two sheets, which are now sent. I will take your advice with regard to Mr *B* ——, and follow your hint, concerning your own work.—I apprehend there will be about *ten* such sheets; and that the piece will make a two-shilling pamphlet. I must entreat you to get time for the revisal of all; which shall be sent you, as you shall be able to dispatch the work. I am,

Dear SIR,

Most cordially yours,

July 27, 1758. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

LAST week I sent you two sheets of the manuscript, now I send two more for your revisal. If you see a fair opportunity of contracting, please to make use of it; for, I fear, the piece will be too long. Inclose, what you think may be omitted in a parenthesis, by a pencil.—Pray examine rigorously, by which you will very much oblige

Your truly affectionate,

Weston, Aug. 2, 1758. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

HERE I inclose two sheets more. They are very long. But I hope you will get time to revise them. Your last packet I received, and am much obliged for your remarks.—I apprehend the piece will make a two-shilling pamphlet. If you could suggest or insert any thing to make it *edifying* and useful, I should be glad. Would it not be proper to print Mr *W*——y's letter, and prefix it to my answer?—Have you left your own two books for me at my brother's? If you have not, please to leave them at Mr *J. R*——'s in St *Paul*'s church-yard. I am,

Dear SIR,

Cordially yours in CHRIST JESUS,

Weston, Aug. 9, 1758. J. HERVEY.

P. S. I suppose about three sheets more will finish the work.

My dear friend,

HERE are two more sheets. The last I received, with your valuable remarks. Pray bestow the same attention on these. Two more, or less, will finish the essay; then I will discontinue writing, and employ myself in reading, especially in reading *Luther*'s comment *. Can't you procure for me *Taylor*'s book? I am,

Dear SIR,

Affectionately yours,

Aug. 16. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

I Received in due time your last letter. Should have sent the conclusion of my manuscript, but it has been lent out, and is not yet returned.

I shall be glad to see your correspondence with Mr *Sandeman*.—The inclosed is a copy of a letter, which I sent some years ago, to two malefactors under sentence of death.—It is got into a good many hands. Some would have me print it. I wish you would be so kind as to revise it, and give me your opinion.—People say, there is not enough said concerning the spiritual change, or the new heart.

My next shall bring you a little piece of mine, which, without my knowledge, has passed the press.—I have lately been in great want of franks. But now I have got a recruit.

I have been very ill this week, but had strength enough to read in your book. I was much edified by Mr *Simpson*'s sermons. Pray, are his whole works to be procured? and are they of the same spirit with the sermons which you have given us? If so, I should desire to see, to possess them all.

I am,

Very affectionately yours,

Weston, Sept. 23, 1758. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

EXCUSE me for keeping your MS. † so long, I have been extremely ill. This morning I have been up for four hours, and in all that time not able to look into a book, or hold up my head.

I fully assent to your opinion. Think you have proved the warrant for a sinner's application of CHRIST very satisfactorily.—If I live, I should much desire a copy of this your correspondence, when you have revised and finished it. Or do you intend to print it?

Have you got some complete sets of all your works? If you have, I wish you would lodge about four of them at Mr *R*——n's. Let them be only in sheets. And when you have given me notice, that they are deposited with him, I will order him to pay you a guinea for them. I promised a worthy clergyman a set, some days ago.

Yours affectionately,

Weston, Dec. 2. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

I AM so weak, I am scarcely able to write my name ‡.

Dec. 15, 1758. J. HERVEY.

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* Letters of correspondence between me and Mr *Sandeman*.

† This was an answer to Mr *John Wesley*'s objections against *Theron* and *Aspasio*, and is so valuable a defence of imputed righteousness, that its publication is much to be desired.—It has been since published by Mr Hervey's brother, and may be seen in the immediately preceding part of this work.

‡ Hearing how dangerously ill Mr *Hervey* was, I wrote to remind him of leaving something under his hand in regard to his writings, as he knew the situation of them *now* required it; and this was all the answer he could give me.

A

A DEFENCE OF THERON and ASPASIO, AGAINST THE

Objections contained in a late Treatiſe, entitled, *Letters on THERON and ASPASIO.*

THE ſum and ſubſtance of the doctrine pleaded for by *Aſpaſio*, is, "That God hath ſo given "eternal life in his Son, to guilty ſinners, as "that they are fully warranted to receive "Chriſt, or aſſure themſelves of ſalvation by him alone, "without waiting for any inward motions, feelings, or "deſires, as any way requiſite in order to ſuch a recep-"tion or aſſurance."

This doctrine has been hitherto oppoſed under the notion, (1.) That ſome inward motions, feelings, or deſires, were ſome way requiſite in order thereto. That theſe inward motions, feelings, or deſires, were the faith or reception of Chriſt ſpoken of in the ſcripture; or at leaſt the indications of it; and muſt be diſcerned in us, in that light, before there can be any well-grounded aſſurance of ſalvation by him. (2.) That if we are called directly to live by Chriſt, or appropriate him, he is ours and we are ſafe, whether we appropriate him or no. (3.) That it is aſſuring ourſelves of what, for ought we know, is abſolutely falſe. (4.) That the wicked, the preſumptuous, and the hypocrites, may, and do often, thus aſſure themſelves. (5.) That there is nothing in faith, thus underſtood or exerted, which is a proper ſpring and cauſe of good works, by which it is in itſelf different from a falſe faith. (6.) That it is contrary to all ſelf-examination, and aſſurance thereby. And, (7.) That ſuch doctrine is a great diſcouragement to weak ſouls.

In anſwer to all this, we have aſſerted, (1.) That the divine revelation concerning Jeſus is addreſſed to ſinners, the world, the loſt, and that without being directed to wait for any inward motions, feelings, or deſires: remiſſion of ſins and eternal life in Chriſt, are ſaid to be preſented or given to them, and they are immediately called to believe on him as ſo granted. That the inward motions, feelings, or deſires, correſpondent to theſe goſpel-declarations, are motions, deſires, &c. to live by Chriſt alone, immediately, without waiting for any thing previous thereto. And that this voice of God, in theſe declarations of the goſpel, was a ſufficient authority for the whole we plead for, without waiting for any inward motions or excellencies in us to add thereto. (2.) That it is very abſurd, to infer, that Chriſt being given for us to feed upon, or live by, that there is therefore no need to live by him. Nor is it (3.) aſſuring ourſelves of what may be falſe; the divine declaration having ſecured this, that they which believe on him ſhall not be confounded; nor does any man thus live by Chriſt alone, but he who is choſen to ſalvation by the belief of the truth. Notwithſtanding many deceive themſelves, profeſſing great confidence, but it is in ſome undue mixture or addition of their own to what God hath ſpoken. And, (4.) that it is here the preſumptuous and the hypocrite do err and deſtroy themſelves, and not in believing according to that which is ſpoken. (5.) That good works are works of love to God, thus manifeſted, and therefore it is the only principle of good works on this account. *We love him becauſe he firſt loved us.* So that it differs from a falſe faith, as the belief of a truth differs from the belief of a falſehood; and as an apprehenſion of the divine favour begets love and obedience rather than an apprehenſion of wrath. (6.) That a proper ſelf-examination is therefore, whether we thus live by Chriſt alone, or whether we are waiting for ſomething more? And, (7) that it is far from diſcouraging the chiefeſt ſinners, to let them know, that God hath given to them eternal life in his Son, although it very poſſibly may, and ought to diſcourage every one from ſeeking relief in themſelves, while the divine declarations point us ſo plainly to the ſalvation given in Chriſt Jeſus to the guilty.

We have now to engage with another kind of an opponent, one that tells us, "That on account of our thus pleading for aſſurance of ſalvation, by receiving or appropriating Chriſt as given to us, we are alſo to be claſſed with the popular preachers, in as much as we alſo lead the guilty as they do, to ſeek after ſome inward motions, feelings, or deſires, as ſome way requiſite, in order to acceptance with God, not underſtanding how God can appear juſt to an unrighteous perſon, in juſtifying him as he at preſent ſtands, without ſome motion in his will, &c. That the whole doctrine of the popular preachers is deviſed for producing, animating, and directing this motion, that ſo the anxious hearer may find, about himſelf, ſome diſtinguiſhing reaſon why the Deity may regard him more than others. That the work finiſhed by Jeſus Chriſt in his death, proved by his reſurrection, is all-ſufficient to juſtify the guilty. That the whole benefit of this event, is conveyed to men, only, by the apoſtolic report concerning it.—And that this whole benefit is no more than a poſſibility of ſalvation, depending upon the divine ſovereignty. That every one who underſtands this report to be true, or is perſuaded that the event actually happened, as teſtified by the apoſtles, is juſtified, and finds relief to his guilty conſcience, *i. e.* the relief of the above mentioned poſſibility. That ſuch are relieved, not by finding any favourable ſymptoms about their own heart, but by finding their report to be true. That all the divine power which operates on the minds of men, either to give the firſt relief to their conſciences, or to influence them in every part of their obedience, is perſuaſive power, or the forcible conviction of truth. That our primary notion of the divine character, can give no comfort to the guilty, but, on the contrary, make them miſerable by a ſenſe of fear and ſhame. That when a man knows how God may be juſt, in juſtifying him as he at preſent ſtands, he finds relief from the aforementioned diſquieting fear."

To this we reply in general, That we agree to the greater part, to almoſt all theſe aſſertions, as moſt valuable truths, and ſtand corrected by ſome of them,

particularly, where-ever we have too charitably ſuppoſed or admitted a belief of the report, contrary to the ſcripture-declaration, *They that know thy name will put their truſt in thee* *; and thereby have been ſometimes † led to fall in with the multitude, who make light of the belief of the report, as a common thing; whereas, to know the real truth of the goſpel, in diſtinction from every corrupting and contradictory falſehood, is the peculiar teaching of God; and every one that has ſo *heard and learned of the Father, comes to CHRIST*. We agree, that "our primary notion of the divine character makes the "guilty miſerable, by a ſenſe of fear and ſhame." But we deny, that relief from the fear is obtained without being as certain that we have righteouſneſs, as we are that we have guilt. The divine declaration of Chriſt, given to be believed on, affords a foundation for this certainty; and contains, therefore, more than ſuch a poſſibility as is above mentioned. We alſo deny the charge, that we lead the guilty, as the popular preachers do, to ſeek after ſome inward motions, feelings, or deſires, as ſome way requiſite, in order to acceptance with God. For notwithſtanding the righteouſneſs appropriated relates to acceptance with God, the appropriation we plead for, relates only to the conſciouſneſs, knowledge, and enjoyment of that righteouſneſs whereby the guilty are juſtified. And we affirm, that to receive a gift, is no prerequiſite or condition, as ſuch receiving has no exiſtence without the thing received; and to be ſo enriched, is not to be enriched by our act of receiving, or what we do, but only what we receive. But as Mr *Sandeman*'s attack well deſerves a more particular defence, we conſider it as follows.

"Has our favourite author then at leaſt ſo far loſt "ſight of the imputed righteouſneſs, as to mix another "with it? Has he ſo embarraſſed, or rather ſhut up our "acceſs to the divine righteouſneſs, as to hold forth a "preliminary humane one, as ſome way expedient, or "rather neceſſary, to our enjoying the comforts and be"nefits of it?" *Letters on Theron and Aſpaſio*, p. 4. ‡

No, far from it; but as the pinching point in the conſcience is not, that there is no ſuch righteouſneſs in being as pleaſeth God; but that WE have no ſuch righteouſneſs; ſo, we underſtand the comfort and benefit of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to be, that it is a ſufficient righteouſneſs to OUR behalf. And we who plead for the divine grant of this righteouſneſs to ſinners, as ſuch, very evidently maintain, that there is no preliminary righteouſneſs neceſſary to ſuch a concluſion.

"I ſpeak of thoſe teachers, who, having largely in"ſiſted on the corruption of humane nature, concluded "the whole world guilty before God, eloquently ſet "forth the neceſſity of an atonement, zealouſly main"tained the ſcripture-doctrine concerning the perſon "and work of Chriſt; yet, after all, leave us as much "in the dark as to our comfort, as if Jeſus Chriſt had "never appeared; and mark out as inſuperable a taſk "for us, as if he had not finiſhed his work." p. 8. 9.

This charge may be very properly exhibited againſt thoſe teachers who leave us as much in the dark as they found us, unleſs we can find out ſomething within ourſelves to diſtinguiſh us from other ſinners. But *Aſpaſio*'s doctrine brings Chriſt near to guilty ſinners, as ſuch, for their immediate enjoyment. Take and have, receive and poſſeſs, relates only to perſonal enjoyment, is no taſk, no entitling condition; the appropriation being fully warranted by the truth believed, and effected by the belief of it.

"While, with great aſſiduity and earneſtneſs, they "are buſied in deſcribing to us, animating us with va"rious encouragements, and furniſhing us with manifold inſtructions, how to perform that ſtrange ſome"thing which is to make out our connection with "Chriſt, and bring his righteouſneſs home to us." p. 9.

We ſay, Chriſt's righteouſneſs is "brought home to "us," in the goſpel-declaration; without the neceſſity of any intervening righteouſneſs to warrant us to call it ours. We only receive what is freely given; that is all the ſtrange ſomething we have pleaded for; and that not for our acceptance with God in virtue of our act, but only to know and enjoy that righteouſneſs as ours on account of which alone we are accepted.

"Setting them to work to do ſomething under what"ever name, to make up their peace with God." *Ibid.*

Not ſo with us, who receive and live by Chriſt's righteouſneſs, with which God hath declared himſelf already well pleaſed.

"Every doctrine which teaches us to do or endea"vour any thing toward our acceptance with God, "ſtands oppoſed to the doctrine of the apoſtles." p. 11.

But the doctrine we plead for, teaches us to live by what Chriſt has already done, as being given to us for that purpoſe. To ſay that I muſt do, or endeavour any thing that I may be accepted, is a contradiction to that believing on Chriſt we plead for; which is, in fact, neither more nor leſs, than living upon him as our whole, only, and complete ſalvation; and will, on that account, bear the teſt of the apoſtle's word, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly* &c. As this faith cannot be ſeparated from the truth believed, nor the truth believed from Chriſt the ſubject of that truth, ſo to be juſtified by faith, by Chriſt, or by his blood, is the ſame thing. Nor can any doing for acceptance be charged upon this believing on Chriſt, while its native language is, *In the Lord have I righteouſneſs.*

* *Palæmon*'s main argument is, "If the work finiſh"ed by Jeſus Chriſt is alone ſufficient to juſtification, "then no appropriation or reception is neceſſary there"to." We reply, that that alone is ſufficient; therefore reception or appropriation belongs to our conſcious poſſeſſion and enjoyment of the juſtifying righteouſneſs, to the manifeſtation of our juſtification by it, and to the influence of it in our lives and converſations.

Palæmon thinks he does not deny the ſufficiency of Chriſt, when he connects faith and ſalvation together, and maintains, that all who believe this ſufficiency will be ſaved, and all who believe it not, will periſh.

He admits, that a work of God is neceſſary in the juſtified, that is, to beget faith, to beget in them a perſuaſion of the ſufficiency of the juſtifying righteouſneſs.

He judges this cannot be a contradiction to the one thing needful alone, becauſe it is wholly a perſuaſion of the ſufficiency of that alone, without more. In what light then are we to conſider this farther work of God, in perſuading us of the ſufficiency of this righteouſneſs? Not as an addition to the ſufficient righteouſneſs, but only as relative to the knowledge of it. He is juſtified by believing only as he is juſtified by what he believes.

Neither does he think he denies the ſufficient righteouſneſs, when he maintains faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience, as neceſſary to demonſtrate his portion in this righteouſneſs, or that he is a juſtified perſon. Becauſe in theſe acts, or in this obedience, he is not doing ſomething to be juſtified, but proceeding in the way "*of painful deſire and fear*," in order to *know* himſelf to be juſtified.

Hence it is apparent, that he muſt be obliged to allow, that although the work finiſhed by Chriſt on the croſs, is the *ſole requiſite* to juſtification; yet, in this view,

* Mr *Hervey* had begun a correction of his three laſt dialogues in this view, as mentioned in the letter, p. 443.

† *Sometimes*, for the force of truth frequently prevailed againſt this miſtake, before Mr *Sandeman*'s performance appeared.

‡ *N. B.* Mr *Sandeman*'s words are included with the commas, the other paragraphs are the reply.

* The name the author of the letters has choſen for himſelf, as Mr *Hervey* is to be underſtood by *Aſpaſio*.

ſomething

ſomething more is neceſſary to the *knowledge* of his intereſt in this righteouſneſs, or of his juſtification by it. And that to maintain this, is no contradiction to the *ſole requiſite*, but a procedure upon it. What he is obliged to plead for himſelf, he muſt alſo allow to us: and the difference between us is not in regard of the *ſole requiſite*, but our preſent *enjoyment* of it, or the *knowledge* of our juſtification by this alone. He ſays, with the multitude, "in the way of painful deſire and fear," till we come to the knowledge of the difference God has made between us and others; we ſay, by the free grant of the goſpel, to the abſolutely guilty without difference.

"The doctrine of the apoſtles, inſtead of directing "us what to do, ſets before us all that the moſt diſ-"quieted conſcience can require, in order to accept-"ance with God, as already done and finiſhed by "Jeſus Chriſt." p. 11.

A diſquieted conſcience requires a righteouſneſs pleaſing to God in *its own* behalf. No righteouſneſs will quiet my conſcience, unleſs I conſider it as a righteouſneſs *for me*. The righteouſneſs which pleaſeth God, is already done and finiſhed by Jeſus Chriſt. *Palæmon* conſiders this righteouſneſs as reſpecting himſelf, only as far as he diſcovers his own faith, love, and ſelf denied obedience. We conſider it as given to the abſolutely guilty, warranting ſuch to live by it, as ſo given to them for that purpoſe.

Palæmon's notion, that God hath appointed no way, but by our works, to be aſſured of ſalvation by Chriſt alone, renders his doing, endeavouring, ſtriving, *&c.* ſcarcely different in any thing from doing that we may live. There are few ſo weak as to think they can alter God's mind or purpoſe by their performances. But not knowing what he has purpoſed, they *do*, that they may obtain ſatisfaction in their minds about their ſalvation; and *Palæmon*'s doing ſeems to be wholly of this ſort, that is, in fact, *for* peace with God, and not *from* it.

"What Chriſt has done, is that which pleaſeth "God; what he hath done, is that which quiets the "guilty conſcience of man as ſoon as he knows it." *Ibid.*

As ſoon as he knows it reſpects him a guilty ſinner. If the fear of the guilty conſcience, conſiſted only in an uncertainty of there being any righteouſneſs which pleaſeth God in the behalf of the elect, or the qualified, then the guilty conſcience would be quieted as ſoon as it is evident there is ſuch a righteouſneſs. But this is not the caſe; the fear of the guilty conſcience is a dread of God, becauſe I have no ſuch righteouſneſs; becauſe I have no righteouſneſs, upon which I can be aſſured he is pleaſed with me. And this guilty conſcience cannot be quieted, unleſs I diſcover the righteouſneſs which pleaſeth God in my own behalf.

As we conceive the report of the goſpel of ſufficient righteouſneſs, freely given in Jeſus, ſuits the guilty conſcience thus underſtood; ſo we agree, that whenever we hear of this proviſion of divine grace, we have no occaſion for any other queſtion but this, "Is it true or "not? If we find it true, we are happy;" and it is *Palæmon*, and not we, that ſtands in need of another righteouſneſs to quiet the guilty conſcience.

Palæmon conſiders "the work of Chriſt as a ſuf-"ficient foundation whereon to reſt the whole "weight of our acceptance with God," p. 12. while at the ſame time he aſſerts, that his own part or lot in this righteouſneſs "is not ſo eaſily ſettled;" p. 13. but that he muſt wait, and work for it in the way of "painful deſire and fear, till he is at laſt "crowned with enjoyment," in a clear diſcovery of his having faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience, p. 419. We judge ourſelves not left to this uncertainty; and that, without the diſcovery of any ſuch difference betwixt us and other men, we are allowed to receive, enjoy, and live upon Jeſus Chriſt, as freely given to ſinners in the goſpel. Even as thoſe who are invited to an entertainment, are freely allowed to partake of what is ſet before them. *Palæmon*'s view of the goſpel-report, ſets him at a diſtance from enjoyment, or leaves him in uncertainty, till his obedience manifeſts a difference betwixt him and others. Our view is of the ſufficient righteouſneſs, brought quite home, ſo that our firſt act is to live by it, that in the ſtrength thereof we may be influenced by love to him that firſt loved us.

It is true, the ſcripture "no where aſcertains that "Chriſt died for me in particular." But it allows, invites, and commands me a guilty ſinner, without more, to believe on him, live by him, *&c.* phraſes evidently expreſſive of the appropriation, truſt, or confidence we plead for.

Our author ſays, "That Chriſt died, that he gave his "life a ranſom for many, is, indeed, a truth fully aſcer-"tained in the ſcriptures,—for the relief of the ſhip-"wrecked and deſperate." But can it relieve any farther than it reſpects ourſelves? And if the goſpel-declaration concerning this righteouſneſs doth not reſpect us any farther than as we apprehend we may be of the elect, or that we have their qualifications, how does it relieve the ſhipwrecked and the deſperate? It rather relieves the elect and the qualified. This point ſeems to be Mr *Sandeman*'s myſtery, and he guards the inquiry with ſomething like, Hence ye profane! "The world (ſays he) will always be objecting thus." A plain acknowledgment, I think, that *that* is the queſtion to be anſwered, or the guilty conſcience cannot be relieved; and a vindication of our view of the goſpel-report, as furniſhing us with the gracious anſwer.

"The ſcripture often affirms the final perdition of "many, not merely hearers of the goſpel, but who have "heard and received it with joy." *Ibid.*

This is an objection againſt depending on any thing I at preſent feel, but not againſt complying with the divine invitation to live by the ſufficient righteouſneſs of the Son of God; an objection againſt the certainty which ariſes from inherent qualifications, but not againſt that which proceeds ſolely on the divine invitation and faithfulneſs.

"Many ſhall ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able." "*Ibid.*

Becauſe they ſeek not by faith (by the *truth* of the goſpel), but as it were by the works of the law.

"Notwithſtanding their great confidence about their "acquaintance with Chriſt, and their intereſt in him, "and their experience of his preſence with them! he "will at laſt ſay unto them, *I never knew you, depart from "me.*" *Ibid.*

The confidence of thoſe condemned, is evidently, not a confidence built upon the finiſhed work of Chriſt, given to them, or the divine faithfulneſs pledged to ſinners in the goſpel-report; but a confidence on their own attainments and experience, wherein they judged themſelves peculiarly entitled to the heavenly admiſſion.

Let who will be condemned, it is allowed by Mr *Sandeman*, that every believer of the ſufficiency of the work of Chriſt, to juſtify the ungodly, is juſtified. And it is very evident that whoever lives by that, as ſufficient for him, believes that ſufficiency, and is really ſaved by what he believes, though ten thouſand profeſſors periſh.

"When they are condemned then as hypocrites and "unbelievers, they are not condemned for want of *Aſ-"paſio*'s faith; and that for theſe two reaſons; the firſt "is, it was never true that Chriſt died for them; the ſe-"cond is, they were not faulty in this reſpect, for the "ſacred text deſcribes them as rather too confident about "their intereſt in Chriſt." p. 14.

As to the firſt, it is not *Aſpaſio*'s faith that Chriſt died for them, whether they believe it or no; and as to the ſecond, they may be condemned for neglecting or rejecting the goſpel-grant of a Saviour to the guilty; which is the truth *Aſpaſio* pleads for, and, at the

the same time, too confident upon their imagined attainments on which they found their hopes.

"The gospel proposes nothing to be believed by us, "but what is infallibly true, whether we believe it or "not." *Ibid.*

But it proposes something to be immediately received and enjoyed by us, without performing any entitling condition whatever. We plead for such a persuasion as is the reception of a gift; and what we thus receive, or assure ourselves of, depends for its truth (or infallible certainty) on the veracity and faithfulness of God, who has promised such shall not be confounded. We agree, that a persuasion of a proposition, true in itself, must be grounded on the evidence of that truth. But this is not the case, when we are commanded to believe on, or trust in the Lord.

"The gospel, which foretells the final perdition of so "many of its hearers, so many seriously and zealously "exercised about it, can never warrant us, to persuade "every one who hears it, that Christ died for him." *Ibid.*

The gospel, which foretells the final perdition of so many of its hearers, at the same time warrants every hearer to live by the righteousness it reveals; and assures them of eternal salvation who thus believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, or live by his righteousness alone, without more.

"Unless we shall say, that Christ died for every "individual of mankind, and consequently, that none "of mankind owe their salvation wholly to his death." *Ibid.*

They owe their salvation, and ascribe their salvation, wholly to his death, who live, and found all their hopes on that alone. Besides, our appropriation relates only to our conscious possession or enjoyment of that which justifies, and therefore is no more liable to the above-mentioned objection, than *Palæmon*'s working to the same end, in a way of painful desire and fear, till he is crowned with enjoyment. If a man receives 10,000 *l.* as a gift, does the act exist without the gift? And is it the act that enriches him, or the riches he receives? We on both sides plead for the conscious enjoyment of the divine righteousness. He, that we enjoy from our consciousness of our acts of obedience, &c. We, by a discovery of the sufficient righteousness granted indefinitely to the guilty, in such a manner, as warrants each one's particular application. Who stands freest from the doctrine of self-dependence, I leave others to judge.

In the second letter, our author wishes *Aspasio*'s faith had been "equally precious with the apostolic." page 18. As the difference between his faith and ours is, that we believe the righteousness which pleaseth God, is given to us guilty sinners immediately, to live by as our own, which he does not; his faith does not in that respect appear to be more precious, or more apostolic.

It is true, "the apostles never taught men to make "one step of advance towards God, on the prospect "that God would condescend and come down the rest "of the infinite distance to meet them." page 23.

And this may be a suitable argument against those who spend their time in offering Christ upon certain terms or conditions to be performed by the sinner.—— But this is far from being the case in what we plead for. Christ, or his righteousness, does not meet our believing application, but is the object of it, the thing applied. It is Christ, and his righteousness, that is immediately received, applied, or accounted ours, as being freely given or granted in the gospel-report. So that our appropriation terminates in its object, and can no more exist without Christ, than eating can without food. Is it proper to say, that in eating, a man makes only a step of advance towards his food, on the prospect that the food shall meet him? Just as improper to apply such representations to the appropriation pleaded for.

The apostles called men to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, in such a manner of address, as is inconsistent with intending thereby only such convictions as are purely passive; only such as force themselves upon the mind by the evidence of their truth. The apostolic language is, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins*, Acts ii. 38. *And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation*, 40. And again, *Repent ye therefore, and be converted*, chap. iii. 19. And again, *To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins*, chap. x. 43. And again, *Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sin. And by him all that believe are justified*, chap. xiii. 38, 39. And again, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*, &c. chap. xvi. 31. In all these instances, there is something exhorted to, called believing on, or in Christ; being baptized in his name for remission of sins; repenting, and being converted; something more than passive conviction, and, at the same time, something consistent with the alone sufficiency of Christ's righteousness, which can be neither more nor less, than the appropriation, trust, or confidence we plead for.

That "the promises of the gospel are made only to "believers," will never invalidate our plea for appropriation, while it remains true, that the grant of Christ, and the salvation in him, is made to sinners; and in receiving the grant, they evidently commence those to whom the promises are made; that is, those who believe on Christ according to the apostolic exhortation. And to sinners, thus immediately believing on Christ, the promises are made; first, to encourage such to draw near and live with confidence on the sufficient righteousness; secondly, to give them a certainty dependent upon the divine faithfulness, and animating thereby to the most ready and willing obedience.

To say no one must account the righteousness of Christ, as belonging to him, in any sense, until he discovers himself a true believer, as it excludes the application we plead for, so in its room it introduces all the pernicious consequences this author professes to avoid in his accusation of *Aspasio, viz.* "holding forth a preliminary human righteousness as some way expedient, or "rather necessary, to our enjoying the comfort and "benefit of Christ's." Unless *Palæmon* can make it manifest that we enjoy the comfort and benefit of Christ's righteousness, while we are, according to him, "working in the way of painful desire and fear, till we "come to that enjoyment;" common experience teacheth us, that righteousness can only relieve or comfort us, as far as it respects us. That he is able to save his elect, is no comfort to me, further than I conceive myself to be one of them; and in this case I am comforted, either by a conjectural hope, or by a hope founded on the difference there is betwixt me and others.

"And to obviate the difficulty, how shall I know "that the promise is to me! they address their brethren "in this manner: In the name of the great God we "declare, that the promise is to thee, and thee, O man, "woman, whosoever thou art." p. 23.

The promise of salvation, to whosoever believes on Christ, is evidently to the sinner, as his encouragement to come to the sure enjoyment of the righteousness and salvation given in him, by receiving, appropriating, and trusting confidently on him as so given.

"In his name, we call you this moment to stretch "forth the withered hand, and the withered heart, and "take hold of Christ, saying, *He is mine, and I am his.*" *Ibid.*

That may be understood thus; "We speak not in our own name, as signifying our own importance, but inform you of the glad tidings, that it is God's command, and your duty, not to wait to feel some power or alteration in yourself as a ground for your confidence, but just as you are, in obedience to the divine com-

command, receive or appropriate Christ, saying, *He is mine, and I am his.*"

The withered hand and the withered heart, are expressions used to signify a powerless, helpless condition, which, consisting in the prevalence of our naturally-evil dispositions, serves to denominate us sinners, and spoils our hopes of living by our own performances; yet it is no objection against living by his obedience who hath become the righteousness of the guilty. For it must be remembered, we are not justified by our acts, but by the righteousness we appropriate; and our appropriation only serves to give us the divinely authentic enjoyment by the word, of that justification of the ungodly, and without strength, whereby we are saved. Hence we are called not to wait for strength to do something for the enjoyment of this justification, but stretch forth the withered hand, or just as we are, to live by Christ's righteousness, when we feel nothing but what marks us out for eternal destruction. When *Lazarus* was made to hear, he came forth, according to the command he heard, or in obedience to the voice that quickened him; and when we are made to hear the divine invitation and command to live by this righteousness, we appropriate it in obedience to him that makes us hear his voice. The righteousness itself, is that by which we are accepted; the appropriation respects our possession and enjoyment. In the latter we may be weaker or stronger; in the former, is the invariable ground of our confidence.

That God has given to us eternal life in his Son, is the apostolic style, and the very record which is pointed out for our peculiar attention; and when the word *offer* has been made use of, and understood to convey nothing more than this important truth, the believer of the record has become the receiver of the gift, or the enjoyer of the blessing.

"Hence we see, that *This is mine*, or *this was done for me*, is a truth, whose evidence takes its rise from the pains I take to believe it." p. 26.

Its evidence depends on the veracity and faithfulness of him who spake the world into being, has provided the sufficient righteousness, and has commanded us to give him this honour of depending on his word, in our enjoyment of this salvation.

It is not in this case the language of the belief of a truth, but of the reception or appropriation of a free gift; the belief of the truth of the sufficiency of Jesus Christ, and of his being freely given, goes before, and is that knowledge of the name of the Lord which emboldens us to put our trust in him. What we thus assure ourselves of, in compliance with the divine invitation, &c. as it is a certain truth in the divine mind, so it appears a truth by the divine word, when it is evident I am begotten to this Christian faith, hope, and charity. The difference here between us is, that, with *Palæmon*, *This is mine, this was done for me*, is a truth, whose evidence takes its rise only from a discovery, that I am distinguished from other sinners by my faith, love, and self-denied obedience. With us it is the language of a reception, appropriation, trust, or confidence, grounded upon the divine declarations to sinners for that purpose.

"This, I must say, is indeed a very strange and uncommon way of finding truth." *Ibid.*

But such a way of dependence on the divine veracity and faithfulness as becomes us, and gives glory to God. ——It is the reception of a gift by a persuasion of the mind.——It is trusting to the faithfulness of God to make out, in this particular case, a blessing indefinitely promised; not assuring myself of a proposition being true, but of eternal salvation, by a Saviour given to me.

To receive a gift, or to partake of any thing upon invitation, is nothing strange or uncommon. In this case, when the gift is given in divine declarations, and the reception of it purely mental, an answerable persuasion of the mind, or (in dependance on the divine veracity and faithfulness) an assuring ourselves of the blessing granted; what we are persuaded of is in a way *peculiar* to itself, and very consistent before him, who said, *Whatsoever things ye desire when you pray, believe that you receive them, and ye have them.* *Palæmon* will allow, that Christ's death is an uncommon affair, as is also imputing righteousness without works, &c. Why then should the *peculiarity* of thus enjoying righteousness without works, be so much the subject of sneer, because accounted *strange* and *uncommon*? ——May it not rather be accounted such a way of dependence on the divine veracity and faithfulness, as renders him his proper glory?

"If he (namely Christ) died for them that perish, "then the happiness of them who are saved, must be "owing to something else beside his death." *Ibid.*

Aspasio is no farther concerned here, than as he maintains, that Christ is given for the guilty to appropriate and live by. And in this regard, may it not be said, with as much propriety, If an entertainment, provided in common, is refused by some, that then the nourishment of those who partake of it, is owing to something else besides the food? this coming pretty near to our Lord's representation, *John* vi. 53. A fallacy or impropriety charged upon the former, is also a reflection upon the latter.

If we understand, by the happiness of them who are saved, their redemption from the wrath to come, and title to future glory; this is owing strictly to his perfect righteousness. If we mean their present happiness in a conscious possession, knowledge, or enjoyment of this redemption; this we may say is owing to his death, given to be received. *Palæmon* says, to a discovery of our faith, love, and self-denied obedience.

It is a very just observation, That "in speaking of "the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, we had need "keep clear of all human systems, and hold close by "the scriptures." p. 30.

And it is in strict conformity to this we assert, that although God has given eternal life in his Son, even unto them, who, by disbelieving it, make God a liar; yet no man has that life, but he that has the Son. God gives being to that which he commands, authorises, and thereby enables us to receive, appropriate, or be persuaded of. And if we admit of his character as a just God and a Saviour, in justifying the ungodly, why should we object thus giving him the glory of his power and faithfulness? Thus *SARAH received strength to conceive seed,—because she judged him* (not only able, but) *faithful that had promised.*——And thus our Lord speaks, *Mark* xi. 22. 23. 24. Shall it be disputed, whether God can give an existence to things that yet are not, and make out that to be true, which we, according to his word, depend upon him for? This confidence is due to God only, and is giving him glory. On the other hand, to suppose this cannot be, and, on this account, to set aside this manner of *believing* or *trusting* in him, is to rob him of his proper glory.

This persuasion may properly be called TRUSTING in the Lord, because it proceeds neither on pre-evidence, nor inward qualifications, but on God's bare word of invitation, promise, &c. taking that as a sufficient authority and security. By this a proper dependence of the creature on the Creator is preserved and kept up. And unless it can, without misrepresentation, be shewn inconsistent and antiscriptural; all other objections raised against it are but of small account; and all labour to form it into a proposition, true in itself, whether we believe it or no, is the labour of diffidence and unbelief. For it is plain, they cannot trust to God's invitations, commands, and declarations; and are seeking a reason of hope more agreeable to themselves.

"*Aſpaſio* maintains, that none have the proper ſcrip-"tural faith, but thoſe who are taught by the enlighten-"ing Spirit to draw the concluſion." p. 334.

Aſpaſio maintains, that "when the divine Spirit opens our eyes, &c. we diſcover and make uſe of the ſame right or warrant as is the privilege of the vileſt miſ-creant; a right founded, not on our awakened deſires, but purely, ſolely, entirely on the free grant of a Sa-viour." *Dialogues*, p. 335.

"They maintain, that reprobates have as fair a re-"vealed warrant, to draw the concluſion, as the elect "have." *Ibid.*

That is, that no man need to wait to ſee his election, or, in other words, any difference between himſelf and other men, to warrant his confidence in Chriſt. The general indefinite expreſſions, contained in the declara-tions of the goſpel, ſuch as *whoſoever*, *any man*, *he that believeth in him*, &c. fully authoriſing or warranting *he*, *any man*, *whoſoever* he be, to *believe*, or *truſt confidently on Chriſt alone* for everlaſting life. Being taught of God this truth, he lives by Chriſt as the Saviour of the loſt, even as being taught the ſufficiency of Chriſt he lives by that alone.

In the third letter, our author miſtakes the real queſ-tion between us. It is not, "Whether or not did "Chriſt finiſh upon the croſs, all that God requires, "every requiſite, without exception, to procure accep-"tance for, and give relief unto the guilty conſcience of "the moſt profane wretch that lives?" p. 41. 42.

This is not diſputed by us, but maintained more pro-perly on our ſide than by our author. The queſtion between us, is, Whether the guilty conſcience can be relieved from the ſentence of condemnation, by the conſideration of a ſufficient righteouſneſs for the elect and the qualified? Or, Whether God hath not provided for the relief of the guilty conſcience, by giving his only begotten Son that we might live through him? giving him not only to die, but giving him in the divine de-clarations to be believed on?

"It muſt be the very ſame thing which placates di-"vine juſtice, or which fully expreſſes the neceſſary op-"poſition of infinite goodneſs to evil or ſin, that re-"lieves the ſinner from the ſentence of condemnation, "which is no other than the voice of God naturally re-"ſiding in the conſcience." *Ibid.*

As it would be very abſurd to ſuppoſe it placates the divine juſtice, without being conſidered by that juſtice in the behalf of the tranſgreſſor; ſo it ſeems to be equally abſurd, that it can "relieve the guilty con-"ſcience from the ſentence of condemnation," without being appropriated by that conſcience.

The ſentence of condemnation, naturally reſiding in the conſcience, requires a revelation of righteouſneſs, that I may as really impute to myſelf, as the ſin that condemns me, or the condemnation ſtill remains un-touched. A poſſibility, that I may be an elect perſon, cannot give relief, becauſe it may be ten to one it is not true. My hope is only in proportion, as I apprehend many, or few, to be elected; and, after all, it is not, in fact, Chriſt's righteouſneſs that relieves me, but my conjectural or fond hope of being one of the elect.

Chriſt did finiſh upon the croſs that righteouſneſs "which placates the divine juſtice, or which fully ex-"preſſes the neceſſary oppoſition of infinite goodneſs to "evil, or ſin." That righteouſneſs which alone can relieve the ſinner from eternal death, entitle him to eter-nal life, and bring peace and hope of everlaſting life to the moſt guilty conſcience. At the ſame time, it would be abſurd to ſay, Chriſt finiſhed on the croſs every re-quiſite or commandment relative to this righteouſneſs as preached or declared in the world. For inſtance; *He hath commanded all men every where to repent.* Which I underſtand a repentance reſpective of this righteouſneſs, and the ſame with the *commandment, that we ſhould be-lieve on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* Again, the voice from heaven, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed*, was attended with a commandment to *hear him*, agreeable to *Iſ.* li. 1.—5. If it is again inquired, of what avail are theſe commandments? It may be an-ſwered, as the commandment to preach the goſpel to every creature, availed to be the ſavour of life unto life in them that are ſaved, and of death unto death in them that periſh; ſo the commandment to believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, avails to encourage and warrant the ſinner, as ſuch, to truſt, believe in, or ap-propriate and enjoy that righteouſneſs. I am perſuaded *Palæmon* will not ſay, that Chriſt finiſhed upon the croſs any of the commandments above mentioned. As it may be affirmed on the other hand, that the obedience to theſe commands is no part of that *righteouſneſs* which procures acceptance for, or gives relief unto the con-ſcience of the moſt profane wretch that lives. But *Palæmon*'s reply is, That all obedience to theſe com-mands, ſuppoſes the belief of the goſpel-report. Be it ſo, the commandment ſpeaks to them, not as to believ-ers, or to the diſtinguiſhed among mankind, but as to ſinners or children of wrath, even as others; and is the divine method of grace in giving us a conſcious poſſeſ-ſion or enjoyment. Which *Palæmon* ſeeks totally by works.

"What is the *turning-point* from deſpair to good "hope?" *Ibid.*

The finiſhed work of Chriſt alone. How is that our hope? As it is given for that purpoſe to be the hope of the guilty.

"*Aſpaſio*'s faith reſts, one foot on the work of Chriſt, "and the other on human efforts, or the motions of "man's heart." *Ibid.*

Quite a miſtake. *Aſpaſio*'s faith is, that the work of Chriſt is given to him; on this he reſts, and on no mo-tions of his heart whatever.

"What gives right to eternal life? The imputed "righteouſneſs. What gives right to that? The work "of faith. Who have a right to act faith? Thoſe who "feel an averſion to ſin," &c. p. 44.

This is alſo far from being *Aſpaſio*'s view of the mat-ter: he ſhould be repreſented thus; What gives right to eternal life? The imputed righteouſneſs. What gives right to that? The declarations of the goſpel, giving it freely to ſinners as ſuch. Who have a right to act faith, or appropriate this righteouſneſs? All the ends of the earth; as many as can be included in the word *whoſo-ever*. To any of all the ends of the earth were the apoſ-tles commiſſioned to ſay, *Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.* To exhort thus to a paſſive involuntary conviction, would be very abſurd.

Aſpaſio's obſervation is, the "grant is made to ſin-"ners; in receiving the grant we commence belie-"vers," according to the above-mentioned apoſtolic exhortation.

"But *Aſpaſio* will ſtill inſiſt, that theſe qualifica-"tions are by no means the *ground* of their right. "Let us ſee then, where the ground of their right "lies?" p. 46.

In the divine declarations to ſinners as ſuch.

"I think the obvious meaning of *Aſpaſio*'s words is "this: theſe perſons, ſo qualified, have the right ex-"cluſive of unqualified ſinners." *Ibid.*

It is very obvious this is not his meaning.

"Where then can the ground of this right lie, but "in the diſtinguiſhed qualifications? It cannot lie in "any thing common to both; for, in that caſe, the "unqualified would have as good a right as the quali-"fied." *Ibid.*

They have ſo. Theſe are *Aſpaſio*'s real ſentiments; whatever qualifications make a difference between one man and another, they confer no right to the king-dom of God, they confer no right to the imputed righteouſneſs. For as *all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God*, they who are juſtified, are *juſtified freely*

freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ.

"They have nothing in the heaven above, nor in the "earth below, to keep their hearts from sinking into "utter despair, but the bare propitiation. This, and "this alone, encourages them to make their address to "God." p. 48.

Can this encourage further than they see their interest in it, or right to draw near to God thereby, in virtue of his gracious declarations? And how are they to address God? As their friend and father, on account of this righteousness? Then they, in fact, appropriate it, and our debate is at an end; we are agreed. Or, do they address God only as the friend of some who are to be known in time by suitable qualifications? If this is our author's meaning, then it is he, and not *Aspasio*, that, in drawing near to God, seeks for inherent qualifications, instead of the imputed righteousness.

"By this, and this alone, God conveys the first taste "of his favour and peace into their hearts." *Ibid.*

Unless we conceive of the imputed righteousness as graciously granted unto us in this destitute condition, where is the connection? What taste of favour and peace can be admitted barely by the consideration of sufficiency for the elect? Sufficient for me a guilty sinner, without any other consideration, is evangelical. To wait for *something more* before we are allowed to call him friend or father, on account of this righteousness, is not at all adapted to bring us nigh to God by *the bare propitiation.*

"And it pleases me to find, *Aspasio* had not courage "to close this period, without bringing forth the plain "truth at last. For pointing to the poor, indigent, and "guilty sinners, he concludes, For such the Saviour is "provided; to such his benefits are proposed; and on "such his grace will be magnified." p. 48, 49.

If it is allowed, that his benefits are proposed to such, the debate is ended. We mean no more. It is undoubtedly warrantable to receive and appropriate what is provided for the enjoyment of *any*, or *whosoever* among the guilty; and proposed to our trust and confidence under that name. If any other consideration must intervene, then it is plain, the benefits are not provided for and proposed to such, but only for, and to those who have the additional consideration.

"As for the bare work finished on the cross, or the "bare report about it, however true we think it, so far "have we mistaken it, that, setting aside *our active* ope"rations about it, we do not see *what comfort or benefit* "*can be derived from it.*" p. 85.

This proceeds on a total mistake and misrepresentation of *Aspasio;* he is not putting the least slight on the report or persuasion of the sufficiency of the finished work of Jesus Christ, to justify the most guilty without more; he is here opposing a qualified persuasion, or rather mere profession, artfully substituted in the room of the sufficient righteousness, and the sinner's living by that alone—A persuasion, "that the shelter of the sum"mer-house is free for our use, accompanied with a high esteem of its accommodation, an earnest desire after its protection, or an habitual tendency towards it." *Aspasio* asks not whether a persuasion of the sufficiency of Christ, but "a persuasion that the summer-house is free "for our use," whether this, though accompanied with esteem, desire, or tendency, unless "carried into actual "entrance and possession," would answer the end and design of such a truth, "would be a proper safe-guard, "or indeed any manner of advantage as to our per"sons," that is, in respect of possession, enjoyment, and advantage from that enjoyment. These are his very words, 16th dialogue, p. 344. And let any one impartially judge, whether *Aspasio* is here objecting against the finished work of Jesus? or rather, is he not setting aside a fruitless persuasion, or rather profession, that the shelter is free for our use, with dependence on our supposed esteems, desires, tendencies, &c. that the soul may rest purely and entirely on Jesus Christ alone? Whom in the same page he describes from the prophet *Isaiah*, as "a place of refuge, as a covert from the storm "and from rain." *Aspasio* asks, if a persuasion that Christ is such a place of refuge and covert free for our use, accompanied with any esteems, desires, and tendencies, will answer to such a representation? Which is, in fact, whether we may trust in such a persuasion, esteem, desire, and tendency, instead of that righteousness which is our appointed refuge? It is plain, all the active operations pleaded for, is to live by this alone, in distinction from any other dependence. And the advantage arising from these active operations, is the enjoyment, comfort, and influence of this sufficient righteousness.

If the objector had been pleading for the entire sufficiency of the work of Jesus, *Aspasio* would readily agree to that, and have recommended living by that alone. But after he had so far coincided with *Aspasio*, as to allow, "that all this grace, and each of these benefits, "are free, perfectly free, for you, for me, for others;" might not *Aspasio* ask, would this bare persuasion answer the end and design of such a truth, unless I was induced thereby to really use it as a shelter? that is, to oppose Christ's righteousness, thus freely given unto me, to every sense of guilt and condemnation, and assure myself of salvation by that alone. As I suppose Mr *Sandeman*, in his view of things, will allow the believer of the gospel-report to oppose the truth of Christ's sufficiency to every declaration or conviction of guilt tending to despair, and this may as properly be called *reducing* that truth *to practice.* This is what *Aspasio* calls *reducing to practice*, the truth of Christ being given for us to receive and live by him as such a gift, as a refuge from all curses of the law, and danger of damnation, unto the end of peace, assurance, and holiness. We do not consider the gospel as barely furnishing us with good and excellent materials *to work upon*, but with blessings *to enjoy and possess* as our own; and our whole comfort, or any part of it, does not arise from the *success of our labour*, but wholly from the blessing so freely presented to us to take comfort in them, and is very far from making them fit to comfort us.

"Now, it does not signify much by what name we "call the mean of escape, whether we call it the law or "the gospel; for the great concern we have with "either of these, is to obtain righteousness or a title to "life." p. 92, 93.

However true this may be of those who seek by works in a way of "painful desire and fear till they are "crowned with enjoyment;" *Aspasio* is not chargeable, whose doctrine allows an immediate enjoyment, without the intervention of any righteousness or work whatever.

"For—it is not the bare knowledge of the law or "gospel that can do us any service, but *the use we make* "*of them.*" p. 93.

This is but mere sound; for our author pleads for the above-mentioned use to be made of the report, previous to the enjoyment of the privilege. The use we make of the gospel-report, is immediately to live by the righteousness it reveals: whereas the use of the law is to do that we may live. Is not here a manifest? yea, is not here a sufficient difference?

"So each one reasons thus: *Seeing many shall perish,* "*and seeing the gospel says nothing to me, but what it says to* "*every one, what comfort can I reap from it, unless I can find* "*about myself, at least one grain of odds, casting the balance* "*in my favour, in comparison with others, or in comparison* "*with what I myself have hitherto been?* p. 94.

But this is not *Aspasio*'s language, which may rather be represented, *Seeing the gospel authorises me and every sinner to live by the righteousness it reveals, why should I not make this use of it? Since the door into the kingdom*

of

of God is thus open for sinners, why should I any longer hesitate?

"But what signifies all this, says the proud devotee, "unless I can find some reason about myself, why the "Deity should distinguish me as his favourite beyond "other men? And thus he treats the bare truth of the "gospel with scorn and contempt." Note, p. 97.

Aspasio waits for no such reason, therefore this representation does not affect him.

"In vain shall he (any sinner) expect to hear one "syllable more from God, to encourage him to draw "nigh to him, than that *he is well pleased in his beloved "Son*; that JEHOVAH is *well pleased for his righteous-"ness*." p. 115.

Hath not God already said, *He that believeth on him shall not be ashamed?* that *he that cometh to him shall in no wise be cast out?* &c. Hath he not given him as bread from heaven, that *whosoever eateth him should live by him?* Has he not given *eternal life to us in him?* even so given to us, that *whosoever* of us *believe not this record* that he hath given of his Son, *makes him a lyar?* Are we to set aside these declarations as no encouragement to us to appropriate or to draw nigh to God, lest we should not sufficiently submit ourselves to the divine sovereignty? Or are we not rather to look upon them, as the declarations of sovereign grace; which has found out a way consistent with the highest justice thus to shew favour to the guilty, and for the encouragement of such to believe on him, or draw nigh with confidence through the faith of him?

"The apostle *John* says, *This is his commandment, that "we should believe on the name of his Son*; not that we "should do any thing to obtain life, but that we should "live by what he hath done. It is a commandment "not requiring any thing of us, but bestowing life by "the knowledge which it conveys." p. 126.

If I live by what he hath done, I account what he hath done, given me for that purpose. And this is also the use I make of it; and this commandment, so understood, requireth nothing of us, but bestows life by the knowledge it conveys. So that what our author has here said, expresses our whole mind, and may end the dispute.

"*Paul*, in the deepest of all his distresses, was relieved by that very faith, which we modern Christians, "in the height of our complaisance, chuse only to call, "of the enfeebled and infantile kind." p. 128.

A mistake this; *Paul* was relieved by a view of the sufficiency of grace for himself in particular, *My grace is sufficient for* THEE. He waited for no other righteousness to certify him, that this sufficient grace belonged to him.

"If we hearken to them, the great point about which "our faith is principally concerned, is a matter which "turns out to be true; no book nor man can tell how." p. 168.

It turns out to be true in God's faithfulness, answering to his gracious declarations. Our assurance or appropriation is founded and exercised upon God's faithfulness to answer to what he has revealed as the ground of our confidence. That *he has given to us eternal life in his Son*; that *in this man's name is preached to us remission of sins*; and that *whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life*. So that, in the very nature of the thing, the appropriating language is only the language of trust and confidence, and will turn out to be truth, if God may be depended on, as he most surely may.

"In the gospel-offer, we are told, is presented to the "poor bankrupt, a bond, or bill indorsed to him, to relieve him from his poverty.——It is not his as yet," *Ibid.*

It is freely given to him, it is his in right to possess and enjoy, as any thing we are invited to partake of——It is therefore his to live upon, though not his in present enjoyment. It is not presented to him, but in common with others who perish, rejecting it as insufficient; yet it is so really presented to him, that he is welcome to live by it, or avail himself of it as his own, without performing one act, or obtaining one qualification to entitle him to it. The difficulty lies in a man's being thoroughly persuaded that this is true; which when a man really is, he immediately lives by this revealed righteousness without more.

"He at last lays hold of it,—so it becomes his." *Ibid.*

It becomes his by that same grace which has convinced him of its truth, and influenced him thereby to appropriate and enjoy it. It becomes his in possession and enjoyment. Not that God imputes it on account of our appropriation; that only serves the use of peace of conscience by it, and a warrantable enjoyment by the divine word, and to demonstrate we are those to whom it is imputed.

Mr *Marshall*, Mr *Boston*, and Mess. *Erskines*, maintain, that, according to the law, "man is bound to believe whatever God declares, and do whatever he commands; that the duty of believing to be true what God has reported, and receiving what he has commanded us to receive, or take to ourselves, belongs to the law; which fastens the new duty upon us, the moment the gospel reveals the new object."——And if this is not true, how will the hearers of the gospel be condemned for despising or neglecting this great salvation? And if this is true, why may not gospel-ministers declare against the rejectors of this grace, what will be matter of their just condemnation? Or, in other words, what proves, that they that perish, perish justly, and of their own will and choice, vindicating the righteous judgment of God.

And is it not to be maintained consistent with this, that the gospel is purely and entirely a revelation of a sufficient righteousness for the most guilty, that where it takes place in the heart, it is by the sovereign grace of him who provided the righteousness it treats of? That in receiving it for true, and living by it, they are fulfilling the command of the new covenant; they are performing of duty; and at the same time, the subjects of the New-testament promise, in having that obedience, or law written on their heart by the Spirit of the living God, as a Spirit of grace and truth?

"I hope *Satan* does not chain you to your houses, "nor stake you down to your fields on the Lord's "day." p. 267.

This is rather to be considered as a convicting them of their sinful negligence and willing ignorance, than giving any directions what we must do to be saved. In that case we allow the answer is, Either keep the law yourself, or live by what Christ has already done.

"We may now turn our eyes more particularly to "those who are most successful in propagating a per-"verted gospel.——These men do indeed press very "hard upon the conscience to awaken fear: but when "they have driven the serious hearer almost to despair, "by an awful description of his miserable condition, "and by representing him as utterly unable in every "respect to contribute any thing toward his own deli-"verance, they at last condescend, with no small art and "address, to make some comfortable exceptions from "the foregoing awful doctrine.——Now is described, "in a variety of particulars, a convenient resource, "where the pride of the serious hearer may exercise it-"self with great hopes of success." p. 279.

The pride of the serious hearer, is the conceit of his being able to do or obtain something to deliver him, as proceeding from his propensity to live by something he is to do, whereby he becomes self-dependent. The truth is, the gift of the divine righteousness depends on no doing or difference in man. The being quickened by the truth of the gospel to hear the voice of God therein, depends on the sovereign good pleasure of heaven. A man hearing this voice of God, not to the qualified, but to the absolutely guilty

guilty and loſt, is made obedient to the commands and exhortations to believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or to live by his righteouſneſs, without waiting for any other; and the obedience that anſwers as an echo to that divine voice, command, invitation, &c. is, and can be no other, than truſting, depending, and aſſuring ourſelves of ſalvation by Chriſt alone, in obedience to the divine declaration; as *Lazarus* came forth in obedience to the voice that quickened him. When we bid ſinners believe on Chriſt, we would be underſtood as exhibiting a quickening truth, as well as a divine command; that is, that there is a ſufficient Saviour who may ſafely be depended on. And in obedience to this voice we are not doing that we may live, but we are living by Chriſt alone, in obedience to him who makes the dead to hear his voice. The pride of the ſerious hearer may be as much excited by being told to do that they may know their ſalvation, as to do to be ſaved.

"The preacher finds it neceſſary to warn his hearers "to avoid all thoughts of this doctrine of election at pre-"ſent." *Ibid.*

That is, when election is objected againſt the divine declarations, encouraging the guilty under that character, and without any evidence of election, to live immediately by Chriſt's righteouſneſs. For the jailor to have objected election againſt *Paul*, when he bid him believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, would have been from the enemy.

"Becauſe (ſays he) there is in this doctrine no viſible "ground for faith to reſt upon,—no viſible reſource for "the pride of any man." p. 280.

No viſible ground for a ſinner's *confidence* or *truſt in Chriſt alone*, which is not the pride of man, but eſſential to the faith of God's elect.

"Sometimes they take great pains to ſhew us how "little we do when we put forth an act of faith." p. 281.

The act we plead for, is to live alone by what Chriſt has done, whether we call it believing on Chriſt, receiving, appropriating, truſting, or whatever name we give it; this is what we mean. Our opponents on this head, are thoſe who are for having ſome good thing to be wrought in us, or done by us, before we are to be allowed to live by what Jeſus has done; which is, in fact, a denial of its being wrought for the guilty. When they have been driven out of every ſubterfuge, they at laſt plead, that we tell people to believe on Chriſt; whereas it is the Spirit's work, and they muſt wait for this working of the Spirit before they are able to believe. We do not pretend to deny, that for a man to believe on the Son of God is the Spirit's work; but at the ſame time we are aſſured, that when a man is taught of God to believe Chriſt's righteouſneſs a proviſion for the guilty, he is not taught to aſſume any other character as his title to it. Nor is he taught of God to conſider himſelf in any other light than as guilty, and juſtly condemned. And therefore we farther inſiſt upon it, that a man, without waiting for any thing more than what Chriſt has already done, is to live by *that*, as ſufficient for him, and given to him in the indefinite grant of the goſpel. And this he is to do, that is, live by Chriſt's righteouſneſs in obedience to the divine command and invitation, when he feels nothing good in him, to embolden him thereto; and to depend upon it, that *that* righteouſneſs will not fail him. And thus far we proceed ſcripturally, according to the anſwer given to the *Philippian* jailor.

We have alſo aſſerted, that a man may aſk the queſtion, What ſhall I do to be ſaved, and yet be but upon nature's bottom. The direction to that man, is not to wait for to do ſomething, or to get ſomething done in him, but to believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. When it has been objected to this, that nature cannot believe on Chriſt, and therefore ſuch are not to be told ſo; we have anſwered, he that gives the command is able to overcome this difficulty by divine conviction of the truth, writing his laws in our hearts and minds. And while we, thus taught of God, in obedience to the word, are endeavouring to believe or truſt on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to obtain our certainty, and reſt ſatisfied with this righteouſneſs, the Spirit of grace and truth may further diſſipate every diſtruſtful ſuggeſtion, and make us fully ſo. And here by believing on Chriſt, we mean ſuch a truſting, confiding on him, as we allow follows a divine paſſive conviction of the truth, that kind of activity which is intimated in the ſcripture-phraſes, *Acts* xvi. 31. *John* vi. 35. and *John* iii. 23.

We cannot believe through our natural averſeneſs to live by the righteouſneſs of another, or our proneneſs to eſtabliſh our own. But, at the ſame time, he that is taught of God, when he acknowledges he can do nothing, he rejoices that nothing is left for him to do, but on the contrary that he is called to live by what Chriſt has already done. And they who will not diſtinguiſh this life from an endeavour to live by our own righteouſneſs, cannot be farther talked with.

As conviction of the truth of the ſufficiency of Chriſt, and his being freely given to the guilty and loſt, is the only conviction of truth that is free from ſelf-righteouſneſs; ſo to live by this ſufficient righteouſneſs as ſo given, is the only activity that moſt immediately anſwers to the above-mentioned truths.

Palæmon cannot deny, but *coming to Chriſt* has the promiſe of *being in nowiſe caſt out*; but he judges it to be an obedience in conſequence of faith, or the belief of the truth. This, on the other hand, is not denied him. And it may be alſo affirmed, that the promiſe is an encouragement of certainty of ſucceſs to every one that comes to him, and a divine declaration which aſcertains the ſufficient righteouſneſs to be imputed to every particular perſon anſwering that character. *Coming to Chriſt* is allowed to be more than a paſſive conviction; it is allowed to be ſomething active in conſequence of ſuch a conviction; and as it cannot by any ſuch activity or coming as contradicts the alone ſufficiency of Chriſt's finiſhed work, what anſwers to the ſcripture-deſcriptions or names given to this activity, more properly than living by that ſufficient righteouſneſs, inſtead of doing or ſeeking to do any thing to add thereto?

And as far as *Aſpaſio*, *Marſhall*, &c. plead for, or encourage, to an activity of this kind, they cannot be accuſed juſtly of ſetting up another righteouſneſs.—This activity terminates in its object, and reſolves itſelf entirely therein. The buſineſs to be accompliſhed by this activity, is only to come under ſuch a certainty of ſalvation by Chriſt alone, as is implied in the words *truſt* and *confidence*; and the nature of it is as oppoſite to ſetting up another righteouſneſs, as the perſuaſion of Chriſt's ſufficiency. *Palæmon* pleads for activity in coming at the certainty of our intereſt in Chriſt's ſufficient work, and we plead for no more. Which therefore removes our plea beyond the reach of his objections.

To plead for appropriation as ſomething to be added to entitle to acceptance, is liable to *Palæmon*'s objections. To plead for it, ſo as to make the ſufficient righteouſneſs depend on that act for its acceptance with God in our behalf, may alſo be accuſed as a doctrine of ſelf-dependence; but to appropriate as an effect of the report believed, as a means of aſcertaining to ourſelves eternal life by that righteouſneſs revealed, and as an animating principle of obedience evidencing our ſpecial intereſt therein, is not at all liable to ſuch objections.

"If faith muſt be called an inſtrument, and if it "be at the ſame time maintained, that juſtification "comes by faith only; then I am at full liberty to

" affirm, that he who is poſſeſſed of the inſtrument, " hand, or mouth, is already juſtified, without regard " to his uſing the inſtrument," &c. p. 285.

Quite a miſtaken view; becauſe faith, or appropriation of Chriſt, has no exiſtence in itſelf without its object, as material inſtruments have.

" We ſhall ſeldom find them ſpeaking any thing " like the language of the goſpel, without cautioning, " mincing, or clogging it with ſome exceptive; but," &c. *Ibid.*

The apoſtle ſays, To him that worketh not, *but* believeth, &c. There is a believing that ſtands oppoſed to working; and if our *but* is the *but* of the apoſtle, and only reſpects our receiving the record, and appropriating the revealed righteouſneſs accordingly, it is free from this exception.

" Though *Theron* is diveſted of all *righteouſneſs of his* " *own*, of every *qualification* and every *recommendation*, he " muſt yet be well provided with *requiſites*, even ſuch " as may embolden him to make the appropriation." p. 287.

A wide miſtake; *Aſpaſio*'s ſcope and deſign throughout, is to ſhew, that nothing emboldens to appropriation, but the divine grant to ſinners, as ſuch.

" He (*Theron*) is very willing to believe that he is a " gracious perſon." p. 288.

How evident does it appear from the paſſage here quoted, that the *faith* or *truth* recommended was, " *that* " *all was his*;" that is, by way of the divine grant of heaven to the guilty?—Quite different from believing about himſelf that *he is a gracious perſon*.

" And while *Theron* cannot be brought to believe, *Aſ-* " *paſio* beholds his title perfectly clear." p. 289.

Aſpaſio beheld his title or warrant to appropriate from the divine grant made to ſinners; not from the prerequiſites of *Theron*.

" I muſt frankly own,—that I ſee no more difference " betwixt a careleſs and convicted ſinner, than is be- " twixt a felon ranging his round at large, and one " newly apprehended by the officers of juſtice: and for " my part, I think it would look liker an impertinent " ſarcaſm, than any thing elſe, to tell either of theſe " laſt, that he was now in a very hopeful way." p. 293.

As faith comes by hearing, we hope for another when we can prevail with him only to hear. This does not imply, that there is a foundation of hope in them. We hope when we ſee people concerned about their everlaſting ſtate, that this concern will terminate in liſtening to the remedy that is graciouſly provided.

" As if one could reap any ſpiritual benefit from ſtudy- " ing the divine law, or know how pure, how exten- " ſive, how ſublimely-perfect it is, before he knows " Chriſt the end thereof for righteouſneſs; as if ſuch a " one could judge of his ſpiritual ſtate impartially." p. 295.

Palæmon ſeems to forget, that in page 51, he has intimated, that "it was for want of comparing themſelves " with the divine law, that the Phariſees made their " miſtake." He that meaſures himſelf by others inſtead of this ſublimely-perfect ſtandard, muſt at laſt ſtand ſelf-condemned *. He that meaſures himſelf hereby, will know his ſtate to be deſperate, unleſs relieved by the finiſhed work of Chriſt.

" *Aſpaſio*, then, hath found out a path, by walking " wherein the guilty may confidently hope to arrive at " righteouſneſs at laſt." p. 296.

Not ſo, but *Aſpaſio* hath found himſelf guilty by comparing himſelf with the divine law;—he hath found the difference ſo great, as to lead him to deſpair of himſelf;—he hath found Chriſt the end of the law for righteouſneſs, and the principle of new evangelical obedience.—He teſtifies of this with confidence, as a ſubject wherewith he is really acquainted, and teſtifies of what he has experienced to be true.

" The doubtſome faith he (*E. E.*) complains of, is " that which admits of a doubt concerning one's own " ſtate. Now, a man may have ſome doubts about " this, who is very firmly perſuaded of the truth of the " goſpel." p. 334.

The doubtſome faith we complain of, is the want of that confidence anſwerable to the gracious declarations of ſalvation in Chriſt to the abſolutely guilty; and not a man's doubting about himſelf, or what he at preſent is. On the contrary, we maintain, that this perſuaſion of a new ſtate in Chriſt, implies our natural ſtate to be quite bad, and paſt recovery; and the particular application we plead for, is flying from a bad ſtate in our natural ſituation, to a good ſtate in the perſon, righteouſneſs, and bleſſings of Chriſt.

As exiſtence, and conſciouſneſs of exiſtence, bear ſuch a relation to each other in the human mind, that the former is only enjoyed by the latter; ſo is juſtification, and the conſciouſneſs of it. If I perceive not my juſtification, it is to me as if I was not juſtified. If I apprehend it is ſo from a falſe foundation, it will prove to me as a dream, which vaniſhes when wide awake. If a man, by ſome kind of argument, was to perſuade me that I exiſted a thouſand years ago, though I am not now conſcious of it, it would be the ſame deluſion, as if he was to perſuade me that I am now King *George*, or the King of *Pruſſia*. For a hundred ſuch exiſtences is, in fact, a hundred men, every man's own conſciouſneſs aſcertaining himſelf to himſelf in diſtinction from any other. In like manner, if a man was to uſe arguments, to perſuade me that I was juſtified long ago, when I was not conſcious of it, he could propoſe no other end, his labour could no otherwiſe terminate, than in perſuading me that I am now juſtified. And that which is brought to prove, that I am one of thoſe who were juſtified long ago, when I was not conſcious of it, may as well give me a conſciouſneſs of my preſent juſtification, without all that round-about labour. Unleſs it is, that while we are conſidering theſe pre-exiſting juſtifications, we are apt to ſlip ourſelves in for a ſhare, upon a foundation that will not bear a preſent ſcrutiny. The ſcripture therefore, does not thus metaphyſically ſubtilize, it does not thus ſeparate our juſtification from the conſciouſneſs of it. He that is juſtified, by the finiſhed work of Chriſt, without any conſciouſneſs of a difference between himſelf and others, is juſtified as ungodly; has peace with God by that which juſtifies him; and is juſtified by his faith, that is, not by what he does, but by what he believes: and the additional confirmation, by the fruits of faith, or conſciouſneſs of our not being deceived in our juſtification by faith, is called by the apoſtle *James*, juſtification by works, without bearing any contradiction to the alone righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified. If my juſtification ariſes to me from the difference there is betwixt me and others, I may be ſaid to be juſtified, or enjoy juſtification by that difference. If the ſpring of my hope ariſes to my view from the report making me welcome to the finiſhed work of Chriſt, as the righteouſneſs provided for the guilty to live by, then I am juſtified, or enjoy juſtification by Chriſt's righteouſneſs given to me, in oppoſition to any thing done by me, or performed in me. If my perſonal juſtification, and the conſciouſneſs of it, ſtand ſo nearly related, it is not at all improper that the ground of our acceptance with God, and the ground of our conſciouſneſs of that acceptance, ſhould be of the ſame kind. So that if I am accepted with God by the work of

* If, as the ſcripture affirms, *the thoughts and imaginations of of man's heart are evil, and that continually*; if this compound of evils is only in ſome meaſure reſtrained and covered in the brighteſt characters amongſt men; if theſe reſtraints are only from the various workings of *pride*, *fear*, and *ſhame*, in all who are not influenced by the ſaving truth: how wretchedly are they miſtaken, who found their hope on ſelf-excellencies ariſing from ſo poor and ſhameful an original?

Christ alone, given to me, I am to know my acceptance with God just upon the same, and no other foundation. If it were not so, the favourite something might be set up, and the pride of man as fully gratified under the name of marks and evidences, as it is under the name of entitling conditions; and we are as effectually taught to draw near, with a *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men.* The sufficient righteousness justifies a man, and gives him a consciousness of his acceptance with God, when he knows it is graciously given to him, so that he is made welcome to draw near to God on that account. He that believes to the peace of his conscience, believes this, and does not rest in an uncertain conjectural hope. Says *Palæmon*, a hope grounded on the sovereignty of God;—say we, not unless that sovereignty has declared a ground of hope for us; otherwise we rest in bare conjecture. But hearing that Jesus has fulfilled all righteousness for the justification of those guilty ones who believe in his name, from a conviction that the doctrine is true, we assure ourselves, in dependence on the divine veracity and faithfulness, that the privileges are our own; or that we shall not be confounded in so trusting to Jesus.

"*Paul* calls upon some whom he himself looked upon as believers, to examine themselves whether they were in the faith; and he exhorts others, about whom he observed the surest tokens of their being true Christians, to give all diligence to remove every doubt concerning their state." p. 334.

When *Paul* bid the *Corinthians examine themselves*, &c. he plainly intimates their being in the faith a self-evident matter; and that to be in the faith, and to have Christ in them, as the peace of their consciences, and hope of glory, is the same thing; and this was the surest evidence that he had been a minister of Christ unto them. He is not here calling them to remove the doubts concerning their own state, by a discovery of their faith, love, and self-denied obedience. It is also very improbable, that the apostle should (as *Palæmon* says) have the surest tokens of their being Christians, and yet call them to doubt of it.

"I am sorry to see *Aspasio* so much carried away with "their (*i. e.* the popular preachers) dissimulation."—— He points out to *Theron* his danger and remedy in the following manner: "*If you fail in one point, or in any degree, you are guilty of all. If your conformity be not persevering as well as perfect, you incur the penalty, and are abandoned to the curse,*" unless you find mercy by what Christ has already done. No; but "unless, renouncing all your *personal* performances, you place all your "affiance on a *Saviour*'s atonement and a *Saviour*'s righteousness." p. 334.

They who endeavour to renounce their personal performances, as an entitling performance required of them, act inconsistently; but they who evidently renounce their own, from a gospel-discovery of the Redeemer's righteousness, and live alone by that, in virtue of the divine declarations, are taught of God, and find mercy by what Christ has alread done.

"This good conduct of ours, by which we are said "to escape the curse." Note, p. 334.

So we are, according to *Palæmon*, to take care that we have no affiance or confidence in Christ's atonement, or righteousness, because that is escaping the curse by some good conduct of our own!

"*Were* (says *Aspasio*) *that firm and joyful reliance on "Christ Jesus, in any degree proportioned to his infinite merits "and inviolable promises?* And if (says *Palæmon*) I cannot find acceptance with God, but in being conscious "of perfect conformity to this new law, then I am in "as great danger as before." p. 335.

Aspasio moves this very question, not to obtain a prerequisite, but to manifest the necessity of a better righteousness than our reliance, considered as a performance or work of ours, that we may rely upon the sufficient work of Christ, without recurring to any other.

The gospel-declarations are not to be separated from our Saviour, his atonement, or righteousness. Nor can our affiance, knowledge, or enjoyment through that report, be separated from either. Is Christ's righteousness presented to me as a security from the curse of the law? My affiance therein, or knowledge thereof, is Christ, my security, enjoyed by me, and manifested to me. The apostle was not so curious as to distinguish and divide with our author, when he said, *I count all things but loss*, not for the excellency of Christ, in distinction from the knowledge of him, but *for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*; and this he styles, *not having on his own righteousness.*

"My expectations were greatly raised by the beauti-"ful and affecting description of the *royal stag chace* in "*dial.* 9. till I saw the sinner's relief described as com-"ing to him by means of such conflicts and struggles, "*&c.*" p. 337.

Aspasio does not mean struggling to believe the report, but struggling for that *rest*, which comes at last in a way they thought not of; that is, by the report. The reasons of the soul-struggles described, are ignorance and self-righteousness, seeking other methods of relief than by the declaration of eternal life given in Christ; and it frequently proves, that after many useless struggles in divers ways, the soul thus finds rest.

"They knew their interest in Christ's death, by the "effect that his death had upon them." p. 339.

Christ's death hath its effect upon us when we draw near to God thereby; which is, in fact, when we appropriate it.

"They imagine, that something besides the bare "truth may contribute more or less toward their "escape." p. 339.

They are clear of this charge, who escape by what that truth declares.

"The gospel leads a man to the greatest reverence "for, and submission to the divine sovereignty, without "having any claim upon God whatsoever, or finding "any reason why God should regard him more than "those that perish." p. 345.

Palæmon maintains, that all who acknowledge the truth of Christ's sufficiency have the promise of salvation. He does not imagine a dependence on this promise opposes the most absolute submission to the divine sovereignty; but is rather a dependence on the promises of sovereign grace. And if we are persuaded of a grant of this sufficient righteousness to the guilty, why may not this be admitted as fully consistent with the same submission to the divine sovereignty?

"The divine sovereignty appearing, that grace might "be shewn to the worthless; and the divine justice ap-"pearing in justifying the ungodly," it is very readily acknowledged, leaves a man entirely at the mercy of God for his salvation. Here no man's pride is flattered; "no man can find any ground to presume, that "the Deity regards him more than others. And a re-"lief a man finds by this discovery, is, that God can be "just, and justify him as he at present stands without "more, or while he finds nothing about himself in the "way of wish, desire, or otherwise, but what renders "him obnoxious to the divine displeasure." p. 346.

The question that remains is, whether God has not intended a farther relief for such guilty helpless ones, even to assure them of their particular salvation in believing, trusting, and confiding, in this sufficient righteousness, as given freely to them to be thus depended upon?—— Whether there is not a word, promise, call, or testimony, to this purpose? and whether Christian obedience is not influenced by an assurance thus obtained?——At the same time we can also readily agree, that "no man "can warrantably be assured that he is already a "Christian,

" Chriſtian, a believer in Chriſt, or that he is an object " of the peculiar favour of God, but by being alſo con- " ſcious, on good grounds, that his practice, in obe- " dience to the peculiar precepts of Chriſtianity, is in- " fluenced by that ſame truth, which influenced the " lives of the apoſtles."

Now, if there is ſuch a *word*, *promiſe*, *call*, or *teſtimony*, as above mentioned, it is very diſtinct from, though not contrary to the declarations concerning the *purpoſe* and *election* of God; and affords a viſible ground for our confident dependence on that righteouſneſs, as ſinners, without finding any reaſon about ourſelves, why God ſhould regard us more than others: whereas the doctrine of election, in the nature of it, is not of itſelf capable of affording us this relief.

It is true, " this *word*, *promiſe*, *call*, or *teſtimony*, leaves " it as much a ſecret what particular perſon ſhall be " ſaved, as the doctrine of the divine *purpoſe*, or *election* " does." p. 348. but does not leave the ſinner ſo much without a warrant to appropriate. Notwithſtanding the doctrine of election, *Palæmon* will allow, that *by him, all that believe are juſtified.* So alſo it is ſaid, *He that* cometh to him *ſhall in no wiſe be caſt out; He that* believeth on him *ſhall never be confounded.*

In this view of things, we are fully warranted " to " repreſent the Deity, as keeping ſecret his gracious in- " tentions" to beget this or that particular perſon, by the word of truth; and, at the ſame time, " revealing " his gracious intentions" to ſave all thoſe, or any, whoſoever they be, that, without ſeeing any difference at all between themſelves and others, ſhall, upon the bare invitation and divine promiſe to the guilty, live, truſt, or depend on his Son and his righteouſneſs, graciouſly provided as a refuge unto ſuch. And while we " are buſy in prompting our hearers to live thus by " Chriſt alone, as given freely and indefinitely to the " guilty; we have reaſon to ſhew no ſmall concern, leſt " *Satan* tempt them" to think, that becauſe God's people are choſen to ſalvation, they are not allowed to feed upon the bread of life, till they know themſelves to be diſtinguiſhed from other ſinners as God's choſen.—— Hereby ſalvation, to the abſolutely guilty, is denied; and the people are taught to hope for eternal life, only by that which diſtinguiſhes them from the reſt of mankind. This is building wood, hay, and ſtubble, on the precious foundation, Chriſt the Saviour of the loſt.

" They tell us, *that God hath made a grant, or deed of* " *gift of Chriſt, and all his benefits, to ſinners of mankind.* " But when we inquire into this again, we find it turns " out to be a gift of benefits to multitudes who are " never benefited thereby." p. 350.

And what of all that? Could there be no ſuch thing as manna given to, or rained daily around the camp of *Iſrael*, becauſe ſome deſpiſed it, and longed for the fleſh-pots of *Egypt*? Muſt it follow that there is no ſuch gift, becauſe multitudes neglect and ſlight it? or becauſe, like *Palæmon*, they will not be perſuaded there is ſuch a gift? Shall our unbelief make the gift, the faith, or faithfulneſs of God, of none effect? It remaineth nevertheleſs a truth, that whoſoever believeth on him, or receiveth the gift, ſhall not periſh, but have eternal life. And why may not they miſs of the benefit of this gift who thus reject it, as the word preached never profited, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it?

" It might, with equal propriety, be ſaid, that there " is a grant of life made in the law, and that the divine " willingneſs to bleſs men is therein expreſſed; Keep " the commandments, and thou ſhalt live." p. 351.

It might ſo; the difference lies here. The grant of life in the law, requires conditions to be previouſly performed, before we may preſume to account the bleſſing ours. The goſpel beſtows life in Chriſt without any condition, or as a free gift, to be immediately enjoyed.

In p. 352. ſeveral inſtances of the faith of thoſe who were healed by Chriſt, are adduced to evidence, that they only believed Chriſt's ability to cure them. To this I anſwer, that in thoſe inſtances they waited for a proper ground, or declaration to proceed upon, in believing that he would; and for that purpoſe they made application to him. And where they had ground for concluding the event, they were as certain of *that*, as of his ability. And faith in thoſe caſes includes *that* certainty. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 2. *If I had all faith, ſo that I could remove mountains*, comp. with *Matth.* xvii. 20. *When he ſaw he had faith to be healed.* Acts xiv. 9. and in *Luke* v. 19, 29. they neither doubted his ability, or willingneſs. In our caſe, the grant of a Saviour to the guilty is declared, as well as the ſufficiency of his righteouſneſs; hence we make God a lyar, if we do not proceed on the truth of both.

" The leper, like the two blind men, was fully per- " ſuaded that Chriſt was able to relieve him. Yet, as " he had no claim upon, he referred his requeſt entire- " ly to his ſovereign pleaſure. In the full aſſurance of " faith he was at Chriſt's mercy, who was nowiſe obli- " ged to apply his healing power to him." p. 352.

But this is no argument againſt that appropriation which proceeds entirely upon the gracious declaration and grant of that ſovereign good pleaſure. If the ſovereign good pleaſure has declared the guilty as ſuch, ſo welcome to what is already done, that *whoſoever believeth on him ſhall have eternal life*; he hath no other application to make, or to wait for. We may be without any claim upon God to do for us any thing that he has not already done, or to give us any right unto what is already done; but as far as he is pleaſed to declare himſelf, it is our buſineſs aſſuredly to believe, truſt in him, or hope in his mercy. And that appropriation which proceeds wholly upon his gracious declaration, is conſiſtent with the utmoſt ſubmiſſion to ſovereign grace.

" Sovereign grace interpoſed, providing a righteouſ- " neſs for the guilty world." p. 353.

Palæmon ſhould ſay, to aſcertain his meaning, " pro- " viding a righteouſneſs for ſome of the guilty world."

" When once the gift of righteouſneſs is made known " to a man." p. 353.

Can the gift properly be ſaid to be made known to a man, unleſs he knows to whom it is given? A gift to nobody, is no gift. A gift to the elect, or to the qualified, is not a gift to the guilty world, but to them that are choſen out of it, and diſtinguiſhed from it.

" He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the re- " cord in himſelf,—the record that God gave of his " Son." *Ibid.*

Palæmon ſlips over the record here treated of, *viz. That God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* This the apoſtle points unto, as what is to be particularly regarded, *And this is the record*, &c. Nor ſhould the teſtimony, that he is well pleaſed in him, be underſtood in any ſenſe excluſive of it.

" In like manner, all his children in the faith believe " the divine word for righteouſneſs, without perceiv- " ing any ſhadow or ſymptom of it about themſelves, " without feeling or being conſcious of any thing about " themſelves, to concur with the divine word, to make " out their righteouſneſs." *Ibid.*

This deſcription ſuits *Aſpaſio* much better than *Palæmon*, who waits for a diſcovery of his faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience.

" If we look into the ſcripture, muſt we not ſay " that all the good works which ſhall be recompenſed " at the reſurrection of the juſt, are produced by the " influence

influence of the divine Spirit dwelling in the hearts of those who believe? Yet such is the connection betwixt every good work and its reward, that, according to the scripture, the justice of God, not to say his grace, is concerned to make it good: *Heb.* vi. 10. *God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love.—Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name,—verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.* Justice, as well as grace, will appear in the last judgment; when due regard will be had to every man's works. But in the justification of sinners, God has no respect to any man, as better than another. He considers men, when he commends his love to them, as ungodly, and without strength, that is, without any will to be better. And all who find mercy, are brought to view themselves in that same point of light wherein God beheld men when he gave his Son to die for them. They do not find themselves prepared, or made fitter than others for mercy, by any work of the divine Spirit upon their minds; but they find their first taste of comfort by hearing of him, *who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.*" p. 257.

Then they find their first taste of comfort independent of any previous discovery or discernment of their faith, love, or self-denied obedience. And their first taste of comfort is, not that there is a sufficient righteousness provided for the elect, or the qualified, but that there is a sufficient righteousness provided for the guilty to live by, without waiting for any farther discovery.

"The popular doctrine supposes, that unbelievers may be seriously engaged in praying for the Holy Spirit to help them to faith, and exhorts them accordingly; which is as absurd as to suppose, that a man may be desirous of being influenced by the Spirit of a truth, which, at present, he neither believes nor loves. For I reckon it must be granted, that no man loves the gospel before he believes it." p. 360.

If we only understood by the gospel that we were to come to do something, or to wait and pray for something to denominate us Christ's people, then we might be complaining for want of this power, praying for it, and perhaps falsely comforted with the supposed will for the deed; and all the while there is no willingness to live entirely by what Christ has done. But this is not the case; when *Aspasio* considered appropriation as essential to faith, and pressed it accordingly, he understood by appropriation, a living entirely by Christ's righteousness alone, without waiting for any other.

"When our systems describe faith to us, as a saving grace bestowed on us, by which we make use of Christ for salvation; are we not led to think of some grace necessary to our salvation, beside what appeared when Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for the sins of men?" p. 361.

But in as much as *Aspasio*'s whole plea is to live immediately by that grace alone, without waiting for any other; he stands clear of this mistake.

"They seem to forget, that Christ is in heaven, and we on the earth;—that the only way wherein we can receive benefit from Christ, is by the report concerning him conveyed to our ears." p. 363.

If the report, in this particular case, invites and authorises us to live by him, and the righteousness which he performed, who is gone to heaven; we may, notwithstanding he is gone to heaven, receive the report for true, and also laid hold of, or live by the righteousness it thus reveals and conveys to us.

"When he comes to know that he may be justified, he finds immediately a covert from the storm." p. 364.

But according to *Palæmon*, he does not find this to be a covert *for him*, till he discovers distinguishing qualifications; whereas *Aspasio* finds a covert for the guilty sinner, without any such distinction.

"If now we understand by the *storm*, the wrath that "is to come, the believer, knowing that Christ hath "done enough to deliver from it, loves him, takes "hold of him, or flies to him."

How?

"In obeying his commands, and frequenting every "mean of correspondence with him." *Ibid.*

He that loves him, takes hold of him, or flies to him, obeys his commands; and is inclined to frequent every means of correspondence with him; but to give us this as the meaning and import of those scriptural phrases and representations, more becomes Mr *Locke*, or Archbishop *Tillotson*, than the evangelical *Palæmon*. He may be assured, if he abides by this doctrine, the offence of the cross will soon cease. The primitive Christians were taught to obey, because *Jesus had delivered them from the wrath to come*, 1 Thess. i. 10. They fled to him as the righteousness provided for the guilty and destitute; and by the enjoyment of him, under this character, they were disposed to all other obedience.

"Accordingly we find *Barnabas* exhorted those at "*Antioch*, in whom he saw the grace of God, that with "purpose of heart they would *cleave unto the Lord*. The "consequence of which was, they assembled together "in the appointed church-order, and denied themselves "in sending relief to their brethren in *Judea*." p. 365.

Did they not assemble as members of Christ, and partakers of his righteousness? Did they not cleave to him as the Lord their righteousness? Or did they only fall into the appointed church-order, in order to escape the wrath to come? If so, what is now become of the sufficient righteousness? or, in short, of all the apostolic exhortations, which constantly proceed upon the certainty of salvation by Christ, as the principle of all the obedience they call for.

"See what effect the knowledge of Christ had on "*Paul*, and what was his steady purpose: *Yea doubtless*, "*and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the* "*knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*" Ibid.

Paul says, *My Lord*, the thing we plead for, and counts himself *apprehended of Christ Jesus*. So that it is plain, he *ran not as uncertainly, he fought not as one that beateth the air*. And as his assurance did not allow him, or lead him to trifle, or slacken his diligence in pressing forward to the desired end; so, on the other hand, his pressing forward was far from being the result of his uncertainty; far from being animated with a view to know by his performances, whether the divine sovereignty had interposed in his behalf.

Palæmon does not approve of *Aspasio* saying, "You "must endeavour, diligently endeavour, to believe." *Ibid.* But we may plead, in his excuse, that *Aspasio* is not here pressing to receive a report as true without evidence, but to appropriate and live by the revealed righteousness; to obtain and maintain thereby that certainty of acceptance with God, which was necessary to animate and incline to all evangelical obedience, and is included in every apostolic exhortation. *Wherefore as ye have always obeyed—As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him—Work out your own salvation—Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life*, &c. And thus understood, we may allow, with *Palæmon*, that "by such arguments God worketh in them that believe, "both to will and to do, not any thing in order to justi-"fication, but all those things wherein their salvation is "evidenced." p. 367.

"If a friend of mine should see me chearful, on "hearing something new, and I should tell him, I was "comforted by an act of faith; would he not say, I

"trifled with him, and readily ask what good news I "had heard, that he might partake in my satisfaction?" p. 369.

But this representation does not reach those who plead for an immediate and constant living upon the complete and perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. They are comforted by *his* acts, and their own has no other concern in it.

"Faith, with its effects, is in scripture often signi- "fied by one expression, and accordingly connected "with salvation, as when it is said, *Whosoever shall call* "*on the name of the Lord shall be saved.* Now, though "we cannot say that a believer is saved on account of "his prayers; yet we may say, that he is saved on ac- "count of what he believes, and by which he is encou- "raged to pray. It is easy to see love and hope expres- "sed in all the prayers of faith recorded in the scripture; "yet it would be absurd to infer from thence, that "prayer, love, and faith, are requisites in order to jus- "tification: for, if we agree with the apostles, we must "still maintain, that justification comes by faith, and "not by works, not by any thing we do in obedience "to any law whatsoever." p. 370.

And at the same time it must be acknowledged, that faith is duty and obedience to the divine law, and in this sense a work: for, as our author has observed, p. 354. "Will not that law which Christ came to ful- "fil, the law which requires love to God with all the "heart, condemn all who by their unbelief make God a "liar? Does not the Spirit of God convince all whom "he brings to the knowledge of the truth, of sin, be- "cause they believe not on Christ? In fine, is there any "thing contrary to the gospel of the glory of the blessed "God, not condemned by the divine law?" How can these be reconciled, unless we admit that faith is so far a work, duty, or obedience, as has been above mention- ed. Yet, as *Palæmon* maintains, we are justified only by *what we believe.* We are justified by faith as we are pleased with a sight, that is, with *what we see.* And God justifies us by faith when he gives us this sight or faith, whereby we are thus justified. And thus to be justified by Christ's blood, and to be justified by faith, is the same thing.

If *Palæmon* will abide by what he says, p. 371. that "the scriptures point forth the freedom of divine grace "to the setting aside all human distinctions, in such lan- "guage as this, *If* any *man will come after me;—Let him* "*that heareth say come; and whosoever will, let him take of* "*the water of life freely,*" p. 371, we are then agreed, this is the foundation of all we plead for, that sinners, as such, are made welcome to take of the water of life freely.

"If the scriptures describe believers as pilgrims, and "strangers on earth, as running the Christian race, de- "nying themselves for the sake of the heavenly inheri- "tance, and accordingly *flying for refuge, to lay hold upon* "*the hope set before them;* our preachers, ever mindful "of their acts of faith, are ready to exhort us to put "forth the acts of *flying to Christ, and laying hold on him.*" p. 372.

The passage alluded to is *Heb.* vi. 18. 19. *That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lye, we might have a strong consolation, who* have fled *for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Which* hope *we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast,* &c. WHO HAVE FLED is an act passed, and bears a manifest refer- ence to flying from the revenger of blood to the cities of refuge, *Numb.* xxxv. 27. to which city the man-slayer being fled, was, while there, secure; not in his act, but in the privilege of the city wherein he now dwelt; and waited unto the death of the high priest, as the hope set before him. The hope set before us, the apostle tells us we yet see not, *but with patience wait for it,* Rom. viii. 25. But how can we with patience wait for it, if it is not at present, the *anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast?* as the apostle says in another place, *I so run, not as uncertainly.* Yet as his security lay in that righteousness Christ alone, he kept *his body* (all his temporal concern *under subjection* thereto, even as the man-slayer abode the city of refuge, knowing there was no safety for h elsewhere. When a man performs his acts of obedien that he may thereby gain himself a conscious title, p session, or enjoyment, of the favour of God, it is but little moment whether he styles it the favour of God Christ, or by any other name. His way to come at i still the same, by his own obedience. Nor can this flying for refuge to Christ, but rather chusing my ow performances as my security, and betaking myself them.

"If *Barnabas* exhorts those in whom he saw t "grace of God, with purpose of heart to *cleave unto* "*Lord*, after the example of the believers who we "said to be added unto the Lord, when they were a "ded to the society of the disciples, keeping his com "mands, then we are told that justifying faith is a *clea* "*ing to Christ.*" Ibid.

It will answer our purpose, and convey our who meaning, to say, The faith which justifies cleaves Christ; and in exhorting to cleave to Christ, we e hort to continue in the faith. The phrase, *Believe were the more added to the Lord*, is, very evidently, n ther more nor less, than that many more were begott to the faith. As to what relation these phrases may al bear to fellowship in the gospel, see the answer p. 365. in p. 457.

"But *Aspasio* tells us, in this page, that it is the offi "of faith, *to take and use the inestimable gift.* If in this, "any other part of the *New Testament*, more be mea "by *receiving Christ*, than knowing him, or believin "on him, then I am ready to shew, that more tha "*faith* is meant, namely, faith with its fruits and effects. p. 373.

By *receiving Christ* more may be meant than *knowi him*, but not more than *believing on him.* We may b said to *know* a thing when its evidence forces itself upo the mind; but to *believe on Christ*, is, in the scripture sense, the subject of exhortation. If *Palæmon* will confin himself to mean by faith, no more than a passive con viction of truth, it shall be allowed him, that by *believ ing on Christ*, more than he means by faith is intended The same may be said of the phrases *laying hold, leanin* &c. more is allowed to be meant by these expressio than *Palæmon* means by faith. At the same time it ma be affirmed, that these expressions of activity "do no contribute their quota" to our justification, since we ar justified by the righteousness received, trusted, or leane upon, and not by our act. We are justified by *wh we receive*, even as *Palæmon* will allow we are justifie by *what we believe.*

"The faith of the gospel is indeed the basis of trust." p. 374.

If so, we are agreed again, for this *trust* we call *be lieving on Christ.* If the faith of the gospel is *the basis trust*, it is of appropriation; for how can I trust in th wherein I am not allowed to take any share? If we ar not allowed to trust in the Redeemer's righteousnes when absolutely guilty, the faith of the gospel is not th basis of trust. In *Palæmon*'s view, the gospel only shew us the possibility of the salvation of the elect, and can not therefore be the basis of trust to a sinner, but the dis covery of his obedience as giving him hopes that he one of the elect, is, in fact, the matter wherein his *tru* is founded.

"If one approaching to a frozen lake or river, ove "which he has occasion to pass, tells me, that he ha "been assured, by good information, that the ice wa "sufficiently strong to support him; and yet, afte "all, proves timorous, and averse to make the trial "*b*

"*by venturing his perſon freely upon it*; I plainly perceive "he has no faith in the report he heard; becauſe he "does not *truſt in it*; or, which is the ſame thing, he "cannot truſt, rely, confide in, or venture himſelf upon "the ice." *Ibid.*

There cannot be a more apt illuſtration of what we plead for. And he that ventures his eternal concerns on the all-ſufficient righteouſneſs of Chriſt, with the ſame confidence that he that believes the ice will bear him ventures his body upon that, will not be averſe to run the riſk of his intereſt and reputation alſo for the ſake of it. We can therefore have no objection to *Palæmon*, when he ſays,

"If one tells me, that he believes the goſpel, and yet "proves averſe to riſk his intereſt or reputation in the "world for the ſake of it; I immediately perceive, that "whatever he ſpeaks with his mouth, he does not in "his heart believe the goſpel, becauſe he puts no truſt "in it." p. 375.

"Perhaps it will now be inquired, are no rules to be "obſerved, no means to be uſed, no works to be exert-"ed by the human mind or body, in order to juſtifica-"tion? The anſwer is ready: Yes, very many. And "they may be thus ſhortly ſummed up: Be perfect, "keep the commandments, and thou ſhalt live. The "obligation of the law is eternal, and cannot be looſ-"ed.———But, perhaps, another ſtate of the queſtion "will be demanded, and that faith ſhould be more "directly reſpected therein: Well then, let it ſtand "thus: Ought not a man to be at pains to attain the "perſuaſion, that all the pains he takes are good for "nothing, except to enchance his guilt? Here, me-"thinks, we are landed at downright abſurdity. For "who will labour in hopes of being convinced, that "all his labour is to no purpoſe, unleſs to his hurt?" p. 387, 388.

This we may allow to be very well ſtated, with reſpect to the perſons whom it concerns. But the queſtion between our author and *Aſpaſio*, really ſtands thus: Are no rules to be obſerved, no means to be uſed, no acts to be exerted by the human mind or body, to arrive at the certainty of our own particular juſtification? *Palæmon* ſays, Yes, a great many, as many as will ſerve to demonſtrate that we are elected. *Aſpaſio* ſays, Only thankfully to receive or accept the bleſſings as freely given: and all the direction given by *Aſpaſio*, reſpects this queſtion and not the ſufficiency of the finiſhed work of Chriſt to juſtify the moſt guilty.

"The deſign of the paſſage (*Rom.* x. 19, 20, 21.) is "plainly to ſhew, that faith comes not by any endea-"vours, or the uſe of any means, even under the great-"eſt advantages that men can enjoy, but of that ſame "ſovereign good pleaſure which provided the grand "thing believed." p. 390.

Here is then, notwithſtanding all *Palæmon*'s exactneſs, a *ſomething more* than the finiſhed work of Chriſt, a ſomething called faith, which he tells us comes "of "that ſame ſovereign good pleaſure which provided "the grand thing believed." *Palæmon* will reply, he means no more than believing that which is provided is ſufficient; nor do we mean any more by appropriation, than *receiving* that which is ſufficient, as believing it to be freely given to us for that purpoſe.

"I would here ſubjoin, by way of poſtſcript to this, "ſome reflections on the *aſſurance* or *appropriation* ſaid "to be eſſential to ſaving faith.

"While various terms and diſtinctions are coined by "popular preachers on this ſubject, great neglect is "ſhewn to a very plain and obvious diſtinction, which "*Paul* makes betwixt the aſſurance of faith, and the aſ-"ſurance of hope." p. 393.

Upon a review of the ſcriptures to ſee what foundation there was for this remark, I gathered the following:

1. In regard to faith. *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. v. 1. *All joy and peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. and not by what *Palæmon* ſtyles aſſurance of hope gathered from a diſcovery of our faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience.

The language of faith is not barely concerning others, the elect, *&c.* *But* WE *believe, that, through the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* WE *ſhall be ſaved*, Acts xv. 11.

Faith is deſcribed, *Heb.* xi. 25, 26. to be ſo far the aſſurance of eternal life by Chriſt, as to be, on that very account, *the victory that overcomes the world.*

They that died in faith, *not having received the promiſes, but having ſeen them afar off, and were perſuaded of and embraced them, and* (therefore) *confeſſed they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth*, Heb. xi. 23. did they not appropriate theſe promiſes? or, did they only conſider them as belonging to the elect, and themſelves uncertain whether they were of the number, till they could diſcover it by the diſcovery of their faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience?

The aſſurance of faith proceeds upon *having boldneſs to enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus,—by a way conſecrated for us,—and having a high prieſt over the houſe of God*, Heb. x. 19, 22. And can all this be in a fixed uncertainty, or without appropriation? Can I draw near, as having a way conſecrated, or as having a high prieſt over the houſe of God; and, at the ſame time, don't know whether I have or no?

If we are condemned for aſking doubtingly, *James* i. 6, 7. and for little faith in providence, *Matth.* vi. 30. does not the oppoſite character imply a certainty of divine favour and regard by ſovereign grace, independent of a diſcovery of our previous obedience?

Rom. xiv. 23. *Whatſoever is not of faith* (*i. e.* whatſoever action is not of confidence of acceptance with God) *is ſin.* Does not this ſcripture make confidence eſſential to faith?

Rom. iv. 5. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly*, &c. Is not this inconſiſtent with waiting to be godly, before I dare put my truſt in him?

We cannot *call on him in whom we have not believed*, Rom. x. 14. that is, we cannot *call in faith, nothing doubting*, as above, *Jam.* i. 6.

It is the divine commandment to *believe in his name*, 1 *John* iii. 23. and it is the ſtrength of faith *againſt hope*, of what we ſee or feel, *to believe in hope* of what God has freely given and promiſed.

Eph. iii. 12. *In whom we have boldneſs and acceſs with confidence by the* FAITH *of him.* Can this be where there is no appropriation?

Gal. v. 5. *We, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteouſneſs by* FAITH. Can this be ſaid in uncertainty? or in a conditional certainty depending on our performance?

Can the dead live by *believing on him*, according to *John* xi. 25. if they are to wait till they feel life firſt?

2. In regard to hope, we are told, that not our performances, but God's promiſe and oath are the *ſtrong conſolation* of them *who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the* HOPE *ſet before them; which hope we have as an anchor of the ſoul, both* SURE *and* STEDFAST, *and which entereth into that within the vail*, Heb. vi. 18, 19.

We are told to *hold faſt the beginning of our confidence—the confidence and rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end.* Heb. iii. 6.

As we *have not ſeen and yet have believed*, ſo we are ſaid to *hope for that we ſee not*, and *patiently wait for it*, Rom. viii. 25. *We are ſaved through faith*, Eph. ii. 8. *We are ſaved by hope*, Rom. viii. 23. *We are ſaid to purify ourſelves by this hope*, 1 John iii. 3. *To have our hearts purified by faith*, Acts xv. 9. *To purify our ſouls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto the unfeigned love of the brethren*, 1 Pet. i. 22. *We are ſaid to be all the children of God by faith in Jeſus Chriſt*,

Christ, Gal. iii. 29. to be *begotten again to a lively hope*, not through a discovery of our obedience, *but by the resurrection of Christ from the dead*, 1 Pet. i. 3. And *the God of hope* fills us with *all joy and peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. *And being justified by faith, we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God*, Rom. v. 2.

When we are exhorted, 1 Pet. iii. 15. to *be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us*, I apprehend our faith, or that truth we believe, is that reason, and not our own righteousness or qualifications. Upon this review of these scriptures, it appears to me, that *Palæmon*'s refinement upon the scripture-phrases, to the excluding appropriation or certainty of salvation from faith, and ascribing it wholly to a discovery of our inherent qualifications, under the name of assurance of hope, is not so scripturally founded as he has imagined.

"The assurance of hope, is enjoyed only by those "who give all diligence to obtain it." p. 393.

That they are exhorted to shew *the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end*, is true. We are also to *hold fast the beginning of our* confidence *stedfast unto the end.*

"The first of these (the assurance of faith) was called "for in a man's first profession of the faith, upon his first "hearing the gospel, in order to his being acknow-"ledged for a Christian." *Ibid.*

Hope is also called the *hope of our calling by the gospel*, Eph. i. 18. not the hope of our obedience, or hope arising from our qualifications. And upon a man's first hearing the gospel, when he was first begotten again by the word of truth, he is said to be *begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead*, 1 Pet. i. 3. Christ is said to *dwell in our hearts by* FAITH, Eph. iii. 17. and *Col.* i. 27. as our HOPE *of glory*. And if he is not thus in us, we are said to be not young professors, or young Christians, but *reprobates*.

"The assurance of faith is likewise necessary to the "drawing near to God in his worship." p. 394.

We are likewise said to *draw near to God by the better hope*, Heb. vii. 19. *which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both* SURE *and* STEDFAST.

"The assurance of hope again, is an enjoyment pro-"posed to them who believed." *Ibid.*

A stedfast continuance, full assurance, and increase in the faith, is proposed to them also.

"The assurance of hope, then, holds pace, first and "last, with the work and labour of love." *Ibid.*

The apostolic *hope* held pace, first and last, with the apostolic faith; and love or charity followed both. The apostles do not teach the order to be *faith*, *love*, and *hope*, because I love; but *faith*, in the revealed righteousness, is the spring of *hope*; and *love* flowing from both. *Now abideth faith, hope, and charity; these three* as the root, and not the fruit of our obedience.

"There was no Christian, however eminent, in the "days of the apostle, but needed the exhortation, to "give all diligence for maintaining and confirming the "assurance of hope." *Ibid.*

Nor was any Christian so far advanced, but he might be exhorted to be *strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus*, and *continue in the faith grounded and settled.*

"They often called on men to examine themselves." *Ibid.*

They declared remission of sin immediately in Christ's name, as the truth whereby we pass *from death to life*. They did not teach people to find remission of sin by the way of their inherent dispositions, or works; but when the apostle *Paul* was called upon for a proof of Christ speaking in him, he bid the *Corinthians examine themselves* for that proof; for if they had not received Christ, they were *reprobates*; and if they had, they were his *epistle of commendation*, agreeable to what he had said, chap. iii.—xiii. 5.

"No man, then, can be charged with the sin of dis-"believing the gospel, for doubting, if he be a good "Christian." *Ibid.*

But he may for doubting whether Christ is given to him in the divine declarations to sinners; or, whether he may trust to those declarations; or, for doubting whether he may venture his eternal concerns upon Jesus Christ alone, without, and before any discovery of his excellency above other men.

"Yea, we find the apostles ready to quash the confi-"dence of those who were ready to conclude their state "was changed, by such awful sentences as this: *He that "saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a "lyar, and the truth is not in him.*" p. 395.

They who professed the faith and hope of Christians, and were evidently not influenced by the Christian love, to observe the commandments of him in whom they professed to believe, were undoubtedly the subjects of this censure; which may well be admitted without any contradiction to the *hope* of a guilty sinner *by Christ alone.*

"The apostles frequently declare their assurance of "faith and of hope in the same passage. While they "express their faith in Christ, they are at the same time "confident of their interest in him." *Ibid.*

This proves, that either the apostles' Christian *hope*, stood in a nearer connection with their *faith*, and sprung more immediately from their doctrine, than *Palæmon* will admit of; or else that he is more accurate than they in describing it.

"This joint assurance they sometimes express in fel-"lowship with all that follow their footsteps, and often, "in language plainly, distinguishing the apostles them-"selves from other professors of the faith." *Ibid.*

The 1 *John* v. 11. is not of the sort: *This is the record, which he that believeth, hath in himself; he that believeth it not, maketh God a lyar, because he believeth not the record which he gave of his Son.* And THIS IS THE RECORD that God hath given, not to us apostles, exclusive of others; not to us who can say, God, I thank thee, I am not as other men; but to us, guilty, sinners, lost, &c. to us, as numbered with them, who, in not believing it, make God a lyar. *God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* So given him, that *he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life*; it being only to be received, possessed, or enjoyed in receiving, possessing, and enjoying of him.

"The same Spirit, acting as the Comforter, is given "only to those who are already the friends of Christ. "—To this purpose, *Paul* says, *Gal.* iv. 6. *And because "ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into "your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*" p. 397.

That is, and because ye, while enemies, have received, through the gospel, *the adoption of children by Jesus Christ*, Eph. i. 5. Because, also, according to the fulness of time, ye are sons; the church being come out of her nonage. As a proof of this, it is evident, God hath not given you *the spirit of bondage again to fear*, but *he hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts*, whereby ye obtain such a discovery of salvation to the guilty, as enables you to cry, *Abba, Father.*

"The Holy Spirit then acts a twofold part, as he "breathes in the gospel. He reconciles enemies, and "he comforts friends." *Ibid.*

He reconciles and comforts enemies in the same instant, and by the same truth; so the distinction is not properly founded. Besides, the consolation we have by Christ to the end, is of the same nature with the beginning; the grace that is manifest in Christ Jesus to the guilty. Not but that we have also the additional consolation of those sayings which relate to our witnessing and suffering for the truth.

"What then shall we say of those pretenders to "the apostolic consolation, whose very profession of "Christianity, instead of being any loss to them, "spreads

"ſpreads their reputation for piety, and procures them "eſteem and reverence from the world?" p. 398.

We will ſay, their conſolation is not apoſtolic, that the offence of the croſs has ceaſed with them, or that they are of the world. But it is very plain, *Aſpaſio*'s appropriation, or that truſt wherein he is comforted, has not had this effect; however he may have been honoured on other accounts.

"In latter times, not a few have, from the hand of "church-authority, ſupported by ſecular power, endu-"red the ſame ſufferings which the apoſtles met with "from the *Jews* and *Romans*, and accordingly enjoyed "the ſame conſolation. It was very natural for ſuch of "them as were writers, to commend the faith which "thus wrought by love." *Ibid.*

They ſuffered as maintaining the certainty of ſalvation by Chriſt alone; and did not ground their certainty upon their ſufferings; although they were far from being diſcouraged thereby, but endured them with additional conſolation. Their aſſurance gave the offence, and cauſed their ſufferings.

"Shall we ſay, that theſe friends of Chriſt would "have approved of that aſſurance of an intereſt in him, "which men now pretend to acquire by ſome *heart-*"*work*, in a full conſiſtency with their worldly eaſe and "reputation?" p. 399.

Nor does *Aſpaſio* plead for ſuch an aſſurance; what he pleads for is founded only upon the divine declarations to guilty ſinners; and is far from having the approbation of the devout and honourable of the world, however they may profeſs to eſteem his writings on account of the elegancy of the ſtyle, or ſome particulars foreign to his main intention in them.

"The modern aſſurance—proceeds on the principle, "that the ſimple truth believed, affords no joy nor "comfort." p. 402.

This cannot be our caſe who plead for the joy and comfort of the ſufficient righteouſneſs, as given freely to the guilty in thoſe evangelical declarations. See remark on p. 85. in p. 451.

"Will the news of a plentiful importation of corn, "in time of famine, give joy to many ready to periſh, "and revive even the pooreſt with the hope that they "may be fed?" *Ibid.*

Will the joy and comfort of this news be ſet aſide, by underſtanding that the corn is freely given for us to live upon without money or price? Will not this rather enhance the joy? Does not the pooreſt receive comfort from ſuch tidings, becauſe they expect either to be able to buy ſome, or to have ſome given them? See remark on p. 429.

"Yet no man knows certainly, but this preſent day "may be his laſt."

But the joy created by the news above mentioned proceeds on a contrary ſuppoſition, *viz.* That he ſhall live, and be ſuſtained by it. Beſides, the bread of life concerns a day that will never have an end, therefore this uncertainty is foreign to the purpoſe.

"And however diffident the convert" (that is, the convert of *Aſpaſio*'s ſtamp) "be, he is ſtill ſuppoſed to "be poſſeſſed of ſome degree of aſſurance, provided he "blame himſelf for the want of it." p. 403.

He is ſuppoſed to live by Chriſt alone, as his ſufficient righteouſneſs, who condemns every word, work, or thought, to the contrary, or who fights this fight of faith againſt all oppoſitions and trials, inward or outward. But though we may make ſuch an allowance, this is not our point. The queſtion is not ſo much about whether I believe, let that make itſelf evident. The proper queſtion to be always conſidered and reſted in, is this: Does God give to guilty me eternal life in his Son? Is this the ſpring of my hope, and the ſource of my love and obedience? Do I live, not by my notion that I am a believer, but do I live by this?

"They (the devils) believe, they hate, and yet they "tremble at that truth which Chriſt's people believe, "love, and find ſalvation in. With them are ranked "all thoſe of mankind, who know as much of the "truth as inclines them to hate and pervert it." p. 405.

Yet it cannot be ſaid of the devils, they have the ſame confidence. It cannot be ſaid of the devils, that they receive or appropriate the divine righteouſneſs as freely given to them, or that they ſee any foundation for it.

"In this view, the ſame truth is the ſavour of life "unto life unto ſome, and of death unto death unto "others. In this view, the ſame truth is the object "of contempt and chagrin to ſome, and of love and joy "to others." *Ibid.*

True it is ſo, but not by both believing it alike for themſelves.

LETTER VI.

"We are now then to conſider faith as a principle of "life and action." p. 406.

Palæmon is here obliged to admit of a different conſideration of faith. If he conſidered it in juſtification as a principle of life and action, he would have been involved in the miſtakes he has been oppoſing. If on the other hand he denied faith to be a principle of life and action, he would overthrow the principle of the Chriſtian obedience he pleads for. Now, ſince he is thus obliged to take up this diſtinction for himſelf, why ſhould he not allow it to *Aſpaſio*? Why ſhould he not allow that appropriation, although it is an act, or work exerted by the human mind, in conſequence of the belief of the goſpel, and as a principle of all other Chriſtian obedience; yet we are not juſtified by our appropriating perſuaſion, but by the righteouſneſs we appropriate, even as *Palæmon* ſays, we are juſtified by what we believe, and not by faith, as a principle of life and action. See obſ. on p. 483.

"And here we muſt carefully diſtinguiſh betwixt all "works by which men would pretend to acquire faith, "and thoſe which faith produces: for if we will contend "that juſtification comes by faith without works, and "that there is no acceptable working but what follows "upon this, and yet maintain that faith is acquired by "works, we undoubtedly reaſon in a circle.—And how-"ever ſeriouſly and devoutly we may be occupied in "this kind of reaſoning, it is evident we are employed "in nothing elſe but ſolemn trick and diſſimulation; un-"leſs it may be pled in our behalf, that we are impoſing "on ourſelves by the ſame means by which we impoſe "upon others.

"Men are juſtified by the knowledge of a righteouſ-"neſs finiſhed in the days of *Tiberius*; and this know-"ledge operates upon them, and leads them to work "righteouſneſs. *If ye know*, ſays the apoſtle *John*, *that* "*he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth righteouſ-*"*neſs is born of him.* Faith is not acquired, but is ob-"tained, as *Peter* ſays, (τοις λαχουσι) *To them who have* "OBTAINED BY LOT *like precious faith with us.* Of two "criminals juſtly condemned to die, if one eſcapes by a "favourable throw of the dice, and the other dies for "his crime, we ſee mercy in the deliverance of the for-"mer, and no injuſtice in the death of the latter. Two "men may be employed with equal diligence in ſtudy-"ing the ſcripture, and with equal ſeriouſneſs in pray-"ing for divine aſſiſtance; the one may come to know "the truth, and the other may grope in the dark all his "life-time. He who comes to know it, plainly perceives "that he has found what he was not ſeeking after: He "plainly ſees, that his moſt ſerious devotion was pointed "in direct oppoſition to what now comforts him." p. 406, 407.

Nevertheleſs the truth being declared, they may, like the noble *Bereans*, ſearch the ſcriptures, *whether theſe things are ſo?*

" Thus the word of life is held forth in the world— " ſerving as a mean of divine appointment to lead " ſome to the faith, and render others inexcuſeable." p. 408.

This is a proper reply to *Palæmon*'s own objection, p. 350. " That the grant of the goſpel is a gift of be- " nefits to multitudes who are never benefited thereby." It ſerves as a means of divine appointment to lead ſome to faith, and leave others inexcuſable.

" The change made upon a man by the belief of the " goſpel, may be thus illuſtrated: When *Lazarus* was " revived to the enjoyment of this mortal life, neither his " will nor power were concerned in the obtaining of life. " Yet his life could no otherwiſe be continued and en- " joyed, but in his voluntary exerciſe of it. As ſoon " as he revived, the principle of ſelf-preſervation, with " all its hopes and fears, behoved immediately to be ſet " in motion. No ſooner was he poſſeſſed of life, than " the active love of it behoved to take place. Accord- " ingly no ſooner does a man begin to know the grace " of God in truth, than love to it takes place in his " heart. Love is the activity of that life which a man " obtains by faith, for faith worketh by love." *Ibid.*

But what is all this to the doctrine of working in painful deſire and fear, till we come to the enjoyment of life, or the knowledge that we have life? *Lazarus* had no principle of ſelf-preſervation before he was con- ſcious he had a ſelf to preſerve, nor had he any love of life before he enjoyed it. In like manner we can have no love to that grace of God we know not, nor deſire to preſerve that life we never enjoyed.

" If a man of low condition, is by a royal patent en- " nobled, and entitled to a place in the politeſt aſſem- " blies, he cannot enjoy the pleaſures of his promotion, " but in as far as he loves and ſtudies to learn the man- " ners ſuitable to his rank and company." p. 409.

And his motive to this improvement of theſe man- ners is, that he is promoted to a ſtation he deſires to enjoy more perfectly. So we being called to the adop- tion of children by Jeſus Chriſt, toil no more in the way of painful deſire and fear, to attain to a conſciouſneſs of the privilege, but as partakers of it, are influenced thereby.

" The apoſtle *John*, ſpeaking of obedience to the " new commandment of love, ſays, *Beloved, if our " hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards " God;* that is, if, notwithſtanding our natural bias " againſt the goſpel, with its remaining effects, giving " us daily diſquiet, our heart condemn us not as deſti- " tute of love to that truth which the world hates, then " we have confidence towards God; even as much " confidence as the teſtimony of our own conſcience " can give us." p. 414.

This is plainly not the confidence which the truth itſelf affords a guilty ſinner, but confidence " that we " are not deſtitute of love to that truth the world hates." The former is our life, the latter is only an additional corroborating comfort.

" Yet this is but one witneſs, and needs to be ſup- " ported. For in this caſe one may be liable to doubts, " leſt even his own conſcience ſhould be partial in his " favour."

If we have confidence in Chriſt by the truth itſelf as we are guilty ſinners; if I am conſcious that the truth, or, which is the ſame thing, my faith, and confidence in it, works by love; if our hearts condemn us not in this matter, then have we confidence towards God. Firſt, becauſe we are conſcious we proceed on divine authority. Secondly, we prove the bleſſed effect of the truth. Theſe then are two witneſſes inſeparably united. The firſt a divine truth, the teſtimony of the divine Spirit, than which there cannot be a greater ground of certainty; the latter is the conſciouſneſs of the effect of that truth.

" Here then the Spirit of truth, who never fails to " bear witneſs to the genuine effects thereof, gives his " teſtimony as a ſecond witneſs ſupporting the former. " Thus *Paul*, after he had ſaid, *As many as are led by the " Spirit of God, they are the ſons of God;* adds, *The Spirit " itſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the chil- " dren of God.*" p. 417.

The apoſtle *Paul*, after he had ſaid, *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the ſons of God;* adds, *For ye have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received* (*i. e.* by the goſpel-truth) *the Spirit of adop- tion, whereby we cry, Abba, Father;* and then follow the words, *The Spirit itſelf* (which ye received in the hearing of the goſpel, emboldening us guilty ſinners to cry, *Abba, Father*, through the divine righteouſneſs freely given to us; this Spirit received in the goſpel) *beareth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God*, and not of them who deceive themſelves with vain thoughts.

It is already granted, p. 397. that " the Spirit of " truth never ſpeaks one word or ſentence to any per- " ſon beyond what is written in the ſcripture." And what is written in the ſcripture is either the declarations of free ſalvation to ſinners in Jeſus Chriſt, or divine aſ- ſurances of no diſappointment to them that believe on Chriſt, or on account of the genuine effects of faith. In the firſt we are taught to apply what is ſaid to our- ſelves as ſinners: In the ſecond we are encouraged to believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in aſſurance of ſalva- tion by him without diſappointment; In the laſt we are informed of the genuine effects of this truth, or faith, correſponding to what we find and feel to be true, when we believe according to that which is written.

" And this he (*i. e.* the Spirit) does by ſhedding " abroad in the heart ſuch an abundant ſenſe of the di- " vine love, as leaves no room for, ſo caſts out, the " anxious fear of coming ſhort of life everlaſting." *Ibid.*

The love ſhed abroad in the heart, is that manifeſted in Chriſt dying for the ungodly when enemies and without ſtrength. Not love manifeſted to the qualified. For *if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son* (given freely unto us), *much more being reconciled*, as is apparent to us in what we believe, and in its genuine effects, we have a hope (that maketh not aſhamed) that *we ſhall be ſaved by his life;* that he who gave us righteouſneſs while enemies, will ſave us for ever who are thus reconciled to him.

" Thus that love to the truth, which formerly " wrought in a way of painful deſire, attended with " many fears, is perfected by being crowned with the " higheſt enjoyment it is capable of in this mortal ſtate." *Ibid.*

I do not read in the ſcripture of any love to the truth of the goſpel ſo deſcribed. *Herein is love, not that we loved God*, and he crowned us with enjoyment, *but that he loved us, and ſent his Son, his only begotten Son, into the world, that we might live through him;* ſent his Son *to be a propitiation for our ſins. If we who are of this truth love one another, his love is* already *perfected in us. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. Herein is our love made perfect. He that fetireth*, and is not em- boldened by the truth to venture his everlaſting con- cerns upon Jeſus Chriſt alone, *is not made perfect in love. We love him becauſe he firſt loved us, purifying our ſouls by obeying the truth through the Spirit; unto the unfeigned love of the brethren*, as its proper and genuine effect.

" Jeſus Chriſt who loved his Father with a p • fect " heart, even while ſorrowful unto death, received " the higheſt proof of his being the beloved Son of " God, when being exalted at the Father's right hand, " and being made moſt bleſſed with a ſenſe of his

" love,

ove, he experienced fulneſs of joy in his preſence."

But he knew he was the Son of God before he had highеſt proof; he, though ſorrowful unto death, none of the anxious fear of coming ſhort of his ry, but was animated by that glory. *For the joy that ſet before him, he endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame,* received the word in its accompliſhment, as the heſt confirmation of the veracity of what his Father ſpoken. But ſurely he ſhewed himſelf entirely ſa- ied with the bare teſtimony, when he anſwered the mpter, *Man ſhall not live by bread alone, but by every thing t proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

"The report of this draws them who believe it to love him, and ſuffer for his ſake. To ſuch Jeſus Chriſt promiſed fellowſhip with him in the fulneſs of joy." *Ibid.*

That *fulneſs of joy* muſt be in the life to come, accord- to *Pſal.* xvi. 11. For in this life we walk by faith d not by ſight, and hope which is ſeen is not hope. d it is alſo acknowledged, that Jeſus himſelf did not ter into this joy till he ceaſed from this world.

John xv. 10. 11. "*If ye keep my commandments, ye ſhall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's command- ments, and abide in his love. Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*" Ibid.

The commandments here ſpoken of are to believe, d love for the truth's ſake. The love and joy is that hich is manifeſted by the word in this life; and which ither *life, nor death, nor angels, principalities, nor powers,* r any kind of ſuffering nor affliction, ſhall be able to parate us from. Nevertheleſs we yet but hope for the lneſs of joy that Jeſus is now arrived at, with *hope that keth not aſhamed*, but animates us to be followers of ſus, *enduring the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame.*

"When the ſaving truth firſt ſhines into the hearts of men, the effect is ſuitable to the divine promiſe, *Jer.* xxxii. 40. *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.* This fear dwelling in their hearts, checks and recalls them when ready to be ut- terly led away by their former evil inclinations.—— They are preſerved from falling away, by the fear of falling away." p. 419. 420.

This is no more than a fear of caution, conſiſtent with e utmoſt confidence of the ſufficiency of Chriſt, and e veracity and faithfulneſs of God. Conſiſtent with firm perſuaſion, that nothing ſhall *be able to ſeparate us m the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* The aviſh fear which ariſeth from uncertainty, and is ſeek- g after a differencing ſomething to remove our tor- ent, is ſo far from preſerving us from falling, that it rather proof we are not ſatisfied with the ſufficient ghteouſneſs, with the ſufficient ground of faith and pe, and have at preſent no part or lot in the matter.

"It is evident, that to have the Holy Spirit as the comforter and earneſt of the heavenly inheritance, is an attainment far beyond any influences of the Spirit that are common to thoſe who believe for a time, and thoſe who believe to the ſaving of the ſoul. Yea, beyond the regenerating work of the Spirit, by which men are at firſt brought to the knowledge of the truth, and taught to love it." p. 420.

"*To find by experience* (in the effects of the report on our minds) *the truth of what they formerly believed on teſ- timony*," (which is what *Palæmon* declares himſelf to mean, p. 416) is certainly an attainment of another kind than the joy and comfort of the truth itſelf. But hat a conſcious certainty, that "*I depend on the promiſe of Chriſt, and run all hazards for his ſake*," is what the ſcrip- ture means by the *comforter* and *earneſt* of the heavenly inheritance, does not ſo evidently appear: beauſe 1. This is not taking of things of Chriſt, but taking of our things, and ſhewing them to us. 2. It is not the Spirit's bearing witneſs itſelf with our ſpirits, but bearing wit- neſs by the medium of our obedience. 3. It would be ſpeaking more to us than what is written in the ſcrip- ture. 4. This conſciouſneſs, and the joy accompany- ing it, was an attainment of the people of God before the reſurrection of Chriſt, as really as it has been ſince; whereas the Comforter promiſed was to be the conſe- quence of Chriſt's aſcenſion to his Father, and was firſt performed on the day of Pentecoſt, *Acts* ii. 33. Laſtly, To wait for an attainment far beyond the knowledge of the truth, or, which is the ſame thing, of the power of Chriſt's reſurrection; ſerves, in fact, to ſet aſide that reſurrection as inſufficient, ſo to deny the one thing needful. More eſpecially as, according to *Palæmon*,

"*It* (this ſuppoſed attainment) *muſt be diſtinguiſhed* "*from any joy or ſpiritual delight which neceſſarily attend the* "*obtaining of faith, or its beginning to work by love.*" And "*that it is vain and abſurd to call men to be aſſured of their* "*being children of God, when they are not enjoying it.*—— "*That it cannot further appear that any man has known the* "*grace of God in truth, than he gives all diligence to the end,* "*in order to obtain it.*" p. 420. Now the grand arca- num in *Palæmon*'s doctrine is, how a man can live en- tirely by the *one thing needful*, and yet be ſo diligently employed in labouring for ſo important a *ſomething more?*

"It is ſo plain, that the promiſe of the Spirit as the "Comforter is common to all thoſe who follow the "faith and practice of the apoſtles." *Ibid.*

It is plain, they were comforted by the Spirit of God, in the joy of the truth concerning Jeſus the Saviour of ſinners, and had alſo the additional comfort of thoſe con- firming declarations concerning the children of God and their bleſſings, which are recorded for that purpoſe. But that we are taught to wait for any other attainment, under the name of the Spirit, as the Comforter, does not appear.

"Their (the *Jews*) appropriation was the great "ſpring of all their pride, of all their diſaffection to "the true goſpel, and all their ruin." p. 424.

The *Jews* appropriation was upon the ground of the difference between themſelves and others; which we readily agree has this effect, that "*the more men excelled* "*in this way, they proved the more hardened enemies to the* "*true God, and the eternal happineſs of mankind.*" p. 422. But what is this for an objection to that appropriation which proceeds entirely on the free grant of heaven to the guilty, excluding all ſuch difference? *Aſpaſio* is ſtill left to affirm of his appropriation, that "*nothing will be* "*ſo powerful to produce holy love, and willing obedience, to* "*exalt our deſires, and enable us to overcome the world.*"

Who ſtands higheſt to the *Jewiſh* appropriation, *Aſpaſio* or *Palæmon?* *Aſpaſio*, who in *dial.* 16. com- pares "thoſe *who adviſe us to prove our title to comfort by* "*genuine marks of converſion, and teach us on this column to* "*fix the capital of aſſurance, unto thoſe who would fix the* "*dome of a cathedral upon the ſtalk of a tulip*," or *Palæmon*, who judges this "*talking profanely.*" p. 425. Neither do I ſee how this is talking profanely, until it is firſt proved, that the marks whereby we ſuppoſe ourſelves entitled to comfort rather than others, are the Deity in which we are to put our truſt. *Aſpaſio* rightly judges, that this is placing a moſt weighty affair upon that moſt ſlight and uncertain foundation, what we feel, or do, in- ſtead of the Rock Chriſt, given to guilty ſinners. Does not the Holy Ghoſt prove a comforter, by manifeſting to us, guilty ſinners, *the things that are freely given of God; taking of the things of Chriſt, and ſhewing them to us?* And muſt not every genuine mark of converſion have its foundation here?

"*He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that* "*ſent*

" *sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condem-*
" *nation, but is passed from death to life*, John v. 24. *Here*
" *we see how men pass from death to life.*" p. 426.

The word that Jesus hath spoken, and the declaration the Father hath made, is the first and surest ground of undeceivable certainty. The dependence hereon proceeds entirely on the *truth* and *faithfulness* of God; and that dependence is the assurance we have pleaded for; and they who thus depend, our Lord declares, *have everlasting life*, are already *passed from death to life*.

" Here we see how men pass from death to life. " *John* declares how they come to know this; while, " plainly pointing at the words of Jesus, he says, *We* " *know that we are passed from death to life, because we love* " *the brethren.*" Ibid.

There is no foundation for the distinction here made by *Palæmon*, viz. *That our Lord only declares how men pass from death to life*, and *John only declares how they come to know this.* It is plain, that our Lord's declaration runs in the same strain with that of his disciple; our Lord says, He that heareth my word—*is passed from death unto life.* *John* says, He that loveth the brethren, *is passed from death unto life*; where is the difference? Both are declarations of who are passed from death to life, therefore both alike in that respect. Our Lord intimates, the life-giving *word* the matter believed by all who are passed from death to life; his disciple intimates, the proper and genuine *effect* of that word on all who believe. " *We know* (says *John*, we have an additional proof, that the word of Jesus is true) *that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.* It is plain, that they abide still in death who abide in the hating murdering spirit of the world; and more especially, who cannot love them who are of the *truth* for the *truth's sake.* On the other hand, the uniting life-giving tendency of the *truth*, appears to us who are of it, since it causeth us thus to love one another for *the truth's sake*, and proves what Jesus said, that *he that heareth his word, and believeth on him that sent him, is passed from death to life.*"

Jesus saith, He is passed from death to life *that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me.* *John* saith, *We know he has passed from death to life who loves the brethren.* The only difference is, Jesus declares the privilege by that whereby we enjoy it; *John* gives proof in the love of the brethren, as a demonstrative effect, that Jesus's words are true.

" By this proof, men come to know, that the joy " they had upon their first believing, was not the joy " of the hypocrite." *Ibid.*

The joy true believers have on their first believing, is the joy of the truth. If that we rejoice in is found to be true, our joy is proved genuine.

" And so their joy is made full." *Ibid.*

Our *joy* is not made full by a discovery of itself, but by farther confirmations of that truth which begat and supports it. The believer gives an account of his *faith* and *joy* when he gives an account of what he believes and rejoices in. And it is made full by a farther supply or confirmation, of the truth and faithfulness of God on which he depends.

" By this they come to know it was the genuine truth " of God, and not any human counterfeit and corrup- " tion of it, which they at first believed." *Ibid.*

The genuine truth of God makes itself manifest to be such at our first believing, 1 *Thess.* ii. 13.—1 *John* i. 10. and thereby begets faith, joy, and every other effect. He that waits for such effect, to know whether he has the genuine truth or no, may finish his inquiry, by reminding himself that he is in this inquiry very evidently but upon the search, and therefore has not found truth as yet. He may also be convinced his search is wrong and preposterous, as if a man that should make an inquiry after what was proper for him should, instead thereof, be waiting to know by certain effects, whether he had eat any or no. The noble Bereans inquired after truth, by searching the scripture to see whether *these things were so; therefore* (it is added) *many of them believed.* The truth was made manifest unto them as the truth of God. And when this was the case, they did not wait for the joy of it with its effects, to know whether it was so or no.

" Thus they receive an additional knowledge and " certainty about the truth, in the way of experience, " by perceiving that it works effectually in them, pro- " ducing its genuine effects."

If the experience of the effects of the genuine gospel produces only an additional knowledge and certainty from experience, as the first knowledge and certainty came by divine evidence of the truth itself, this is all we plead for, then we are again agreed.

" As often as the apostles speak of their interest in " Christ, and life eternal, or use any language to the " effect, we shall find that they either speak of them- " selves separately, or in conjunction with those on " who are possessed of the same unfeigned faith and " love with them." *Ibid.*

That the apostles wrote their epistles to professed believers, may be very readily admitted. As on the other hand, that the apostles did not live by Christ alone, under the notion and view of themselves as guilty sinners, but only through a medium or discovery of their own faith, love, &c. will be very difficult to be proved, however confidently asserted.

" *Hereby we*, who love the brethren, *perceive the love* " *of God, because he laid down his life for us.* We, who " are conscious of the effects, and enjoy the fruits of his " atonement, know that God first loved us, and had " peculiar regard to us in providing the atonement. p. 428.

The effects and fruits of the atonement, are sinners *peace with God*; their *access to the holiest of all* thereby; it is allowed that we enjoy and are conscious of these, we are again agreed. But if *Palæmon* means only being conscious of " working in the way of painful desire and " fear, till we are crowned with enjoyment," there cannot be a plainer deviation from the intent of the apostle. The apostle says, Hereby perceive we the love of God, *because he laid down his life for us.* *Palæmon* says, Hereby perceive we the love of God, because we are conscious of the effects, and enjoy the fruits of the atonement. The apostles lead us to think he laid down his life for us who were justly doomed to eternal death. *Palæmon* leads us to think he laid down his life for us, who can say, God, I thank thee, I am not as other men; " *who can find some reason about themselves* " *why all the great things spoken and done by Jesus, should* " *bear its peculiar direction towards them.*"

Besides, how does it appear we love the brethren when those we call so, are seeking the reason of their hope, certainty, and assurance of eternal life, wholly in their own love and obedience? consequently are not in this respect the *despised few*, but of the same mind and judgment with every natural man.

" He who perceiving the divine love to sinners of all " sorts without distinction, manifested in the atone- " ment, is thereby led to love the atonement, and the " divine character appearing there; and so to enjoy " the promised comfort resulting thence to the obedi- " ent." p. 428.

If the promised comfort is suspended for want of obedience, or depends on obedience as its condition, the divine love is far from being manifested to sinners of all sorts without distinction.

" And thus by happily experiencing the truth of " the gospel." *Ibid.*

He does not experience the truth of the gospel, but only the effect of that doctrine that tells him, if he is willing

willing and obedient, he shall eat the good of the land. Whereas, the truth of the gospel, relieving the guilty without condition, animates thereby to all the obedience it calls for.

"So he labours neither first nor last to acquire any "requisite to justification; but all his labour proceeds "on the persuasion that the atonement itself is the sole "and sufficient requisite to justification." *Ibid.*

All his labour proceeds on the persuasion, that however sufficient the atonement may be for the elect, yet he is not allowed to account it of any use to him a sinner, or to trust or depend upon it, but to be at an entire uncertainty about it, until he discovers his works of obedience to such a degree, as to conceive himself to be an elect person.

"So he knows, that all his holiness, as well as all "his happiness, comes entirely of that grace which pro-"vided the atonement." p. 439.

Far from it; all his holiness, as well as all his happiness, according to *Palæmon*'s representation, comes entirely of the painful desire and fear, lest he should have no part in that grace which provided the atonement.

"The merchant who, being encouraged by some cre-"dible intelligence Providence has favoured him with, "from an unexpected quarter, sets out at all hazards "on some new branch of traffic, will be greatly anima-"ted to proceed, when he finds his labours crowned "with success. *Ibid.*

But our obtaining salvation is not like a trading merchant setting out at all hazards on a new branch of traffic; this is salvation by works indeed! *Matth.* xiii. 45. describes the merchant as finding one pearl of great price, which puts an end to all future merchandizing.

"He who so knows the bare report thereof, as to "love it, and to run all risks upon it, shall in no wise "lose his reward." *Ibid.*

True, but *Palæmon*'s Christian rather runs all risks in order to know his part in the atonement, than on the account of the bare report of salvation to the guilty.

"The passages in the dialogues which appear to me "to deserve the greatest censure, are those two, which "in a very confident manner deny; the one, the com-"fort attending the simple report of the gospel; and "the other, the additional comfort attending the self-"denied obedience to it." *Ibid.*

These passages have been considered, and it appears that neither are denied, but confirmed by *Aspasio*'s doctrine. We proceed on the report in appropriation, so it is the very basis of our comfort. We are confirmed by the effect of the enjoyment, that our enjoyment, or the foundation of it, is not a fancy.

"And all this is done, in order to rest, I cannot say "our comfort but a good opinion of our state, on what "is neither faith nor obedience." *Ibid.*

Not so, but to rest our souls on Christ alone, and neither on our faith, obedience, nor good opinion of our state.

"For, according to the popular doctrine, men living "for a course of years together in unbelief, consequent-"ly neither loving the gospel nor enjoying the com-"fort of it, are allowed to consider themselves all the "while as regenerate, provided they have once in their "lifetime exerted a certain act." p. 430.

It may be so according to the *popular* doctrine; but according to the *unpopular doctrine*, which *Palæmon* excepts against, we depend upon no acts but the perfect obedience of Christ.

"I shall now take some notice of a treatise highly "esteemed by the votaries of the popular doctrine: I "mean, *The gospel-mystery of sanctification.*" Ibid.

This book was so far from being highly esteemed by the votaries of the popular doctrine in *England*, it was hardly known till *Aspasio* recommended it, and since that disapproved of by many devout people: Because, 1. It proves that the most earnest desires and endeavours after obedience to the law, may be in the natural state of man. 2. That the new life, new state, or new creation, is inseparably in Christ; so that we have no such privilege, but in enjoying Christ himself through the report of the gospel. 3. That there is no furniture for the obedience of love, but in partaking of this reconciliation, or new state in Christ. 4. That no conditions or performances are to be placed between the sinner and the Saviour, but the first step of practical religion is to trust on Christ alone, as given to us for the sure enjoyment of himself and his salvation.

"This author supposes his unconverted reader, when "beginning to be concerned about religion, to propose "for this end such an obedience to the divine law, as "may be acceptable to God."

He rightly supposes, that men who are yet in their natural state, may attain with great zeal to great heights of legal obedience, and, as *Paul* and others, be very earnest after it, counting it their truest gain; and like *Paul*, at the same time, totally unacquainted with, yea enemies unto real Christianity, and the obedience of love to the truth, and to God manifested thereby.

"According to this author, then, Christ is not the "end of the law for righteousness, but the best means "one can make use of for enabling him to perform "that righteousness which is the end of the law." *Ibid.*

He (as the apostle does) directs unto that love which is the fulfilling of the law, by the enjoyment of that righteousness which is the end of it, by enjoying that new state of peace and reconciliation with God which is inseparably in Christ; or, in fact, his view is, to recommend the gospel of our Lord Jesus, as a principle of obedience, in opposition to that preliminary grace, which, as *Palæmon* well says, p. 445. "*however much* "*it has been christianized, is at bottom the same thing with* "*that divine* AFFLATUS, *influence, or energy, by which* "*it was supposed philosophers and heroes of old became good* "*and great men.*"

"Accordingly the well-disposed reader is led for-"ward to his desired end, in consequence of the same "good dispositions that led him to use the means." p. 431.

Not so, however fair the directions may seem to promise at first to him that is naturally desirous to keep the law that he may live; yet no man is made a disciple to these directions, but by being converted from this false hope, to the hope of the gospel. No man is disposed to use the means of reconciliation with God by Christ alone as a principle of obedience; but he that is converted from the false hope of obtaining life by any obedience he can render, to live alone by what Christ hath already done, as the spring of his hope, and the source of his future obedience.

"But why all this round-about course? Why should "we seek to repress any man's impetuosity to fulfil the "law? Why should we retard his course, by entang-"ling him in a labyrinth about the use of means?" *Ibid.*

Men, naturally desirous to keep the law, that they may live, may, and do, as Mr *Marshall* observes, "*rush* "*blindly upon immediate practice, making more haste than* "*good speed, crying, with* Israel *of old, All that the* "*Lord saith we will do. At the same time there is no* "*such heart in them.*" But through a natural propensity to those things which are contrary to the divine law, they continually fail in the obedience they have so strongly purposed. "*And some of these, when* "*they have mis-spent many years in striving against the* "*stream of their lusts, without any success, do at last fall* "*miserably into despair, and turn to wallow in the mire* "*of their lusts, or are fearfully swallowed up with hor-*

" *ror of conſcience.*" As all their religion, or impetuoſity to fulfil the law, is founded on a miſerable miſtaken hope, to live by their own obedience; ſo Mr *Marſhall*'s is to throw down that *falſe hope*, by proving that there can be no obedience acceptable to God, till we are firſt made *accepted in the Beloved*; or, in other words, till we firſt live by Chriſt's obedience alone, and are influenced thereby. His hope to live by his own obedience is criminal; it is therefore no matter how ſoon we repreſs his impetuoſity, and retard his courſe; and when he underſtands his reconciliation with God by Chriſt alone, to be the principle, or means of goſpel obedience, he will not be entangled in a labyrinth, but made free by the Son of God.

" As for the goſpel, it was only intended to relieve " thoſe ill-diſpoſed people who deſpair of ever doing " any thing to render them acceptable to God, by any " aſſiſtance whatſoever." *Ibid.*

And Mr *Marſhall*'s deſign is to ſhew, that thoſe *well-diſpoſed* people who hope to live by their own obedience, are, in fact, at the ſame time, thoſe *ill-diſpoſed* people, who will never be really obedient till they deſpair of ever doing any thing to render them acceptable to God, by any aſſiſtance whatſoever; and, in that deſpair of themſelves, live alone by what Chriſt has already done.

" It (the goſpel) was never intended to be an auxi- " liary to thoſe good people who are deſirous to give " acceptable obedience to the divine law." p. 431.

But it was intended to remove their miſtake, that they may be obedient from a more divine principle; that is, reconciliation with God by Chriſt alone. And this, it is evident, is the main deſign of Mr *Marſhall*.

" All ſuch (who are deſirous to give acceptable obe- " dience to the divine law) whereſoever they are, ſhall " undoubtedly be happy, without having any occaſion " to trouble their heads about the goſpel." p. 431. 432.

All ſuch who are of this character uniformly, and without contradiction. But it muſt be allowed, that there are many, even every natural man has a propenſity to live by his own obedience, or to do, that he may live. At the ſame time, he is deſirous of thoſe things which are contrary to that obedience, whereby he forfeits the character, and becomes guilty before God.

" Let us now obſerve the uſe of means to which our " author directs, *direct.* 11. p. 208. Endeavour *dili- " gently* to perform the great work of *believing* on Chriſt." p. 432.

That is, in Mr *Marſhall*'s ſenſe, endeavour diligently to live by Chriſt alone, to be ſatisfied with him, to aſſure your ſoul of ſalvation by him, by what he has done and ſuffered; that you may, in this way, have a perſonal conſcious enjoyment of him and his fulneſs, in which fulneſs we enjoy reconciliation with God, and every bleſſing tending to the obedience of love. Was *Palæmon* to direct to perſonal conſcious enjoyment of Chriſt, he would tell us about working diligently, working in the way of painful deſire and fear, till we were crowned with enjoyment, in a conviction that we were diſtinguiſhed from others, by having faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience. Where lies the difference between the two, but that the latter ſays, Do that you may live; that you may be crowned with enjoyment? the other ſays, Live by Chriſt, that you may do? Enjoy as ſinners, that you may live as ſaints.

" It is neceſſary that we ſhould endeavour it, (*i. e.* " to believe on Chriſt), and that before we can find the " Spirit of God working faith effectually in us, or giv- " ing ſtrength to believe." *Ibid.*

Mr *Marſhall* here conſiders faith as a duty required by the law, which *Palæmon* alſo aſſerts, p. 354. At the ſame time, he ſo explains himſelf, as it is evident faith neither juſtifies nor ſanctifies as a duty; but by Chriſt alone believed on. And it is alſo evident, he means not the divine paſſive conviction, but an obedience to the apoſtolic exhortation; a " truſting on a " Saviour as diſcovered by a teſtimony, which (as he " ſays) is properly *believing on him.*"

He oppoſes at the ſame time, the popular notion, that we muſt wait for God to give us ſomething called faith, before we are to attempt to believe, or live by his righteouſneſs; whereas, in whomſoever faith is wrought, they immediately live by Chriſt alone; they wait for nothing, they ſee nothing to be waited for, but they ſee Chriſt's ſufficient work, and the grant of it to the guilty, a ſufficient ground for immediate truſt and confidence.

" Only (ſays Mr *Marſhall*) I ſhall prove, that we are " bound, by the command of God, thus to aſſure our- " ſelves; and the ſcripture doth ſufficiently warrant us, " that we ſhall not deceive ourſelves in believing a lie, " but according to our faith ſo ſhall it be to us, *Matth.* " ix. 29.—Here (ſays *Palæmon*) is the great whirlpool of " the popular doctrine." p. 433.

A very great miſtake to call this the popular doctrine; whereas Mr *W——d*, Mr *W——y*, and numbers more, ſuch as have been named, are full as great adverſaries to it as himſelf. Nor is any point more univerſally oppoſed, than that of aſſuring ourſelves of ſalvation, only from the grant of a ſufficient righteouſneſs in Jeſus Chriſt to the guilty.

" When we have thus, according to our author, " wrought ourſelves into a new ſtate." *Ibid.*

This repreſentation is not juſt; would it be proper, when a man receives a preſent, or gift, to ſay that he works himſelf into it? It is true, he may meet with ſome oppoſition in the enjoyment of that which is freely given him. And in this caſe, the ſcripture prevents *Palæmon*'s reflection, by exhorting us to work out our own ſalvation, *&c.*

" According to him, there is no practice of holineſs, " but what proceeds from the perſuaſion of our ſtate " being changed." *Ibid.*

Rather from our perſuaſion of our reconciliation with God by Chriſt alone ariſing not from the conceit of our being better than others, or having done ſomething towards it; but as given freely in Chriſt Jeſus.

" This perſuaſion (of his ſtate being changed) is his " faith." *Ibid.*

No ſuch matter. Mr *Marſhall*'s doctrine, or the truth believed in, his faith is, that there is a new ſtate prepared in Chriſt for the guilty which we are divinely authoriſed to enter into and enjoy without any works at all. As, on the other hand, *Palæmon*'s doctrine leaves him working in painful deſire and fear, till he be crowned with enjoyment.

" If we hearken to this author, we muſt ſet out in " the ſervice of God, from the confidence of our being " in a better ſtate than other men." p. 434.

Is it not highly conſiſtent that we ſhould ſet out in the ſervice of God, with the furniture God hath provided us? If God hath given to us eternal life in his Son, is not our firſt obedience to receive and enjoy the eternal life that is in him? This does not conſiſt in any perſuaſion that we are better than other people, that there is any new ſtate in Chriſt for us rather than for others; but it conſiſts purely in what is inſeparably in Chriſt Jeſus, given to us in him, and only to be enjoyed in enjoying him. So that the whole is, we muſt ſet out as followers of our Lord, from the confidence of the eternal life given freely to us in Chriſt Jeſus.

" He makes no account of the grand things teſtified " of Chriſt, as any way ſufficient to lead us to holineſs, " without a good opinion of our own ſtate." p. 435.

Palæmon ſhould ſay, if he would give a juſt repreſentation

sentation, that Mr *Marshall* makes no account of all that holiness which is not influenced by the reception and enjoyment of that new state, and eternal life, which is freely given to the guilty, in Christ Jesus. Mean while, the opinion we have of our own state, is, that it is stark naught, and cannot be mended. This is far from having a good opinion of it.

"Thus the ancient gospel, which, from the beginning, turned many from idols to serve the living God, is now set aside." *Ibid.*

The ancient gospel held forth the new state, and eternal life given in Christ, which we plead for.

I have nothing to say in defence of myself from the charge in p. 448. of patronizing my creed by the names of fallible men. I acknowledge my fault. If I have not the doctrine of the apostles, what signifies having all the world on my side? and if I have them to keep me in countenance, it ought to be little concern, though the whole world are against me *.

"The use these people (*i. e.* the people in fellowship with *W. C.*) have for Christ is, to give them strength to do something toward their justification." p. 449.

Our appropriation stands in no opposition to free justification by Christ alone, but rather to *Palæmon*'s coming to the knowledge of it only, in a way of painful desire and fear.

But *Palæmon*'s main objection to this reception, or appropriation of Christ, and eternal life in him, is, that "*this is doing something toward our justification.*"——To what has been already said, I would only add the following illustration. A man has a large estate fallen to him by inheritance or legacy; he is now informed that he need do nothing toward his maintenance at all, for he has a sufficiency to live upon, and that would dishonour his benefactor, and be a disgrace to him to think of it. The man believes this, and accordingly sits down to a plentiful table provided, under a notion that all things being ready he has nothing to do but to EAT or ENJOY. Upon this, a virtuoso in criticism, like *Palæmon*, informs him, that to eat, is to do something towards his maintenance, that the victuals, and in short every thing, is his, without any act of his at all. So that if he imagines himself under any necessity of eating, he dishonours his benefactor, and denies the estate his benefactor has given to him, as though it was not in itself enough to maintain him without doing something towards his own maintenance. What answer would this person in all likelihood return? Very probably he would say, You speak extremely absurd; for if I eat not, all my right and title to it will be of no service to me; I starve, I die in the midst of plenty; besides, I love to eat *. The case is as parallel as possible; our Lord says, he is *the bread of God come down from heaven to give life to the world; and that except we eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, we have no life in us.*

This objection of *Palæmon*'s is such a fine-spun cobweb of criticism, that he seems to have catched himself in it while he was endeavouring to entangle us. "Is "it possible (says he) after what we have seen, for any "one to maintain, that these people *look for* acceptance "with God only through the sacrifice of Christ, once "offered for the sins of many?" p. 405.

Now to *look for* acceptance with God only through the sacrifice of Christ, is the very thing we plead for, and he has been opposing. His argument has been, "The "sacrifice of Christ is sufficient of itself. To appro-"priate, or to *look for* acceptance with God on that ac-"count, is evidently to do something towards our justi-"fication; this is to set up in its stead another sacrifice "of their own preparing and offering.

"He who maintains that we are justified only by "faith, and at the same time affirms with *Aspasio*, that "faith is a work exerted by the human mind," "un-"doubtedly maintains, if he has any meaning to his "words, that we are justified by a work exerted by the "human mind." p. 483.

May not *Aspasio* as readily retort, He who maintains that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirms with *Palæmon*, "That faith is a principle of life "and action," undoubtedly maintains, if he has any meaning to his words, that we are justified by a principle of life and action? The answer that retrieves him out of this difficulty, will also serve us. See remark on p. 406. p. 395.

I have now considered all that I apprehend we are concerned with in Mr *Sandeman*'s performance, not with a design to manifest his blemishes, or to defend *Aspasio*'s; but to preserve the important truth he contended for, from the objections arising through evident mistakes and misrepresentations. Not pleading for a *manner* of believing either *active* or *passive*; but pleading against the private interpretation of those divine declarations, which are the sinner's only ground of immediate trust and confidence in that sufficient righteousness. It is no pleasure to me to find a people to whom my heart inclines on account of their appearing attachment to this sufficiency of Christ, at the same time so inclined to explain away those divine declarations, and tell us, that "God may, if he pleases, have mercy upon me," is all the conclusion that the guilty and destitute can draw from what God has revealed. Now, in this case, are we not to take heed, lest under the notion of purer faith *we depart from trusting in the living God* (to a labouring in painful desire and fear) *through an evil heart of unbelief?* And as there is a natural propensity in man to self-

* Methinks this author discovers too much complaisance, when he compliments Mr Sandeman so far as to make an apology for his conduct in professing an agreement, in some fundamental articles of the Christian faith, with the late Mess. Erskines and the Seceding ministers in Scotland, according to scripture, and the judgment of all sound Protestant divines, and in quoting a few passages from a sermon of Mr Ebenezer Erskine; as if he had thus made Mess. Erskines, and the Seceding ministers, with other Protestant divines, the vouchers of his creed, and given a manifest proof of his yielding implicit faith to their dictates and sentiments. Is it culpable, then, to yield obedience to our Lord's command in going forth by the footsteps of the flock, Cant. i. 8. or *to remember them who have spoken to* us *the word of God, whose faith* we are exhorted to *follow, considering the end of their conversation?* Heb. xiii. 7.—— Must an endeavour to keep the unity of the faith in the bond of peace be reputed a fault? and a sovereign contempt of the doctrine and principles of Christian teachers uninspired, however consonant to the word of God these may be found, accounted essential to the character of a true believer and apostolic Christian? What pity is it, that men should suffer themselves to be bantered, by the scornful and senseless reflections of one of the most trifling, though one of the most arrogant writers that this, or perhaps any age, has produced? *Wilson's Palæmon's creed reviewed and examined*; pref. p. lii. note.

* If any object, that this representation relates only to personal enjoyment, and manifestation to our own consciences, it may be granted; and it may be also affirmed, that the whole of God's revelation bears this design. The scriptures were never designed to inform God about our justification, but to inform us. And whenever any, who dislike the scripture-account, endeavour to scheme out another, what is their design, to inform God, or to inform man? If one tells me, I am justified (according to his scheme) whether I am persuaded of it or no, is not his design at the same time very evidently to persuade me that I am justified, or to manifest my justification according to his scheme? Shall I not rather let God be my instructor? And when I ask the question, *Wherewith shall God be pleased?* he answers, *I am pleased in my Son.*—— When I inquire further, How I shall know my own interest herein? he tells me, *he gives me eternal life in him*; and so makes me welcome to call it my own without more. Is it not the height of disaffection to this, to say, I will call it my own upon some other account; but not because he either bids me, or gives it to me?

self-dependence, is there not a proportionate averseness in him to trust on the bare declarations of the divine word? And may not this be the source of those Pharisaic attempts Mr *Sandeman* has so justly detected, of the objections that stand between us; and also of those laboured inventions of others, to make out that men are saved by Christ in a way of natural necessary connection; hereby, at once, setting aside the divine sovereignty, declarations, promises or trust therein. I shall only add, that if what we have pleaded for is (without misrepresentation) proved a contradiction to the fulfulness of the finished work of Christ, then, and not till then, I shall see a necessity for understanding the scriptures on this subject in another light than I do at present, and shall make my public acknowledgment accordingly.

Directions to the readers of THERON and ASPASIO, with respect to the amendments which were intended by Mr *Hervey*, had he survived another edition. ——Taken from Mr CUDWORTH's Defence.

PAGE 246. c. 2. l. 8. read, "This, he says, as it was wrought in the name and stead of the guilty, enemies and rebellious, was wrought out in my name, and in my stead; that is, in a name and character that undoubtedly belongs to me, and, according to the declarations of divine grace, sufficiently authorises me to draw near to God thereby."

P. 324. c. 1. l. 41. "Not one among all the numberless productions which tread the ground, or stand rooted to the soil, wants any convenience that is proper for its respective state. And the same heavenly FATHER has provided for the most guilty, the righteousness which is absolutely necessary to his present comfort, and his final happiness."

Ib. c. 2. l. 5. "Consider those stately *poppies*, &c. observe the *young ravens*, &c. He accommodates the former, though incapable of asking; he attends to the latter, though insensible of their benefactor. He also *regards* our pressing wants; he has also superseded our earnest petitions by such free and unmerited gifts, as it is both his delight and his honour to bestow."

Ib. c. 2. l. 60. "So that nothing is required, in order to our participation of CHRIST and his benefits.—We receive them as the freest gifts; as matter of mere grace."

P. 325. c. 1. l. 37. "The man without the wedding garment, &c. Your former mistakes, and present objections, tend to place you in the state of this unhappy creature. The returning prodigal came with no recommendation either of dress, of person, or of character. None but his nakedness and misery; his acknowledgment was vileness, which had every aggravating, not one extenuating circumstance."

Ib. c. 2. l. 19. "If there be any qualification, I think, it is our extreme indigence; and this, I presume, you are not without."

Ib. c. 2. l. 38. "Sanctification, heavenly-mindedness, and a victory over our lusts, are not the qualities he *requires*, but the blessings which he *confers*."

P. 326. c. 1. l. 59. "The greatest *unworthiness* is no objection in Christ's account; it is as much disavowed by the gospel, as *equivocal* generation is exploded by the discoveries of our improved philosophy."

P. 327. c. 1. l. 24. "From the King, *whose name is the* LORD *of hosts*, let us expect (if he vouchsafes to shew us any mercy) not barely what corresponds with our low models of generosity,—much less what we suppose proportioned to our fancied deserts,—but what is suitable to the unknown magnificence of his name, and the unbounded benevolence of his heart. Then we shall no longer be afraid, assuredly to trust to the gracious declaration, *that* CHRIST JESUS *is made of* GOD *to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*; That HE hath *given* himself for us, hath *given* himself to us, with all the blessings of his purchase, of his SPIRIT, and of eternal life."

Ib. c. 2. l. 12. "That we all deserve this misery, is beyond dispute. We are also told, that the LORD JESUS has satisfied divine justice."

Ib. c. 2. l. 38. "You are *still corrupt*; does this exclude you from being the *very person* for whom the Saviour's righteousness is intended, and to whom it is promised?"

P. 328. c. 1. l. 3. "And sure it cannot be a fanciful persuasion of our health which renders us proper objects of his recovering grace."

Ib. c. 2. l. 3. "I behold it (*Theron*'s title) perfectly clear, not because you long or pray for it; but because the all-sufficient righteousness is granted to you *a sinner* in the record of the gospel."

Ib. c. 2. l. 22. "*If any man*, however unworthy his person, or obnoxious his character, *thirst*; thirst for something to make him happy; let him not seek to that which satisfieth not, but *let him come to me* the fountain of living waters, *and drink* his fill.

"That clergyman," &c.

Ib. c. 2. l. 68. "They are to be enjoyed by *every one*. No exception is made."

P. 329. c. 1. l. 18. "To us, says the prophet, a child is born.

Ib. c. 1. l. 43. "Since the LORD JEHOVAH *has given* us his SON and all his unutterable merits; and also seals this grant unto us in every sacramental ordinance; why should we not confide in it, as firmer than the firmest deed? and far more inviolable, than any royal patent?

"*Ther.* My servant never," &c.

P. 332. c. 1. l. 59. "It seems to be quite out of my reach."

Asp. "That is, because you still imagine something is to be done by you, to entitle to this immaculate and perfect righteousness; you give no credit to those declarations of heaven, which brings it near to your view and home to your condition. Remember rather the words of our LORD, *Come unto me, all ye that are weary, and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*"

Ib. c. 2. l. 14. "Nothing short of these mercies can afford any satisfaction to the guilty conscience, or true satisfaction to the restless soul."

"Say not then, my dear friend, that Christ, and the blessings of his purchase, *are beyond* your reach. They are now, even now, at your door."

Ib. c. 2. l. 70. "If you heard his voice, you would believe on him agreeable thereto. You then open the door, and *he sups with you*, makes his abode with you, manifests his salvation, and communicates his blessings. If you believed his promising word, you would no longer hesitate to believe on him accordingly. You then *sup with him*. This will be refreshing to your distressed soul, as the most sumptuous banquet to the famished stomach and craving appetite. *Expunge all from here to the words*,

Ther. "This I believe—That I am a lost sinner;" &c.

P. 333. c. 1. l. 31. "He that believeth on the Son hath a chimerical? far from it; a real substantial happiness; even everlasting life.

"Can you doubt of his willingness to save the chief of sinners? or his sincerity in his declarations? Then go to mount *Calvary*."

Ib. c. 1. l. 62. "What a stranger was I then, to the blindness of my understanding, and the hardness of my heart; to my bondage under unbelief, and my natural averseness to the way of salvation by grace through faith!"

Asp.

Asp. "Are you ſure this is not now your caſe? This ſentiment, though ever ſo juſt, will not palliate your preſent infidelity. Since the Great Jehovah has declared the grant of his Son to you a ſinner; ſince he has thus given you eternal life in him; ſince he has warranted your immediate reception and enjoyment by his commands, invitations, and promiſes, you make him a liar in all; you reject his word as not to be depended on, every moment you thus unbelievingly heſitate." *Expunge from here to*

Ther. "But is not faith the work of God's Spirit? how, or in what manner, &c."

P. 333. c. 2. l. 40. "I very much queſtion, whether I ſhall ever be able to attain it."

Aſp. "The true belief, *Theron*, has no exiſtence without its proper object Chriſt, and is never to be conſidered in the light you ſpeak of, that is, as a moſt refined and exalted virtue. When, upon the divine grant in the word, you behold Chriſt, as your given righteouſneſs and ſtrength, then you truly believe; you believe God's truth which can never deceive, you receive the gift which enriches you with grace and glory. But permit me to aſk," &c.

P. 338. c. 2. l. 56. "If you rely on the all-ſufficiency of his gracious declarations as the foundation of immediate truſt or confidence, as well as the all-ſufficiency of his power."

l. 62. "Let the moſt wretched ſinner, and moſt afflicted ſoul, *truſt in the name of the Lord.*"

In note, p. 341. l. 5. "We only affirm, than an appropriating perſuaſion of ſalvation by Chriſt alone, is that confidence which properly anſwers to the divine report, and grant of a Saviour to be believed on for everlaſting life."

P. 343. c. 1. l. 50. *Aſp.* "The *If* is what I greatly queſtion; but of this I am certain, that you are ſtill inclined to ſpare *Agag*."

Ib. c. 2. l. 11. "You aſk, whether the ſtate of theſe perſons is *ſafe* and their faith *real?* I anſwer, What evidence is there of their *ſafety* or their *faith*, while Chriſt the only ſecurity is neglected, and the free grant of him to ſinners thus diſbelieved? Beſides, why ſhould, &c."

Ib. c. 2. l. 49. "GOD has freely loved me ſo as to give his Son unto me; CHRIST has graciouſly died for me, to take ſhare in his death as my own; and the HOLY GHOST ſanctifies me in the belief and appropriating confidence, ariſing from theſe precious truths."

P. 344. c. 1. l. 49. "When the divine SPIRIT, ſpeaking in the gracious declarations of the goſpel, manifeſts the grant of Chriſt to me a ſinner, then am I enabled to receive and appropriate his death as the deſert of my ſins, and his obedience as the matter of my juſtification."

Ib. c. 2. l. 3. "May I firmly believe on Chriſt for everlaſting life? may I firmly believe, that in this infinitely-meritorious Redeemer I have granted unto me pardon and acceptance, &c."

P. 345. c. 1. l. 57. "I do more than pardon my dear *Theron*. I feel for him, and I ſympathize with him; not becauſe he has not ſufficient evidence from God's word, for truſting in Chriſt for everlaſting life; but becauſe I have alſo felt that perverſe tendency in my own heart, to miſtruſt the infallible word of my God, as though he was leſs to be depended on than fallible man."

In like manner, p. 305. 316. 318. were to be corrected, and all other paſſages in his writings which might be underſtood, as making thirſtings, awakenings, earneſt prayers, ſorrows, tears, good deſires, or ſenſe of unworthineſs, as the encouragement for confidence. This Mr *Hervey* acknowledged was inconſiſtent with his main deſign, which was to come to God by him only, who was able to ſave to the uttermoſt; but he had been drawn ſometimes into this way of expreſſing himſelf by too great a regard for the current cuſtoms; and not conſidering, that till the divine relieving truth appear in view, the wiſhes and deſires of the diſtreſſed are as much pointed againſt the ſalvation of the guilty, as the careleſſneſs of the profane. He was ſenſible, that "the goſpel-hiſtory gives us no inſtance of an unbeliever diligent to obtain faith;" and therefore intended to expunge every thing that tended to encourage ſuch miſtakes.

When he took notice of "a ſpeculative aſſent to all the principles of religion," he intended by it ſuch agreeing with the current opinions as will ſtand conſiſtent with ſentiments quite ſubverſive of the ſaving truth. Not ſuch a knowledge of the truth as the apoſtle ſpeaks of, when he ſays, *Ye know the truth, and that no lie is of the truth.* He well knew, that there was no man, but he that is taught of God, could be ſatisfied with the apoſtolic account of ſalvation; and would have informed *Theron*, had he had another opportunity, "that if he attempted to do any thing eaſy, or difficult, under the notion of an act of believing, or any other act, in order to his acceptance with God, he only thereby heaped up more wrath againſt himſelf."

He was alſo ſenſible, that a man may be very uſeful and amiable amongſt men, and at the ſame time an utter enemy to the grace of God's kingdom:—That he has been too forward in commendations of thoſe, who were no friends to apoſtolic Chriſtianity. His deſign was only to commend what was amiable in every one, paſſing over their blemiſhes.——In this deſign he acknowledged, he was carried to an extreme. When he ſays of *Eraſmus* and *Locke*, that they ſat at the feet of Jeſus, he only meant to expreſs in an elegant way, that they betook themſelves to the reading of the ſcriptures, and not to vindicate their notions.

And he counted it an obſervation well worthy regard, that "it may be maintained by ſome, that converſion is carried on by grace aſſiſting nature; and by others, that this matter is wholly conducted by irreſiſtible grace; and yet both ſides may be equally diſaffected to that doctrine, which maintains the work finiſhed by Chriſt on the croſs, to be the only requiſite to juſtification.—And that while many Chriſtian teachers maintain, that no man can be eminently virtuous without divine energy, they ſay no more than Heathen philoſophers have ſaid before them."

Theſe remarks and obſervations may be ſufficient to direct the intelligent reader of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, to avoid needleſs objections, and alſo to improve that performance more agreeably to the ſcriptures and the author's own mind.

It appears by the Letters *prefixed to this* Defence, *that an improvement of Mr* Marſhall's *book was intended, to obviate as much as poſſible all objections; which, through the preſſing importunities of the printer, and Mr* Hervey's *hopes of accompliſhing a fourth volume of* THERON and ASPASIO, *was not executed. The following is a plan of ſuch improvement, where, by changing the fourteen* directions *into the form of* aſſertions *or* propoſitions, *the ſtrongeſt objections are enervated.*

ASSERTION I.

THAT practice and manner of life, which the ſcripture calls holineſs, righteouſneſs, or godlineſs, obedience, true religion, is not attained by our moſt reſolved endeavours, but is given through the knowledge of him that has called us to glory and virtue.

ASSERT. II.

No man can love God till he knows him, nor till he knows him to be his everlaſting friend. Therefore the ſpring of true holineſs, is a well-grounded perſuaſion of our reconciliation with God, and of our future enjoyment of the everlaſting heavenly happineſs, and of ſufficient ſtrength given in him for all that he calls us unto.

ASSERT. III.

Theſe endowments, ſo neceſſary to the obedience of love, are contained in the fulneſs of Chriſt, and are enjoyed only by union and fellowſhip with him.

ASSERT. IV.

The means or inſtruments whereby the Spirit of God accompliſheth our union with Chriſt, and our fellowſhip with him in all holineſs, are the goſpel, whereby Chriſt entereth into our hearts, begetting us to the faith whereby we actually receive Chriſt himſelf, with all his fulneſs, unto the hope of eternal life by him. And thus, by the influence of the Spirit of truth, we unfeignedly believe the goſpel, and alſo believe on Chriſt, as he is revealed and freely promiſed to us therein, for all his ſalvation.

ASSERT. V.

The practice of true holineſs is not attained by any endeavours of our natural ſtate, but is a bleſſing of that new ſtate given in Jeſus Chriſt, and partook of by union and fellowſhip with Chriſt through faith.

ASSERT. VI.

Thoſe that endeavour to perform ſincere obedience to all the commands of Chriſt, as the condition whereby they are to procure for themſelves a right and title to ſalvation, and a good ground to truſt on him for the ſame, do ſeek their ſalvation by the works of the law, and not by the faith of Chriſt as he is revealed in the goſpel: and they ſhall never be able to perform ſincerely any true holy obedience by all ſuch endeavours.

ASSERT. VII.

We are not to imagine, that our hearts and lives muſt be changed from ſin to holineſs, in any meaſure, before we may ſafely venture to truſt on Chriſt for the ſure enjoyment of himſelf and his ſalvation.

ASSERT. VIII.

True holineſs of heart and life, hath its due order where God hath placed it, that is after, union with Chriſt, juſtification, and the gift of the Holy Ghoſt. It is not therefore to be expected but in that order, as what accompanies ſalvation.

ASSERT. IX.

It is only by the comforts of the goſpel revealing a juſt God and a Saviour, that God works in us to will and to do of his good pleaſure.

ASSERT. X.

The comforts of the goſpel, neceſſary to Chriſtian obedience, contain ſufficient grounds of aſſurance of our ſalvation, not becauſe we believe, but in a way of immediate truſt and confidence. Therefore, inſtead of ſeeking other methods of peace and holineſs, we muſt endeavour to believe or truſt on Chriſt confidently; perſuading and aſſuring ourſelves, according to the divine declarations, that God freely gives to us an intereſt in Chriſt and his ſalvation, according to his gracious promiſe.

ASSERT. XI.

It is therefore belonging to the practical part of the Chriſtian life, to maintain the ſame immediate truſt and confidence in dependence on the divine faithfulneſs, not to ſuffer us to be confounded, that ſo our enjoyment of Chriſt, union and fellowſhip with him, and all holineſs by him, may be continued and encreaſed in us.

ASSERT. XII.

The ſcripture calls upon Chriſtians to walk no longer according to the principles or means of practice that belong unto the natural or original ſtate of man, but only according to that new ſtate given in Chriſt, which we receive by faith, and the principles and means of practice that properly belong thereunto; and to ſtrive to continue and increaſe in ſuch a manner of practice.

ASSERT. XIII.

All ordinances of divine appointment, for the eſtabliſhment and increaſe of our faith and love, are to be conſidered only in this way of believing in Chriſt, and walking in him according to this new ſtate given in him.

ASSERT. XIV.

That we may be confirmed in holineſs only by believing in Chriſt, and walking in him by faith, according to the former aſſertions, we may take encouragement from the great advantages of this way, and excellent properties of it.

A

RECOMMENDATORY LETTER

FROM

Mr HERVEY

TO THE

Publisher of a new Edition of MARSHALL on Sanctification.

SIR,

IT gives me no small pleasure to hear, that you are going to republish Mr MARSHALL's *Gospel-mystery of sanctification* *. The instruction, consolation, and spiritual improvement, which I myself have received from that solid and judicious treatise, excite in me a pleasing hope, that it may be equally instructive and advantageous to others.

The recommendation of it in *Theron and Aspasio*, with which you propose to introduce the new edition, is at your service. To this proposal I consent the more readily, because Mr MARSHALL's book may be looked upon as no improper *supplement* to those dialogues and letters. The author of which intended to have closed his plan with a dissertation on practical holiness, or evangelical obedience. But this design was dropped; partly, on account of his very declining health; partly, because the work swelled, under his hands, far beyond his expectation.

He has been advised, once more, to resume the pen; and treat that grand subject with some degree of copiousness and particularity. If he should be enabled to execute, what he acknowledges to be expedient, the doctrines already discussed, and the privileges already displayed, will furnish the principal materials for his essay. Justification, *free justification*, through the righteousness of JESUS CHRIST, is the sacred fleece from which he would spin his thread, and weave his garment; agreeably to that important text, *Ye are bought with a price*; therefore *glorify* GOD †.—If Providence, in all things wise, and in all things gracious, should see fit to with-hold either time or ability for the accomplishment of my purpose, I do, by these presents, nominate and depute Mr MARSHALL *to supply my lack of service.*

Mr MARSHALL expresses my thoughts; he prosecutes my scheme; and not only pursues the same end, but proceeds in the same way. I shall therefore rejoice in the prospect of having the *Gospel-mystery of sanctification* stand as a fourth volume to *Theron and Aspasio.*——Might I be allowed, without the charge of irreverence, to use the beautiful images of an inspired writer, I could with great satisfaction say, *If* this *be a wall*, that *will build upon it a palace of ivory; if* this *be a door*, that *will inclose with boards of cedar* ‡.

Mr MARSHALL represents *true holiness* as consisting in the love of GOD, and the love of man;—that unforced, unfeigned, and most rational love of GOD, which arises from a discovery of his unspeakable mercy and infinite kindness to us; that cordial, disinterested and universal love of man, which flows from the possession of a satisfactory and delightful portion in the LORD JEHOVAH. These duties, of love to our Creator and our fellow-creatures, are regarded as the sum and substance of the *moral* law; as the root from which all other branches of pure and undefiled religion spring.——Holiness, thus stated, is considered, not as the means, but as a part, a distinguished part of our salvation; or, rather, as the very central point, in which all the means of grace, and all the ordinances of religion, terminate.

Man, in a natural state, is absolutely incapable of practising this holiness, or enjoying this happiness.—If you ask, What is meant by *a natural state*? It is that state, in which we are under the guilt of sin, and the curse of the law; are subject to the power of Satan, and influenced by evil propensities.——From this state none are realeased, but by being united to CHRIST; or, as the apostle speaks, by CHRIST *dwelling in the heart through faith* *.

Faith, according to Mr MARSHALL, is a *real persuasion*, that GOD is pleased to give CHRIST and his salvation; to give him freely without any recommending qualifications, or preparatory conditions; to give him, not to some sinners only, but to *me* a sinner in particular.——It is likewise an *actual receiving* of CHRIST, with all the benefits, privileges, and promises of the gospel; in pursuance of the divine gift, and on no other warrant than the divine grant.——This last office is particularly insisted on, as an *essential* part, or as the *principal* act of faith. To perform which, there is no rational, no possible way; unless, as our author declares, we do, in some measure, persuade and assure ourselves †, that CHRIST and his salvation are ours.

As faith is such a persuasion of the heart, and such a reception of CHRIST, it assures the soul of salvation by *its own* act; antecedent to all reflection on its fruits or effects, on marks or evidences.——It assures the soul of acquittance from guilt, and reconciliation

* Is is said, by the very best judge of propriety in sacred writing, *great is the mystery of godliness*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. This passage, I presume, Mr MARSHALL had in his view, when he pitched upon a title for his book. And this passage will render it superior to all censure; unexceptionably just and proper.

† 1 Cor. vi. 20. ‡ Cant. viii. 9.

* Eph. iii. 17.

† It is not, by this expression, affirmed, or insinuated, that we are able to produce faith in ourselves, by any power of our own. The self-sufficiency the author has professedly and frequently disclaimed; asserting, That "the SPIRIT of GOD habitually dis-"poses and inclines our hearts to a right performance of this most "important act."—This manner of speaking is used, I imagine, for two reasons: To point out the first and chief work, which we are to be doing, incessantly and assiduously, till our LORD come: To remind us, that we must not expect to have faith wrought in us, by some fatality of supernatural operation, without any application or endeavour of our own; but that we must make it our diligent endeavour, and our daily business, to believe in CHRIST. We must *labour to enter into this rest*, and *shew all diligence to the full assurance of hope.*

to

to GOD; of a title to the everlasting inheritance, and of grace sufficient for every case of need.——By the exercise of this faith, and the enjoyment of these blessings, we are *sanctified*; conscience is pacified, and the heart purified; we are delivered from the dominion of sin, disposed to holy tempers, and furnished for an holy practice.

Here, I apprehend, our author will appear singular, this is the place in which he seems to go *quite out of the common road.* The generality of serious people look upon these unspeakable blessings as the reward of holiness; to be received, after we have sincerely practised universal holiness; not as necessary, previously necessary to perform any act of true holiness. This is the stumbling-block, which our legal mind, dim with prejudice, and swollen with pride, will hardly get over.—However, these endowments of our new state are, in our author's opinion, the effectual, and the only effectual expedient, to produce sanctification. They are the very method which the eternal SPIRIT has ordained, for our bringing forth those *fruits of righteousness, which are by JESUS CHRIST unto the glory and praise of* GOD *.——Whereas, if there be any appearances of virtue, or any efforts of obedience, which spring not from these motives and means of practice, Mr MARSHALL treats them as "reprobate silver." He cannot allow them the character of *gospel-holiness*.

This is the plan, and these are the leading sentiments, of the ensuing treatise. To establish or defend them, is not my aim. This is attempted, and, I think, executed, in the work itself. My aim is, only to exhibit the most distinguishing principles, in one short sketch, and clear point of view; that the reader may the more easily remember them, and, by this key, enter the more perfectly into the writer's meaning.——Let him that is *spiritual* † judge; and reject or admit, as each tenet shall appear to correspond or disagree with the infallible word. Only let candour, not rigour, fill the chair; and interpret an unguarded expression, or a seemingly inconsistent-sentence, by the general tenor of the discourse.

We are not to expect much pathos of address, or any delicacy of composition. Here the gospel-diamond is set, not in gold, but in steel; not where it may display the most sprightly beam, or pour a flood of brilliancy; but where it may do the most signal service, and afford a fund of usefulness.——Neither is this book so particularly calculated for careless insensible sinners, as for those who are awakened into a solicitous attention to their everlasting interests; who are earnestly inquiring, with the Philippian jailor, *What shall I do to be saved* *? or passionately crying, in the language of the apostle, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death* †? If there be any such, as no doubt there are many, in the Christian world, I would say, with regard to them, as the *Israelitish* captive said concerning her illustrious but afflicted master, *Would GOD my master were with the prophet that is in Samaria; for he would recover him of his leprosy* ‡. O that such persons were acquainted with the doctrines, and influenced by the directions contained in this treatise! they would, under the divine blessing, recover them from their distress, and restore them to tranquillity; they would *comfort their hearts, and* thereby *establish them in every good word and work* ‖.

But I am going to anticipate what the following extract § speaks. I shall therefore only add my hearty wishes, that you may meet with encouragement and success in the publication of this truly valuable piece. Since there is, in this instance, an evident connection between your private interest and the general good; I think you may promise yourself the approbation and acceptance of the public; as you will assuredly have all the support and assistance that can be given, by,

SIR,

Your humble servant,

Weston-Favell, near Northampton, Nov. 5, 1756.

JAMES HERVEY.

* Phil. i. 11. † 1 Cor. ii. 15.

* Acts xvi. 30. † Rom. vii. 24.

‡ 2 Kings v. 3. ‖ 2 Thess. ii. 17.

§ This extract, or the recommendation given of this excellent book, entitled, *The gospel-mystery of sanctification*, is to be found in our author's works, above, p. 342. c. 1. note.

SERMONS.

THE

TIME OF DANGER,

THE

MEANS OF SAFETY,

AND THE

WAY OF HOLINESS.

BEING THE

SUBSTANCE OF

THREE SERMONS,

Preached on the PUBLIC FAST-DAYS, 1756 and 1757.

PREFACE.

SHOULD any one ask, "Why does this author "publish his sermons, when the fast is *gone* and "*forgotten?*"—For this very reason he publishes, that the fast, though gone, may not be forgotten; that we may remember the sins we confessed, and the miseries we deprecated; remember the vows of GOD, which are still upon us; and the snares of death, which are still around us.

Should it be further asked, "Why does he obtrude "himself on the public, when so many *eminent* writers "have already made their appearance? Does he bring "with him any distinguished excellency of composi-"tion, any superior force of argument, or uncommon "delicacy of sentiment?" No such thing. He pretends to nothing refined or extraordinary: he affects neither brilliant thought, nor polished style: equally remote from nice criticism and profound learning, his discourses are studiously *plain*, and brought down to the level of the meanest capacity.

"What then is his motive?"—This is the very truth. In several of the sermons published on this occasion, the *one thing needful* seems to be overlooked. CHRIST and his free grace, CHRIST and his great salvation, are either totally omitted, or but slightly touched.—Where these are but slightly touched, the door of hope and the city of refuge are shewn, as it were, through a mist, dimly and indistinctly. We have no more than a transient glimpse of the desirable objects; and only so much light as is sufficient to bewilder, rather than direct.—Where they are totally omitted, the door of hope si barred, and the city of refuge withdrawn from our view. In this case, being without CHRIST, we are without consolation; and may justly complain, with the mourning prophet, *the Comforter, that should relieve our souls, is far off.*

Through the following discourses, a constant regard is paid to *the redemption which is in CHRIST JESUS*; to his all-atoning blood, and his everlasting righteousness; which are the grand means, both of comforting our hearts, and sanctifying our nature.—Indeed the principal aim of the whole is, to display the unsearchable riches of *CHRIST*, the matchless efficacy of his death, and that perfect freeness with which all his invaluable benefits are bestowed.——*To those who believe he is precious;* and to those who are convinced of sin, these salutary truths will be their own best recommendation. Such readers will excuse a multitude of blemishes, provided they find *JESUS* who was crucified; *JESUS*, who is the desire of all nations; *JESUS*, than whom no other foundation can

be laid, either for preſent holineſs, or future happineſs.

As theſe ſermons were not preached to gratify a *curious* taſte, neither are they publiſhed with any fond proſpect of reforming a *ſinful* nation. Sincerely as the author loves his country, and ardently as he deſires the ſalvation of his countrymen, he is not ſo vainly ſanguine in his expectations.—But this he will venture to aſſert, that, if ever a reformation is produced, it muſt, under the influences of the eternal SPIRIT, be produced by the doctrines of free grace, and juſtification through a REDEEMER's righteouſneſs. Till theſe doctrines are generally inculcated, the moſt eloquent harangues from the pulpit, or the moſt correct diſſertations from the preſs, will be no better than a pointleſs arrow, and a broken bow.

This alſo he will venture to hope, that the diſcourſes may here and there meet with ſome poor ſinner, who is ſmitten with a ſenſe of guilt, and alarmed with apprehenſions of danger; who deſires nothing ſo much as to find a reſting-place, where he may be free from the terrors of conſcience, and ſafe in the day of trouble. This freedom and this ſafety are to be found *only*, are to be found *infallibly*, in the bleſſed JESUS and the blood of ſprinkling. If ſuch a reader, by the following pages, is conducted to this divine ſanctuary, the writer is ſatisfied, is rewarded, enjoys the utmoſt of his wiſhes.

Then, inſtead of ſoliciting the voice of fame, or coveting the wreath of honour; inſtead of giving himſelf any concern about the *officious* critic; he will thankfully adore that almighty hand which *confirmeth the word of his ſervant, and performeth the counſel of his meſſengers* *. For, oh! how inſipid is the praiſe of men, compared with the exalted pleaſure of glorifying GOD, and edifying an immortal ſoul! How harmleſs is defamation from a fellow creature, when our great CREATOR ſmiles; and is pleaſed by *weak things, and by things that are deſpiſed* †, to accompliſh the purpoſes of his infinite grace and everlaſting love!

* Iſ. xliv. 26. † 1 Cor. i. 27. 28.

SERMON I.

The Time of Danger.

HEB. xi. 28.

Through faith he kept the paſſover, and the ſprinkling of blood, leſt he that deſtroyed the firſt-born ſhould touch them.

IF we conſult the hiſtory to which theſe words refer, we ſhall find the Iſraelites in a ſtate of great affliction. The Egyptians oppreſſed them; very heavily laid the yoke upon them; and made their *lives bitter with hard bondage*.—The miſery of his people GOD pities, and is reſolved to redreſs. Accordingly he ſends Moſes, in the quality of his ambaſſador, to demand their releaſe. The king of Egypt moſt inſolently replies, *Who is the LORD, that I ſhould obey his voice, to let Iſrael go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Iſrael go.* GOD, to chaſtiſe his inſolence and obſtinacy, inflicts a variety of plagues on him and his ſubjects: in contempt of all which Pharaoh hardens his heart, perſiſts in his diſobedience; and refuſes to *let the people go*.—At laſt, ſays the LORD, *I will bring one plague more upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt* *; which ſhall infallibly accompliſh my purpoſe. Be their hearts hard as the nether milſtone, this ſhall make them feel: be their reſolution ſtubborn as an iron ſinew, this ſhall make it bend. *About midnight I will go out into the midſt of Egypt, and all the firſt-born in the land of Egypt ſhall die* †.

But as the Iſraelites then dwelt in Egypt, how ſhould they be ſafe amidſt the general deſolation?—Will it be ſaid, the Iſraelites, being the people of GOD, were not expoſed to this puniſhment; had no reaſon to fear the infliction of this vengeance? None, that remembers how all the world is become guilty before GOD, will affirm this; none, that conſiders how rebellious and idolatrous the Iſraelites were, can ſuppoſe this. And every one who has read Ezek. xx. 8. * muſt allow, that there was no difference in this reſpect. The one people were criminal, as well as the other. All of them moſt righteouſly deſerved the afflictive ſtroke. Grace, free and ſovereign grace alone, muſt make the diſtinction.

Since this was the caſe, it may reaſonably be aſked, How ſhall the Iſraelites be ſafe?—The LORD himſelf directs Moſes to a method, which ſhould effectually ſecure all the families of Iſrael, while death entered into every habitation of the Egyptians. The method—its execution—and ſucceſs—are all ſpecified in the text. *By faith Moſes kept the paſſover, and the ſprinkling of blood, leſt he that deſtroyed the firſt-born ſhould touch them.* Where we may obſerve,

I. A very dreadful danger; ſignified by *the deſtruction of the firſt-born.*

II. A method of ſecurity from this danger; effected by *keeping the paſſover, and the blood of ſprinkling.*

III. The ſucceſs of this method; denoted by the deſtroyer *not ſo much as touching them.*

* Exod. xi. 1. † Exod. xi. 4. 5.

* *But they rebelled againſt me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not, every man, caſt away the abominations of his eyes, neither did they forſake the idols of Egypt. Then I ſaid, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accompliſh mine anger againſt them, in the midſt of the land of Egypt.*

The

The good LORD enable us to open and apply the ...ons, thus divided! Then we ſhall ſee their ſuitable-...ſs to the preſent occaſion; and, I hope, feel their ...lutary influence on our ſouls.

I. A very dreadful danger; ſignified by *the deſtruction of the firſt-born.* The LORD had already put his hand to the ſword. It was even now drawn from the ſcab-...ard, and had received a commiſſion to go forth; to go ...orth that very night; to walk through all the land of ...gypt; and to be bathed, before the morning-light, in ...he blood of the firſt-born, all the firſt-born, from the ...aughty king that ſat on the throne, even to the ſlave ...hat toiled at the mill, and the very ſheep that yeaned in ...he field.——Tremendous, as well as inevitable blow! ...O what an alarm will it create, and what affliction will ...ſpread! make every heart ſad, and every houſe a ...cene of mourning! *There ſhall be a great cry throughout ...ll the land of Egypt, ſuch as there was none like it, nor ſhall ...be like it any more* *.

And is not the preſent time a time of imminent dan-...ger? are not the judgments of the Almighty *now* abroad ...in the world? have not earthquakes ſhaken kingdoms, ...and rent the foundations of nature? have they not ...ſpread terror through our own and diſtant nations; ...laid wealthy towns and magnificent cities in ruin; and ...ſwallowed up or deſtroyed unknown multitudes of our ...fellow-creatures?

'Is not the ſword of ſlaughter drawn? has not war ...hung out her bloody flag? are not the flames kindled ...in Europe and America; on the land and on the ocean? ...are they not gathering ſtrength daily; ſpreading their ...rage continually; and threatening to over-run all?

If we were evidently ſuperior to our enemies in num-...ber and power, in vigilance and unanimity; yet the ...events of military undertakings are very uncertain.—*The battle is not always to the ſtrong* †. Succeſs and vic-...tory depend upon a hand higher far than the arm of ...fleſh. *Without me*, ſaith the LORD, *they ſhall bow down ...under the priſoners, and they ſhall fall under the ſlain* ‡.

But are we not at war with one of the moſt potent, ...inſidious, enterpriſing kingdoms in the world? is there ...not great reaſon to ſuppoſe, that they will ſoon be join-...ed by their neighbours the Spaniards? And, if we ...have been worſted by one, how ſhall we contend with ...their united force?—Conſidering the ſituation and be-...haviour of the ungrateful Auſtrians, have we not cauſe ...to ſuſpect the junction of a third Popiſh power againſt ...our religion and liberty? will not the court of Rome, ...with all her bigotted adherents, urge and inſtigate ...them to be active in this confederacy ‖? will they not ...at this juncture,—the moſt favourable for the proſecu-...tion of their purpoſe that any age has afforded, or their ...own ſanguine zeal can deſire;—will they not exert their ...utmoſt ability to cruſh the Proteſtant cauſe and extirpate ...the Proteſtant name §?

Should the enemy make a deſcent upon our iſland, what can we expect, but that our iſland be turned into a field of blood? They, who have always been jealous of our intereſt and influence, have now added rage to their jealouſy. Their reſentment, like the burning fiery furnace, is heated ſeven times hotter than uſual. We ſhould certainly find them, as the ſcripture ſpeaks, *a bitter and haſty nation* *; and, without the ſpirit of pro-...phecy, may venture to declare, Wo be to England, if GOD ſhould now deliver it into the hands of the French.

Some, perhaps, may cry, "Theſe fears are all chime-"rical. There is no ground for ſuch diſcouraging ſug-"geſtions. We don't queſtion but we ſhall be a match, "and more than a match for our adverſaries."——To this confident boaſting let not my tongue, but let the courſe of events, let the diſpoſals of Providence reply. ——Have we, then, been ſuperior in the day of trial? Alas! have we not loſt Minorca? is not Oſwego gone? a general ſlain, and his army cut in pieces? an admiral condemned to be ſhot to death, and his fleet defeated by an inferior number of the enemy's ſhips? Are not ravages and depredations made almoſt continually up-on our colonies in America; and horrible, unheard-of cruelties committed by the ſavages, on the perſons of our fellow-ſubjects? What have we reaped from the late campaign, but diſappointment, loſs, and ſhame?

Are not all theſe things apparently againſt us? will they not diſpirit our men and embolden our foes? will they not make our allies backward to come in with their ſuccours, and render the powers that are unengaged afraid to declare themſelves on our ſide?

All theſe circumſtances conſidered, the preſent time appears to be a time of uncommon danger: affairs, look where-ever we will, wear a louring aſpect. *Our ſky is black with clouds, and there is the ſound of abundance of rain* †. Judgments ſeem, more than ſeem, to be hovering all around us. How ſoon they may fall, GOD only knows!

If GOD indeed *were for us*, we might truſt, and not be afraid; we might look danger in the face, and bold-ly ſay, *Who ſhall be againſt us* ‡?—But is this the caſe? are we *a righteous nation, that keepeth the truth* ‖? is there ſufficient reaſon to believe that the holy One of Iſrael is our defence?—Are we not, on the contrary, a ſinful generation, a people laden with iniquity? is there not abundant reaſon to fear, leſt our GOD ſhould ſay, in terrible indignation, *They are joined to idols let them alone* §? —In order to determine this point, let us examine our ways. Nothing can be more proper for a day of hu-miliation. Are not we, like the Egyptians, in a ſtate of great danger? if we conſider

1. The *ſins* of our nation.

2. The *judgments* of GOD denounced upon ſuch ſins,

3. The *certain execution* of thoſe judgments, unleſs we fly to the appointed refuge.

1. Conſider the ſins of our nation. Here I ſhall mention ſome, and only ſome, of thoſe abominations, which, where-ever they are found, cannot fail to pro-voke the eyes of GOD's glory, and render either a per-ſon or a people ripe for his vengeance.

The *Chriſtian ſabbath* is an ineſtimable privilege to the church of CHRIST: it is a happy means of building us up in knowledge, of eſtabliſhing us in faith, and preparing us for our everlaſting reſt.——Yet is it not ſhamefully profaned in city and in country? What multitudes waſte it in idleneſs, or ſquander it away in unedifying converſation; making it by far the moſt uſeleſs and contemptible day of the week?—This they do, even though GOD ſtrictly charges,

* Exod. xi. 6. † Eccleſ. ix. 11. ‡ Iſ. x. 4.

‖ I am informed, that when the Pope heard of the alliance lately eſtabliſhed between the houſes of Bourbon and Auſtria, Hungary and Bohemia, ſtrengthened by the unexpected acceſſion of Ruſſia, he cried out, with an air of triumph, *O admirabile commercium gene-ris humani!* "Admirable aſſociation and intercourſe of man-"kind!" promiſing himſelf, I ſuppoſe, from this remarkable turn of affairs, ſuch advantages to the cauſe and intereſts of Popery as exceeded even all his hopes.

§ The French and Auſtrian miniſters, it ſeems, have long been concerting meaſures to tear up the reformed religion by the roots, and not to leave a Proteſtant upon the face of the earth. This execrable plot is diſcovered by the ſagacity and activity of the king of Pruſſia; is averred and proved, in the memorials lately publiſh-ed by his Majeſty. If that hero and his army ſhould fall before their enemies, what can hinder the execution of this horrid deſign? It may puzzle the acuteſt politician to aſſign any *human* means, ſuf-ficient to ſtand as a barrier.

* Hab. i. 6. † 1 Kings xviii. 41. ‡ Rom. viii. 31.

‖ Iſ. xxvi. 2. § Hoſ. iv. 17.

ſaying,

saying, *Remember ye the sabbath-day*, not barely to abstain from your ordinary works, but *to keep it holy* *: devoting it entirely to holy purposes, and religious exercises.—— This they do, even though GOD solemnly threatens, saying, *If ye will not hearken unto me, to hallow the sabbath-day, then will I kindle a fire in your gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched* †.

Is not the *name of* GOD great, wonderful, and holy? ought it not to be used with the deepest veneration, and magnified above all things? But is it not audaciously dishonoured, and impiously blasphemed? dishonoured by customary and wanton, blasphemed by false and perfidious swearing? Has not the most high GOD declared, that he will in no wise hold such daring wretches guiltless? Yet how do these daring wretches swarm, like the locusts of society, in our polluted land? O England, how is thy air tainted with this breath of the infernal pit! how do thy streets resound, most horribly resound, with this language of hell! And will not the almighty LORD make thee know,—know by bitter experience, what that meaneth, which is spoken by his prophet? *Because of swearing the land mourneth* ‡; mourneth under afflicting visitations, and desolating judgments.

Is not the *scripture* a singular blessing? Yes; it is celebrated by the psalmist as the sovereign blessing; that which crowns the other instances of divine goodness: *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and ordinances unto Israel.* It is also celebrated as a most distinguishing blessing, from which multitudes are excluded: *He hath not dealt so with all nations, neither have the Heathen knowledge of his laws* ‖. Should not then the scripture be precious to our souls; more precious than fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the droppings of the honey-comb? should we not exercise ourselves in it day and night §; reading it by day, meditating on it by night? should we not make it the most delightful subject of our conversation? talk of it to our children, our domestics, our neighbours; when we lie down, and rise up; when we walk by the way, and sit in the house ¶? —But where are the persons who bear such a superlative esteem for the Bible? where is the company that delights to converse on those oracles of truth? where are the parents that diligently instruct their children, and feed them with the milk of the word? Diversion, of every kind, engages their attention, and the most trifling impertinence employs their tongue: but the *LORD*'s word is insipid, if not irksome. His word is treated, even by Protestants, as the manna was treated by the Israelites, who had the ingratitude and impudence to say, *Our soul loatheth this light bread* †. A plague from the LORD of hosts was the consequence of their contemptuous treatment of the meat that perisheth. Of how much sorer punishment shall we be thought worthy, who contemn the food which endureth to everlasting life?

GOD hath reserved the unjust, saith the scripture, unto the day of judgment, to be punished; *chiefly those who walk after the flesh in the lusts of uncleanness* ††. Is not this iniquity rampant among the inhabitants of England? What lewd pictures are exposed to view! what filthy writings are suffered to see the light! fewel for lust, and incentives to debauchery.—— What is wit, in our day, but either some lascivious hint, or some licentious abuse of scripture? Are not the wanton entertainments of the stage, and other seminaries of lewdness, countenanced, supported, thronged? Can you acquit your cities and towns of drunkenness, revellings, and abominable excesses? Are not these, and all sorts of filthiness, found in our skirts? If so, hear the word of the LORD, and let it sink deep into every heart. *When I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots-houses. They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the* LORD; *and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this* *?

Is not religion, *vital religion*, very much upon the decline? does it not, even among the serious, wear a sickly dying aspect? What multitudes profess to know GOD, but in works deny him; and, quite destitute of the power of godliness, content themselves with the mere form? Whereas, if any, in imitation of the first believers and preachers, are fervent in spirit, serving the LORD with alacrity and zeal; these persons, instead of being encouraged, are opposed; instead of being esteemed, are reproached.——Of such persons even the malignant spirit could bear witness; *These are the servants of the most high GOD, who shew unto us the way of salvation* †. But among us, who call ourselves Christians, who pique ourselves upon being the purest church in Christendom, among us such persons are deemed the visionaries of the age, the disturbers of society, the men that would *turn the world upside down* ‡.——The ministers who are most faithful, and the people who are most exemplary, are a derision and a by-word among their neighbours. Thus, in Israel, *they mocked the messengers of* GOD, *and despised his words, and misused his prophets.* But it was to the confusion of those scoffers, and the ruin of their country. *For the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword, in the house of their sanctuary; and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man or him that stooped for age* ‖.

Are we not abandoned to a spirit of *carnal confidence*? When do we discover any reliance on the Almighty, or ascribe any of our success to his gracious interposition? It is not GOD, but our sword, that shall help us. Or, if any unseen power is acknowledged, it is not the LORD of hosts, but *good fortune.* One would almost imagine, that we were ashamed of a heavenly ally; and thought it a disgrace to own ourselves dependent on Omnipotence. Is not such a temper a national infatuation, and the harbinger of national judgments? Zedekiah and the men of Judah forgot or neglected the Rock of their salvation, and made Pharaoh's army their confidence. But see what was the issue, or hear it from the mouth of him who fulfilleth the word of his servants; *Though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire* §.

Should you say, This is a false charge: have we not, this very day, publicly acknowledged, that, "without "the divine aid, the wisest counsels of frail men, and "the multitude of an host, and all the instruments of "war, are but weak and vain?" Have we not likewise expressly declared, that, "not confiding in the splen-"dor of any thing that is great, or the stability of any "thing that is strong here below, we do most humbly "flee to the LORD for succour, and put our trust un-"der the shadow of his wings ¶?" I would to GOD we believed *that* acknowledgment, and acted conformably to *this* declaration. We should then be very diligent to propagate religion among our soldiers and sailors; we should seek for such officers and commanders, as are men fearing GOD; we should be as desirous to establish our troops in godliness, as to train them up in

* Psal. i. 2. † Deut. vi. 7. ‡ Numb. xxi. 5. ‖ 2 Pet. ii. 10. § Exod. xx. 8. ¶ Jer. xvii. 27. † Jer. xxiii. 10. †† Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20.

* Jer. v. 7, 8, 9. † Acts xvi. 17. ‡ Acts xvii. 6. ‖ 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16, 17. § Jer. xxxvii. 10. ¶ The form of prayer appointed for the fast.

in military discipline.——But is it thus with our army? Is it thus with our navy? Visit a man of war.——You will think yourself, not in one of the bulwarks of our island, but in a little hell. Observe the gentlemen of the sword. Concerning the generality of them you will have reason to ask, Are these Christians? are they not incarnate devils * ?——And can we expect, that the infinitely-pure GOD will go forth with *such* hosts? will he not rather become *their enemy, and fight against them* † ?

What *ignorance* prevails, especially among the lower ranks of people? The grossest ignorance of themselves, and of *GOD* our *SAVIOUR*; the grossest ignorance of grace and salvation by a *REDEEMER*'s righteousness; the grossest ignorance of the very first principles of our holy religion. To do evil they are wise: but to do good, to believe in *JESUS CHRIST*, to love and glorify him who bought sinners with his blood; to do all, to do any of this, they have no knowledge. And is it a small matter to be thus *children of darkness?* is not the soul alienated from the life of *GOD* through ignorance ‡? does not this displease the most high *GOD*, and provoke the holy One of Israel? Let his own word determine: *It is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them, will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them, will shew them no favour* ‖. Are these impotent menaces? made only to be contemned? then we may dismiss our fears. But if they are the word of *GOD*, which liveth and abideth for ever; then we have reason to cry, "What will become of England?"

In a word, religion, both as to knowledge and practice, was never at so low an ebb, since the reformation took place; nor luxury, and immorality of every kind, at such an enormous height.——Where now are our *rulers?* are they zealous for *GOD*, and valiant for the truth; have they courage to stem the torrent, or to oppose the overflowings of ungodliness?—Where are the grandees and magistrates? warm with generous indignation, do they snatch the spear; and, like the gallant *Phinehas*, smite through the loins of iniquity? Alas! have not our great men *altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds* §? are they not, generally speaking, the ringleaders in transgression; as eminent for their contempt of *GOD*, as for the affluence of their circumstances? *Yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief* in the several *trespasses* ¶. But will that dignity, which they have abused; will that authority which was lent them for better purposes; will those distinctions be a security to them or their country, in the day of visitation? ——Hear what the righteous *LORD* says, who is higher than the highest, and able to execute all his decrees: *It is the sword of the great men that are slain, which entereth into their privy chambers. I have set the point of the sword against all their gates, that their hearts may faint, and their ruins be multiplied* †. Gates, be they ever so strongly fortified, or ever so faithfully guarded, are no fence against the point of *JEHOVAH*'s sword. And if sin is suffered to enter, judgments will assuredly follow: judgments will follow even the most powerful and wealthy sinners; will pursue them like an eager bloodhound; will haunt them like a dismal ghost; will force a way into their palaces, nay into their closest retirements; and never remit the chace, till *fainting of heart* ends in *multiplied ruin*; in the ruin of themselves, their families, their country.

Amidst all these crying evils, are we not *presumptuously secure?* is there not a deplorable state of stupidity, which blinds our eyes, and renders us insensible? Scarce any one lays these miseries and dangers to heart. Who mourneth for the abominations of the land? who stirreth up himself to call upon *GOD*, if so be he may yet be entreated, and have mercy upon Zion?—Are we not too much like the intoxicated sinners of the old world? *They ate, they drank; they bought, they sold; they planted, they builded.* They gave themselves wholly up to sensual gratifications, and inferior cares; disregarding all the admonitions of Noah, and all the tokens of impending vengeance: *till the* divine long-suffering ceased; the universal *flood came; and*, with irresistible violence, *swept them all away* *.—Are we not in the condition of those supine senseless people, spoken of by the prophet Zephaniah? *It shall come to pass at that day, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled upon their lees; that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.* And may we not justly expect their awful doom? *Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation. Their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them, in the day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy* †.

As a farther aggravation of our crimes, have we not been *incorrigible*, amidst the most compulsive and the most winning motives to amendment?—We have been visited with a *contagious distemper* among our cattle; which, we were apprehensive, might have introduced a plague among the human race. From this fear we have been delivered: but are we delivered from our evil works, and have we renounced all ungodliness?—*Rebellion* broke out in our island; threatening to overthrow our Protestant government, and deprive us of our reformed religion; threatening to deprive us of our liberty and its privileges, of our peace and its comforts. This storm also was soon blown over, and tranquillity restored to our land. But did we return every one to the *LORD* our *GOD*, who dealt so graciously with us? ——*Earthquakes* have shattered other kingdoms, have destroyed other cities; while they only admonished, not injured, us and ours. Has this goodness, this distinguishing goodness of *GOD*, led us to repentance?—Were we not lately preserved from the most calamitous of all temporal losses? from losing the *precious fruits* of the earth. When the corn was ripe and ready for the sickle, who can forget the louring sky, and the descending rains, which held back the husbandman's hand, and forbade the gathering? A few more days of such unseasonable weather had inevitably spoiled the produce of the ground, and destroyed the staff of life. But Divine Providence, at the very hour of need, restrained the immoderate showers; bid the sun shine forth with peculiar brightness; and gave us the expected weeks of the harvest; thus rescuing us from famine, perhaps from pestilence, probably from mutiny, certainly from a train of evils, the particulars of which we cannot so much as imagine. But is there not too much ground for the complaint, so pa-

* Does this sound harsh? or will any other part of the charge advanced in these discourses, prove offensive?—I am sorry there should be any occasion for such language. But I dare not retract it; I must not soften it; no nor apologize for it. Thus much, however, I will very readily acknowledge, borrowing the words of *Job*; *If it be not so now*, let experience *make me a liar, and* in this case *make my speech nothing worth*, Job xxiv. 25. Desirous as I am of speaking truth, here I shall rejoice to be convicted of falsehood.

† Is. lxiii. 10. ‡ Eph. iv. 18. ‖ Is. xxvii. 11.
§ Jer. v. 5. ¶ Ezra ix. 2. † Ezek. xxi. 14. 15.

* Luke xvii. 27. † Zeph. i. 12. *&c.*

Tremendous threat'ning! *black as night it stands,*
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
And shakes a dreadful dart; MILTON.

Even the dart of divine indignation over a guilty land. Yet who is awaked from a state of indolence? who is induced to watch and pray? who falls down at the feet of JEHOVAH, though they see his wrath enkindling, and hear his terrors denounced?

thetically urged, and ſo frequently repeated, by the prophet; *Though I have done all this for you, yet have ye not returned unto me, ſaith the LORD**?

Behold, now, the ſtate of our nation.——Our ſins abound, and are grown up to heaven;—ſins of every, even the moſt horrid kind; ſins among all ranks, from the higheſt to the loweſt.—In our ſins we perſiſt, though wooed, as it were, with the choiceſt mercies; though made to ſmart under various judgments; though threatened with far more afflictive viſitations.—And will the great, the mighty, the immortal GOD, always bear with ſuch a people? will he receive the moſt horrible indignities, and ſtill, ſtill refrain himſelf? Surely he will awake, as one out of ſleep! ſurely he will ſay, with a determined indignation, *Ah! I will eaſe me of mine adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.*†—Has he not ſhewed us evident tokens of his diſpleaſure? is he not filling all his diſpenſations with marks of anger? And what, O what may be the end of theſe beginnings! how doleful, how deſtructive! unleſs ſovereign grace interpoſe; bringing us, by faith in the *SON* of *GOD*, to unfeigned repentance and newneſs of life.—Some notion we may form concerning the end of theſe things by unfolding the ſecond point;

2. The *judgments* of *GOD* denounced on ſuch ſins.—Where ſuch iniquities prevail, we might naturally conclude, that the divine indignation is awakened, and the divine vengeance lingereth not. Is there a *GOD?* does he behold the children of men? is his nature infinitely pure and holy? Surely then he cannot, he will not ſuffer the moſt outrageous violations of his ſublime perfections to paſs unpuniſhed.—Thus we might argue from the nature of *GOD;* this we might conjecture from the aſpect of things. But we have a more ſure word of prophecy; in this word, *the wrath of GOD is revealed againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men*‡. And ſee! in what flaming colours, by what frightful images this wrath is repreſented, theſe judgments are deſcribed.

They are likened to *a lion* rending his prey. The *LORD* hath been *unto Ephraim as a moth, and unto the houſe of Judah as a worm.* He had diſpenſed milder corrections; afflicting them in meaſure, and with-holding inferior comforts. His judgments were like a moth fretting the garment, or like a worm corroding the wood. In both which caſes the conſumption creeps, as it were; the waſting operates ſilently, and proceeds ſlowly. Thus the chaſtiſing *JEHOVAH* acted; giving the people ſpace for recollection, and looking for repentance; but no repentance was produced; they continued irreclaimable, adding ſin to ſin.—Then ſays the *LORD, I will be unto Ephraim as a lion;* which, all fierce and ravenous, ruſhes upon a lonely traveller. I will now come forth, as an incenſed and irreſiſtable adverſary, and be *as a roaring lion to the houſe of Judah. I, even I,* who am omnipotent, *will tear,* will deſtroy them with a mighty hand; *and go away,* ſatiated with ſlaughter and vengeance. *I will take away* both prince and people; I will take away their very place and nation; *and none ſhall* have power to effect, or courage to attempt a *reſcue* ‖.—If GOD do thus to perverſe and incorrigible *Judah,* why ſhould we imagine that he will deal otherwiſe with perverſe and incorrigible England?

They are deſcribed by a *flood. Now therefore behold the LORD bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, ſtrong and many, even the king of Aſſyria and all his glory: and he ſhall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks. And he ſhall paſs through Judah; he ſhall overflow and go over; he ſhall reach even to the neck, and the ſtretching out of his wings ſhall fill the breadth of thy land, O IMMANUEL* §. The king of Aſſyria and his army, determined to invade Judah, are ſignified by *the waters of the river.* Theſe *the LORD bringeth up;* over-ruling the purpoſes of ambitious princes, and making even their wicked deſigns ſubſervient to his holy will.——They are, like the waters of an immenſe flood, *ſtrong and many;* their multitude innumerable, and their force unconquerable. For they ſhall come with *all their glory;* with their choiceſt troops, their ableſt commanders, and their whole warlike artillery. *He ſhall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks:* from all parts of his vaſt dominion, his troops ſhall be aſſembled; each province ſhall be drained of its braveſt inhabitants; and all unite to render this expedition one of the moſt formidable that ever was undertaken.—*He ſhall paſs through Judah;* not only make inroads upon the frontiers, but puſh his way through the country, and penetrate the very heart of the kingdom. *He ſhall overflow;* ſpread terror and deſolation on every ſide, and in every quarter. *He ſhall go over* villages, towns, cities, tribes; and bear down all before him. He *ſhall reach even to the neck;* his ravages ſhall extend even to the royal city, to the very gates of the metropolis; threatening deſtruction to the palace of the king, and the walls of the temple. *The ſtretching out of his wings,* the ſeveral detachments and parties of his victorious army, *ſhall fill the breadth* of the land with havock, ſlaughter, and ruin; even *of thy land, O IMMANUEL.* Their relation to thee ſhall procure no favour, ſhall afford no protection. They have diſhonoured that goodly name wherewith they were called. Therefore that goodly name ſhall no longer ſtand in the breach, but pour itſelf with the torrent, and render it irreſiſtible.—Such an inundation of judgments, ſo terrible, ſo deſtructive, have not we deſerved, may not we expect?

Theſe judgments are compared to *fire,* and to the fierceſt of fires, that which glows in a *furnace. The houſe of Iſrael is to me become droſs, all they are braſs, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midſt of the furnace; they are even the droſs of ſilver. Therefore thus ſaith the LORD GOD, becauſe ye are all become droſs, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midſt of Jeruſalem. As they gather braſs, and iron, and tin, and lead into the midſt of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; ſo will I gather you, in mine anger and in my fury; and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye ſhall be melted in the midſt thereof* *. Aſtoniſhing words! And they are doubled! they are redoubled! in order to alarm the inſenſible ſinners: as the ſword, by being brandiſhed in many a dreadful circle, over the criminal's head, ſtrikes terror into his apprehenſions, before it does the work of vengeance on his heart.—This generation is become *braſs,* impudent in their wickedneſs. They have a whore's forehead; they cannot bluſh at their iniquities, but glory in their ſhame.——They are *tin;* a degenerate race, children that are corrupters. They have forſaken the good old way, and ſwerved from the example of their fathers.——With regard to hardneſs of heart, they are as *iron;* impenitent amidſt all their guilt; obſtinately tenacious of their vices; and not to be wrought upon by any addreſſes, not to be reclaimed by any expedients.——In another reſpect, they are as *lead;* ſtupid and ſottiſh; pliable to evil, but for any good purpoſe unmeet, to every good work reprobate.——Becauſe they are ſo exceedingly ſinful, they ſhall be overtaken by *GOD*'s anger, and ſurrounded by his fury; as metals caſt into *the midſt of a furnace,* are ſurrounded with the raging heat. The flame of this wrath ſhall *be blown,* as with a vehement wind, to its utmoſt height. In this furnace they ſhall *be left,* to this wrath they ſhall be abandoned; till, by a complication

* Amos iv. 6. 8. 9. 10. 11. † Iſ. i. 24.

‡ Rom. i. 18. ‖ Hoſ. v. 12. 14. § Iſ. viii. 7. 8.

* Ezek. xxii. 18. 19. 20. 21.

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of afflictions, reſembling the complication of their vices, they are overcome, ſubdued, and even *melted*; ſo melted, as to be either purged from the droſs of their iniquities, or elſe blended together in one promiſcuous ruin.

Theſe judgments are deſcribed by the terrible repreſentation of *an end*. An end of affluence and proſperity, of which we have gloried: an end of power and ſtrength, in which we have truſted: an end of all national bleſſings, which we have not improved to GOD's honour, but turned into licentiouſneſs. *Thus ſaith the* LORD GOD, *An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land. The ſword is without, and the peſtilence and the famine within: he that is in the field, ſhall die with the ſword; and he that is in the city, peſtilence and famine ſhall devour him* *. For this we have been ripening, by an uninterrupted courſe of ungodlineſs and iniquity. And what can be expected by an impenitent people, hating to be reformed? What, but that judgments, which have long been ſuſpended, ſhould at laſt be inflicted? *An end is come;—it is come upon the land.* It is a national viſitation; not confined to a part, but extending to the whole kingdom.—*Upon the four corners* of the land. No place ſhall be exempt; nothing ſecure: neither that which ſeems to be moſt ſecret, nor that which lies moſt remote. The vengeance is univerſal and inevitable.——The executioners of this vengeance take their ſtand, within and without, at home and abroad; ſo that to fly from one is only to fall into the hands of another. *He that is in the field* ſhall find no way to eſcape, *but ſhall die with the ſword. He that is in the city* ſhall obtain no protection, but *famine and peſtilence ſhall devour him.* Every city ſhall be a charnel-houſe, and every field a field of blood. In city and country ſin has prodigiouſly abounded; therefore in city and country deſolation ſhall be made, deaths ſhall be multiplied, miſeries ſhall abound.

Theſe are ſome of the images, by which the judgments and the wrath of GOD are repreſented in the ſcriptures. But when all images are uſed, when fancy itſelf is exhauſted, we may truly cry out with the pſalmiſt, *Who knoweth the power of thine anger* †? If GOD whet his glittering ſword, and his hand take hold on judgment, what can withſtand it, or who can ſuſtain it? If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, *it ſhall conſume the earth with her increaſe: it ſhall ſet on fire the foundation of the mountains*, and *burn to the loweſt hell* ‡.

When *the lion has roared*, ſays the prophet, *who will not fear?* When the moſt high GOD has ſpoken; ſpoken ſuch terrible things in righteouſneſs; who will not lay them to heart? O! how deep is that ſleep; how deadly is that lethargy, which the voice of him who ſhakes the heavens does neither alarm nor awe!

Leſt you ſhould begin to ſay within yourſelves, Theſe threatenings are applicable only to the Jews, I proceed to ſhew,

3. The *certain execution* of theſe, or ſome ſuch judgments on us, unleſs we fly to the appointed refuge.

GOD is an infinite ſpeaker. In his word, he addreſſes himſelf to all generations of men, and to every individual of the human kind, where his holy revelation is made. It is therefore a certain rule, that when any people, enlightened by the glorious goſpel, become, like Jeruſalem, univerſally and incorrigibly corrupt; they do, in Jeruſalem's doom, read their own.

GOD is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever.—He remembereth his threatenings, as well as his promiſes, to a thouſand generations. Whatſoever, of either kind, happened to our forefathers, *happened to them as enſamples* to us. And *whatſoever was written aforetime, was written for our learning.* Obſerve, it was written, not for our amuſement, but *for our learning* and *admonition* *; that we may, as in a mirror, ſee our own picture; and, as from an oracle, learn our own deſtiny.

Is it not in a manner neceſſary, for the manifeſtation of GOD's inflexible juſtice, and his unalterable hatred of ſin, that judgment ſhould take their courſe; when iniquity rears its head, and refuſes to be controlled? At ſuch a juncture does not every one of the divine attributes cry aloud, O LORD GOD, *to whom vengeance belongeth; thou* GOD, *to whom vengeance belongeth, ſhew thyſelf.*——And how can the juſtice of GOD, with regard to a wicked *nation*, be ſhewn, but by executing his vengeance upon them, in temporal calamities?

Conſider, Sirs, the very eſſence of nations and political communities is temporal, purely temporal. They have no duration, no exiſtence, but in this world.—— Hereafter ſinners will be judged and puniſhed ſingly, and in a perſonal capacity *only*. How then ſhall He, who *is ruler among the nations*, maintain the dignity of his government over the kingdoms of the earth, but by inflicting national puniſhments, for national provocations; and, for final impenitence, total deſtruction?

Beſides, has not the LORD always acted in this manner? Go back to the generations of old. Contemplate Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them;—well watered every where, even as the garden of the *LORD*. Yet *this fruitful land is made barren*, thoſe populous cities are turned into aſhes, *for the wickedneſs of them that dwelt therein* †; for their pride and idleneſs; for their voluptuous and wanton indulgencies. *For which things ſake the wrath of* GOD not only has come, in former ages, and in diſtant nations; but in every age *cometh*, and in every nation will come, *upon the children of diſobedience* ‡.

Paſs over to Babylon, the grandeſt city that the ſun ever beheld; which ſet calamity at defiance, ſaying in her heart, *I ſhall be a lady for ever* ‖. How is ſhe fallen! *ſwept with the beſom of deſtruction* §! Not ſo much as a trace or footſtep of her ancient glory left! And ſhall *we* be ſafe, when thoſe very iniquities prevail among us, which razed the foundations of the Babylonian metropolis, and overthrew the magnificence of the Babylonian monarchy?

Take a view of Conſtantinople, once the moſt flouriſhing Chriſtian city in the world; where the firſt Chriſtian emperor filled the throne, and Chryſoſtom, that great Chriſtian orator, the pulpit. Then it was glorioufly enlightened with the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST. Grace and truth dwelt in it; and the beauties of holineſs adorned it. But now the candleſtick is removed. It is now given up to infidelity and barbarity; is now full of darkneſs and cruel habitations.

Come hither then, ye careleſs ones, and ſee what deſolations ſin has made in the earth. On account of ſin Sodom was conſumed, as in a moment; Babylon is totally deſtroyed ¶; Conſtantinople has loſt her glory. ——And will the LORD, the LORD GOD, who is unchangeably juſt and holy; will he ſpare *that*

* Ezek. vii. 2, 15.

† Pſal. xc. 11. ‡ Deut. xxxii. 22.

* 1 Cor. x. 11. † Pſal. cvii. 34.

‡ Col. iii. 6. ‖ Iſ. xlvii. 7. § Iſ. xiv. 23.

¶ Will any, raiſed in their own conceit above the vulgar level, neglect theſe admonitions with a ſmile of diſdain? Becauſe they can aſſign the *ſecond cauſes* of ſome ſuch evils, as have been deſcribed, will they therefore quiet their ſpirits, amidſt the alarming proſpect of judgments from heaven?—They have heard (I make no doubt) that a midnight-debauch in Babylon, and a popular ſedition in Jeruſalem, left the gates of the former open to Cyrus, and the walls of the latter without defence to Veſpaſian. Perhaps they will ſuppoſe, that the overthrow of Sodom was occaſioned by the ſhock of an earthquake; and that the fire from heaven was produced by ſulphureous exhalations.

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in one people which he has so severely corrected in another? *He that chastiseth the Heathen, shall not he punish* us, when we do according to all their abominations?

Have *we* a licence to sin with impunity? are our sins less heinous than those of other people? Quite the reverse. Considering the many blessings which we enjoy as a nation; the many deliverances we have enjoyed as a Protestant nation; the numberless advantages for religious knowledge and religious practice, which we both have enjoyed, and do enjoy, above all the nations on earth;—considering these circumstances, our wickedness is highly aggravated; it is become exceeding sinful; it *overpasses the deeds* * of the most abandoned Heathens. What then can prevent our ruin?

Will you reply, "We fast, and humble ourselves be-"fore the LORD?"——I ask, Do we fast from sin? are our fast-days the beginning of a gospel-reformation? When we abstain from our daily bread, do we turn by faith to JESUS CHRIST; that *eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, we may live through him* †? live in holiness here, and live in glory hereafter, by applying his immaculate righteousness to our souls.——If this is the case, we may entertain reviving hopes. The scripture speaks good words, and comfortable words, to such people; be their condition ever so vile, or their guilt ever so great. ——But, alas! are we not just the same persons the day after our fast as we were before? as vain in our conversation, and as forgetful of GOD? as fond of folly, and as negligent of divine grace? as mad upon our idols, of carnal gratification and worldly gain?—If so, our fasts are not an acceptable, no, nor a reasonable service? but a mere mockery of the omniscient Majesty. May he not justly use that upbraiding expostulation? *Will ye steal, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and walk after other gods*, serving, not the LORD JEHOVAH, but divers lusts and pleasures; and then, with hypocritical devotion, *stand before me in this house, which is called by my name* ‡?

Perhaps you are ready to allege, "Our alms will de-"liver us. The son of Sirach exhorts us, to *shut up alms* "*in our store-houses*; and assures us, that *they shall fight for* "*us against our enemies, better than a mighty shield and* "*strong spear* ‖. And when was there a greater flow of "beneficence observable in our own, or in any land? "What sums have been given to the poor during this "severe season of cold and scarcity! what hospitals of "various sorts, and other charitable foundations, have "been set on foot and are supported through the king-"dom!"—Let us beware, brethren, lest those very things, which we look upon as our recommendation, should prove an offence. If our alms proceed not from faith in JESUS CHRIST, and an unfeigned zeal for the glory of GOD, if they are not accompanied with a spirit of love to his name, and with a course of obedience to his commands; hear what the *LORD* himself says concerning such works; see what a figure they make in his sight, and then judge, whether they are likely to be a security to our land. *I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings, and your meat-offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.* Hymns of praise, you see, are no other than a *noise* in the *LORD's* ear; the most costly services of religion are no better than a *smoke* in his nostrils; unless *judgment*, and the love of GOD, *run down as a river*; unless *righteousness*, and the faith of *CHRIST*, abound *as a mighty stream* *.

Do you still conceit yourselves, that, because there are many righteous persons remaining, *they* will stand in the gap; *they* will turn away the anger of the *LORD*, and be as the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen of Israel, to our endangered state?—Hear what a charge the supreme *JEHOVAH* gave to his prophet, when the provocations of Israel were risen to a very high pitch: *Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee* †. Amazing and awful prohibition! Yet it is repeated again and again ‡.—God's professing people may, by their excessive wickedness, become so insufferably loathsome, that were the greatest saints to make supplication in their behalf, they should not prevail. Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, men mighty in prayer, and zealous for the welfare of their neighbours; though these three men (who had each, by his single intercession, procured blessings from heaven) were uniting their petitions in the midst of this profligate generation; *as I live, saith the LORD GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate* ‖.

The land shall be desolate—Doleful sound! dismal decree! And has it not long ago been carried into execution? was not Jerusalem ploughed as a field, and trodden down by the Gentiles? are not the inhabitants rooted out of their dwellings, and scattered to all the ends of the earth? while their country is given up for a prey, and for a possession to strangers, to infidels, to Turks.

Perhaps you will say, "The Jews crucified the *LORD* "of glory, and rejected his gospel: *therefore* wrath "came upon them to the uttermost."——And are we innocent in this respect? are not we verily, are not we greatly guilty concerning this thing? Is *CHRIST* received into the hearts of men, with deep adoration of his person, as *IMMANUEL, GOD* with us? do they glory and delight themselves in his complete redemption, as finished by the great *GOD* and our *SAVIOUR*? do they confide in him alone for their justification, as an infinite Surety, and as *JEHOVAH* our righteousness? do they depend on him alone for their sanctification, as *JESUS* who saves his people from their sins, and sanctifies them through his blood? do they count all things but dung, for the excellency of *CHRIST*, and his incomprehensible merit?——Alas! is not his gospel, though the light of the world, disregarded and despised? is not his name, though a name above every name, derided and blasphemed? are not the influences of his eternal *SPIRIT*, though the very life of our souls, exploded and ridiculed? They who would exalt the *SAVIOUR*, would make every sheaf bow down to the *REDEEMER's* re-

presenting

Be the premises ever so certain, is there any thing rational in the conclusion? Is not what we term the *course of nature*, the incessant administration of *Providence*? are not many of its ordinary appearances very evident indications of a righteous and holy government, unalterably determined to punish sin? The poverty and ignominy of the lazy vagabond; the diseases of the debauchee, and the distresses of the spendthrift; are these less manifest signs of divine displeasure, because they are the immediate effects of an evil conduct? are they not as certainly the *judicial*, the *penal*, as they are the *natural* consequences of vice?

Let those therefore who fear no judgments, compare causes and events. If selfishness, avarice, and venality; if indolence, luxury, and prodigality; if youth without principles, tradesmen without honesty, and nobles without honour; if these are allowed to be either provoking immoralities or fatal symptoms; I fear the ruin of England cannot be far off. GOD Almighty grant we ministers may not accelerate the fall of our country, by neglecting to warn every man, and exhort every man, to the great evangelical duty of BELIEVING; in order to promote national reformation, and to escape national destruction.

* Jer. v. 28. † John vi. 57.

‡ Jer. vii. 9, 10. ‖ Ecclus xxix. 12, 13.

* Amos v. 21. 22. 23. 24. † Jer. vii. 16.

‡ Jer. xi. 14. & xiv. 11. ‖ Ezek. xiv. 16.

lamenting him as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, in the ſalvation of ſinners; thoſe preachers, thoſe writers, thoſe believers, are treated as *the fooliſh people that dwell in Sichem* *.

What the Jews did through ignorance, we, who call ourſelves Chriſtians, Engliſhmen, Proteſtants; we do knowingly, wilfully, and of malicious wickedneſs. And if we thus trample upon the blood which alone can ſcreen us; if we thus crucify afreſh that JESUS who is our only hope; what can we look for, but vengeance and fiery indignation? If we ourſelves, with our own hands, demoliſh the only barrier, what can enſue, but an inundation of wrath, tribulation, and anguiſh?

Conſider theſe things, brethren. The LORD enable you to diſcern the ſigns of the times! Then you will acknowledge, that we have reaſon to be alarmed, to tremble, to be horribly afraid.——Are not theſe iniquities the Achans, that will aſſuredly bring diſtreſs and trouble, if not deſtruction, upon our country? are not theſe iniquities the Jonahs, that will awaken the divine diſpleaſure, and deliver up our veſſel to the tempeſt, if not to ſhipwreck?

Is any one diſpoſed to ſay within himſelf, "Though "others may be guilty of theſe flagrant iniquities, yet "am not I?"—Remember, my friend, the prophet Iſaiah. He was, at leaſt, as free from theſe flagrant iniquities as yourſelf. Yet he laments, and with painful apprehenſions, the guilt of his countrymen, as well as his own †.——Remember king Joſiah. Though a holy man and a juſt, he rent his cloaths, and trembled at GOD's word denouncing vengeance againſt an irreligious people ‡.

Conſider alſo, whether you have not been an acceſſary, even where you was not the principal. Though you have not joined with the more profligate ſinners, nor ſat in the ſeat of the ſcornful; yet have you not connived at their impiety? Do their affronts offered to the King of heaven rouſe you into a becoming zeal to vindicate his injured honour? or, *becauſe iniquity has abounded*, is not your love, and *the love of many waxed cold* ‖? Have not the diſciples, even the diſciples of JESUS, been cowards and traitors; while others have been profeſſed enemies and rebels?

Beſides, have not you, have not I, have not all contributed, in many, many inſtances, to ſwell the ſcore of national provocations? Is not every ſin a diſobedience of GOD's moſt holy command? is not every ſin a defiance of his uncontrollable authority? is not every ſin an imitation of the devil? does it not create a kind of hell in the heart? muſt it not therefore be inconceivably odious to the *holy, holy, holy LORD GOD of Sabaoth?*—If ſo, how guilty are the very beſt among us? Is not *this accurſed thing* § found in all our tents? has not every one added to the load, that dreadful load, which is likely to ſink the nation in ruin? Should not every one, therefore, ſmite upon his breaſt, and ſay, with the penitent, *What have I done!* and cry with the publican, GOD *be merciful to me a ſinner!*

Will you ſtill flatter yourſelf? "All theſe judgments "may be delayed: they may not come in my time."——I anſwer, If there be any truth of GOD's word; if any conjecture is to be made from the appearance of things; theſe judgments are near; they are at the door. They are like the axe in the executioner's hand, which has been poiſed, has received its laſt elevation, and is now falling on the criminal's neck.——Yet, if theſe ſhould be with-held for a ſeaſon, will not ſickneſs come upon you? are not many diſaſters lying in ambuſh to ſeize you? is not death ſharpening his arrow; perhaps fitting it to the ſtring; or even aiming at your life? Is not the day, the dreadful day approaching, when the ſhout of the archangel and the trump of GOD will be heard; when the dead ſhall ariſe, and heaven and earth flee away? will not the LORD, the LORD GOD omnipotent quickly come, *with ten thouſands of his ſaints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodlily committed; and of all their hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him* *?

Take then, my dear hearers, take the advice of the greateſt of preachers, and the wiſeſt of men; *The prudent foreſeeth the evil, and hideth himſelf* †.—Behold! the rains are deſcending, and the flood is coming; haſten like Noah, haſten to your ark. See! the ſkies are kindling all around, and the ſhafts of vengeance are ready to fly. Make haſte, Oh! make haſte, and delay not the time, to get into a hiding-place.—Let me ſound in your ears the angel's admonition; and may the LORD of angels, may the Friend of ſinners, convey it to your hearts! *Eſcape for your lives, leſt ye be conſumed:* leſt the judgments of GOD, and the wrath of GOD, more to be feared than a deluge of waters, more to be feared than a torrent of flames, ſurround you ſuddenly, —ſeize you unavoidably,—and overwhelm you in ruin, temporal and eternal.

O that I might prevail! O that GOD would make you ſenſible of your peril! O that man, woman, and child, would aſk, "How ſhall I fly from the wrath to "come? where ſhall I be ſafe in the day of viſitation? "Shew me the ark! ſhew me the refuge!"—I ſhould then, with great ſatisfaction, proceed to anſwer this inquiry; and point out *CHRIST* to your ſouls, as the *only* hiding-place, as the *ſure* hiding-place, where you may certainly find ſafety. But this muſt be the buſineſs, the pleaſing buſineſs of my next diſcourſe.

Let me beſeech you, in the mean time, to lay theſe alarming truths to heart: let them impreſs your conſciences! let them penetrate your ſouls! And O thou gracious, thou almighty *LORD GOD*, do thou command them to ſink deep into all our minds: that we may, with Ezra thy prieſt, ſit down *aſhamed and aſtoniſhed* ‡, under a ſenſe of our manifold iniquities:—That we may, with thy ſervant Job, *abhor ourſelves, and repent in duſt and aſhes* ‖:—That we may, in the words, and with the compunction of thy prophet, every one cry out, *Wo is me, for I am undone: becauſe I am a man of unclean lips; and I dwell in the midſt of a people of unclean lips* §.

* Ecclus l. 26. † Iſ. vi. 5. ‡ 2 Kings xxii. 12. 13.
‖ Math. xxiv. 12. § Joſh. vi. 18.

* Jude 14. 15. † Prov. xxii. 3.
‡ Ezra ix. 3. ‖ Job xli. 6. § Iſ. vi. 5.

SERMON II.

The Means of Safety.

HEB. xi. 28.

Through faith he kept the paſſover, and the ſprinkling of blood, leſt he that deſtroyed the firſt-born ſhould touch them.

WE have been conſidering the danger of our nation, occaſioned—by the *ſin* of its inhabitants,—by the *judgments* of GOD, denounced againſt ſuch ſinners,—by the *certain execution* of his righteous threatenings, unleſs we fly to the appointed refuge.—When ſuch is the ſtate of a nation, it is high time for the watchmen on her walls to lift up their voice; not indeed to ſpread vain terrors, but to give notice of the approaching evil; to warn the unwary; to call in the ſtragglers; and urge every one to retire into a place of ſafety.

Having, in the preceding diſcourſe, attempted to diſcharge this office; I ſhall now, brethren, as in the preſence of the all-ſeeing GOD, aſk,—Have we been attentive to theſe things? are we alarmed with a ſenſe of our guilt and our peril? have we, with the prophet Iſaiah, lamented our own, and the ſins of our people?—If ſo, we ſhall highly prize, we ſhall ardently deſire, the ſame conſolation, and the ſame relief, which the GOD of infinitely-free goodneſs vouchſafed to his ſervant. *Then flew one of the ſeraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth* *; an action which repreſents the very thing ſignified in the text by *the ſprinkling of blood.*

The *altar* typified *CHRIST*; who is both the ſacrifice that makes the atonement, and the altar that ſanctifies the gift.—The *live coal* ſeems to betoken the word of grace, and the word of life; which brings the glad tidings of the goſpel, and teſtifies of the bleeding JESUS.—*Laying this upon the mouth*, very ſignificantly denotes the application of *CHRIST* and his great atonement. When this is done, under the influence of the SPIRIT, and by means of faith, then *iniquity is taken away, and ſin purged*; taken away from the ſight of GOD, and purged from the ſinner's conſcience. Guilt is aboliſhed; fear ceaſes.—But this leads us to our ſecond particular.

II. The method of ſecurity from danger, effected by *keeping the paſſover, and ſprinkling the blood.*

Moſes was appriſed of a dreadful vengeance to be inflicted on Egypt; the moſt dreadful that ever was known ſince the beginning of their nation; ſo dreadful, that it would make every ear tingle, and every heart bleed. The deſtroying angel was to paſs through all the territories of Pharaoh, and ſmite every firſt-born both of man and beaſt; ſo that, before the morning, there ſhould be heaps of ſlain in the cities, the villages, the fields; not a houſe exempt, not a family ſpared, not a herd, nor a flock, free from the fatal calamity.

Moſes feared the blow. He feared, as the text intimates, the leaſt touch of the divine executioner's ſword; knowing that it would cruſh him and his people, as a moth is cruſhed by the falling millſtone. He is therefore greatly ſolicitous to provide for their welfare. But what expedient ſhall he uſe?——Shall he give them orders to cloſe their windows, and bar their doors; to erect fortifications, and ſtand upon their defence? Alas! before an inviſible hand, armed with the vengeance of heaven, all ſuch precautions would have been as a ſpark before the whirlwind.——Shall he aſſemble the warriors, or detach parties of ſoldiers to patrole the ſtreets, and guard the houſes? Vanity of vanities! the ſword of the avenging angel would pierce through legions and legions of ſuch guards, as lightning penetrates the yielding air.——Shall the whole congregation bend their knees, with ſolemn confeſſion of their ſins, and ſincere reſolutions of future amendment? This, though abſolutely neceſſary to be done, was extremely improper to be relied on. It would have been relying on a broken reed, and deſpiſing the ordinance of the *HOLY ONE.*

The *LORD* himſelf appoints a method of preſervation. Moſes is directed to ſlay a lamb. Each family in Iſrael is to do the ſame. Having received the blood into a baſon, they are to ſprinkle it, not on the threſhold, but on the lintel and ſide-poſts of their doors. This ſhall be a ſign to the deſtroying angel. Looking upon this ſign, he will paſs over the houſe; will ſtrike no blow, and execute no vengeance, wherever he ſees the blood ſprinkled.——All this, in purſuance of the divine direction, being performed; with faith and tranquillity they wait the event.

You will ſay, perhaps, What is all this to us? I anſwer, It is a pattern for our imitation.——Are we then to do the very ſame thing?—We are to do what their practice typified. The ſhadow was theirs, the ſubſtance is ours. The blood of the lamb typified the blood of CHRIST, who is the *LAMB* of *GOD*, ſlain for the ſins of the world.—By the blood of CHRIST is frequently ſignified in ſcripture the *whole* * merit of his life and death, of his actions and ſufferings, of his trials and graces: which ſatisfied GOD's juſtice, and magnified GOD's law; which made propitiation for iniquity, and brought in an everlaſting righteouſneſs.——Well does the apoſtle call it *precious blood*. Unſpeakably precious are its effects. It appeaſes the wrath of GOD revealed from heaven, and makes peace between the offended CREATOR and the offending creature. Sprinkled on the conſcience, it takes away all guilt, and ſecures from all vengeance.—This, therefore, my brethren, this blood is our ſe-

* Iſ. vi. 7.

* *Being juſtified by his blood*, Rom. v. 9. That is, being pardoned, being made righteous, and heirs of all ſpiritual bleſſings.—*Thou haſt redeemed us to GOD by thy blood*, Rev. vi. 9. That is, thou haſt delivered us from all ſin and all wrath; thou haſt reconciled us to the Almighty MAJESTY, and introduced us into his bliſsful preſence.—Theſe bleſſings, aſcribed to our LORD's blood, are confeſſedly the fruit, not barely of his ſufferings, but of his whole humiliation, obedience, and death. Therefore, in a very valuable dictionary of the moſt valuable words and phraſes we have this explication of the *blood of the LAMB*, "The ſacri-
" fice of CHRIST's death, together with his perfect righteouſ-
" neſs and holineſs imputed." See Wilſon's Chriſt. Dict.

curity

curity. This is to our ſouls, what the blood of the paſchal lamb was to the Iſraelitiſh families. *The name of the* LORD, the grace and goodneſs of GOD, manifeſted in the death and obedience of CHRIST, *is a ſtrong tower*: not only *the righteous* perſon, but the diſtreſſed creature, and the endangered ſinner, *runneth unto it and is ſafe* *.

Since this is a point of the utmoſt importance, it cannot be too clearly diſplayed, or too ſtrongly eſtabliſhed. For this purpoſe, the ſcripture gives us ſeveral moſt amiable and inſtructive views of CHRIST, as our refuge and ſafety.——He is called a *hiding-place* †. To a hiding-place people retreat, and are ſecure from their enemies, even from thoſe cruel enemies that ſee their deſtruction. Thus the prophets, whom Obadiah hid by fifty in a cave, were ſecure from Ahab's tyranny, and Jezebel's perſecution. So the ſoul that flies to CHRIST, that takes ſanctuary under the blood of ſprinkling, is ſecure from the moſt formidable of all enemies; is ſecure from all the wrath due to ſin, and from every accuſation which Satan can bring. To ſuch a perſon ſhall be fulfilled what is ſpoken by the prophet Jeremiah; *When the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, there ſhall be none; and the ſins of Judah, they ſhall not be found* ‡.

CHRIST is ſtyled *a covert from the tempeſt*. *A man*, ſays Iſaiah, that is, the GOD-man CHRIST JESUS, *ſhall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt* ‖. When the thunders roar, and the lightnings flaſh; when the clouds pour down water, and a horrid ſtorm comes on; all that are in the open air retire under the branches of a thick tree, or fly to ſome other commodious ſhelter. What ſtorm can be ſo dreadful as the righteous vengeance of GOD, poured out upon a ſinful nation? What ſtorm can be ſo dreadful as the eternal vengeance of GOD, poured out upon a ſinful ſoul? To both theſe we are expoſed, to both theſe we are juſtly liable. But CHRIST's blood and righteouſneſs are a covert. Hither we may fly, and be ſcreened; hither we may fly, and be ſafe: ſafe as was Noah when he entered the ark; and GOD's own hand cloſed the door, and GOD's own eye guided its motions. For *there is no condemnation* of any kind, or from any quarter, *to them that are in* CHRIST JESUS §.

CHRIST is compared to a *ſtrong-hold*. *Turn ye to the ſtrong-hold*, ſays the prophet Zechariah ¶. When ſoldiers fly from a victorious army, being admitted into an impregnable caſtle, they are beyond the reach of danger. They give their fears to the wind, and repoſe themſelves in tranquillity. When ſinners fly by faith to the dying JESUS, they alſo, from thenceforth, are in *a tower of ſalvation* †. They may ſay, each one for himſelf, "Soul, take thine eaſe. All thy guilt is laid upon "thy LORD, and puniſhed in thy Surety. The flaming ſword of juſtice is returned to the ſheath, having received full ſatisfaction from the ſufferings of "CHRIST. The curſe of a violated law is no more, having been executed to the utmoſt upon the perſon "of my REDEEMER. Nay, its curſe is turned into "a bleſſing. For CHRIST *has redeemed us from the "curſe of the law, that the bleſſing of Abraham might come "upon us Gentiles* ††: even the bleſſing of perfect reconciliation, and everlaſting friendſhip, with GOD moſt "high."

This leads me to mention another beautiful compariſon, which repreſents CHRIST not only as the cauſe of ſafety, but as the ſource of conſolation. He ſhall be *as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land* ‡‡.——In a dry place, burnt up for want of moiſture, nothing is ſo deſirable, nothing ſo refreſhing as water. To the poor ſinful ſoul, of whoſe condition the parched ground is a fit reſemblance, CHRIST ſhall be, not barely as the morning-dew, not barely as the tranſient ſhower, but as a river; yea, as *rivers of water*, that flow in copious and never-failing ſtreams through the thirſty ſoil; making even the ſandy deſert green with herbage, and gay with flowers.—In a ſultry clime, where the ſun pours inſufferable heat, and all things languiſh under the glaring rays, nothing is ſo chearing to the labourer, nothing ſo welcome to the traveller, as a cool and gloomy *ſhade*. A poor ſoul, aſſaulted by the fiery darts of Satan, and diſtreſſed with the remembrance of former iniquities, is this ſultry clime, or *weary land*. But CHRIST and his atonement are not barely as the boughs of an oak, which extend their coolneſs to a ſmall diſtance; not barely as the canopy of an alcove, through which much of the glowing influence penetrates; but like the *ſhadow of a rock*, a *great* rock; which projects the friendly ſhade over many a league; which has repelled and excluded the ſun, through all preceding ages; and gives you, as it were, "the cold of ſnow amidſt the heat of harveſt *."

Here then, brethren, is our ſecurity amidſt all peril. The blood, the righteouſneſs, the infinitely-glorious perſon of CHRIST; theſe are our hiding-place—theſe are our covert—theſe are our ſtrong-hold. And (bleſſed be GOD!) the doors ſtand wide open: they are never ſhut, night nor day. The acceſs is free for any, free for all, free for the greateſt ſinners. We are not only allowed, but we are invited; nay, we are commanded, to approach; to enter; to enjoy the protection; or, as the words of the text expreſs it, to *ſprinkle the blood* on our ſouls.

Sprinkle the blood on our ſouls! You will probably ſay, "What does this ſignify? What was done by "Moſes, when he ſprinkled the viſible blood, we eaſily "apprehend: but how can we ſprinkle the blood of "CHRIST, which we never ſaw? the blood of "CHRIST, whom the heavens have received?"——This is one of thoſe myſteries which the natural man underſtandeth not; he can form no notion of it; it is fooliſhneſs to his apprehenſion. Therefore, may the eternal SPIRIT both teach us to underſtand the doctrine, and enable us to practiſe the duty!

To ſprinkle the blood of CHRIST, is truly to *believe* in CHRIST, in his infinite atonement and everlaſting righteouſneſs: it is to *receive* theſe bleſſings as GOD's free gift to men, to ſinners, to ourſelves in particular; and, having received, to make continual *uſe* of them in every time of trial, for every occaſion of need.

Perhaps this doctrine may become clearer, if we illuſtrate it by an example. A remarkable example we have in the practice of David. After the commiſſion of his grievous crimes, he did, in a very eminent manner, ſprinkle the blood. For he ſaid unto the LORD, *Thou ſhalt purge me with hyſſop*, (the inſtrument of ſprinkling the typical blood,) *and I ſhall be clean; thou ſhalt waſh me* in the fountain opened for ſin and uncleanneſs, *and I ſhall be whiter than ſnow* †. This fountain he looked upon as opened for *his* ſins; and fully ſufficient to cleanſe him from all his filthineſs; ſo that he ſhould be as free from ſpot, before the righteous Judge, as the ſnow on Salmon was free from ſtain.——Had he ſaid within himſelf, "My crimes are too great for this "blood to expiate;" or, "This blood cannot be ſhed "for ſo vile an offender as I am:" he would then have put the atonement far from him, together with all its expiating virtue. This would have been not to apply, but to throw away the blood; not to ſprinkle it upon the ſoul, but to pour it upon the ground,

Come then, brethren; come, fellow-ſinners; let us alſo, in this day of fear and danger, look unto CHRIST, as dying that we may live; as made ſin, that we may be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him:

* Prov. xviii. 10. † Iſ. xxxii. 2. ‡ Jer. l. 20.
‖ Iſ. xxxii. 2. § Rom. viii. 1. ¶ Zech. ix. 12.
† 2 Sam. xxii. 51. ++ Gal. iii. 13, 14. ‡‡ Iſ. xxxii. 2.

* Prov. xxv. 13. † Pſal. li. 7.

him; as made a curſe, that we may inherit eternal bleſſedneſs.——Let us look unto JESUS as taking our nature, and ſtanding in our ſtead. Behold him apprehended as a thief; ignominiouſly bound, and marked with the laſhes of the ſcourge. Behold him crowned with thorns; his hair clotted, his face diſcoloured, his breaſt and ſhoulders all bedewed with his own moſt innocent blood. Behold him nailed to the croſs; hanging in the moſt racking poſture, till all his bones are out of joint; hanging amidſt malefactors, forſaken of GOD, of angels and men. Behold him bowing his head in death, and ſtabbed to the heart with the executioner's ſpear.——Thus behold him, and ſay, "Verily, this "ſufferer was the SON of GOD, and the LORD of "glory. Verily, theſe ſufferings were the puniſhment "due to *my* ſins. In all this extreme anguiſh he bore "*my* griefs, and carried *my* ſorrows. He was oppreſſed, "and he was afflicted, becauſe I had done amiſs and "dealt wickedly. He was cut off out of the land of "the living, that he might make his ſoul an offering "for *my* ſins, and obtain eternal redemption for *me*."

Thus behold the bleſſed JESUS: thus, ſinners, behold the LORD your righteouſneſs; with this look of application, with this appropriating faith. Be verily perſuaded, that you ſhall find mercy before a holy GOD; not becauſe you have any worthineſs, but becauſe CHRIST has incomparable merit; that you ſhall never come into condemnation, not becauſe you have faſted and prayed, but becauſe CHRIST is your great propitiation. Be perſuaded, that GOD has given his SON for you; that GOD gives his SON to you; and together with him eternal life.——Be perſuaded of all this, upon the beſt of foundations, the infallible word of GOD; who has declared, that CHRIST died for the *ungodly* *, and by his obedience *ſinners* are made righteous †; that CHRIST was wounded on the croſs, and intercedes in heaven for *tranſgreſſors* ‡; that he received ſpiritual gifts and divine bleſſings, even for the *rebellious* ‖.——The LORD GOD omnipotent, the author and finiſher of faith, enable you thus to believe! on the ground of his own moſt ſure word, thus to believe! Then you keep the Chriſtian paſſover; then you ſprinkle the blood of CHRIST; then you may boldly ſay, *Under his ſhadow we ſhall be ſafe.*——Which reminds us of the third particular, namely,

III. The ſucceſs of this method, denoted by the deſtroyer not ſo much as *touching* them. *Leſt he that deſtroyed the firſt-born ſhould touch them.*——What a beautiful antitheſis! The Egyptian firſt-born were wounded, were mortally wounded, were abſolutely *deſtroyed;* the Iſraelites were not hurt, nor endangered, no nor ſo much as *touched.* So ſure and complete a defence was this blood of ſprinkling!—Nothing elſe could have yielded *any* protection; this afforded *perfect* ſecurity. When this was ſprinkled on their door-poſts, they had no cauſe to be *afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; for the peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs, nor for the deſtruction that waſteth at noon-day* §.

And is not the hiding-place, the covert, the ſtronghold, provided for *us* in the blood and righteouſneſs of CHRIST, an equal ſecurity? do they not yield abſolute, perfect, conſummate ſafety? Nothing elſe could adminiſter the leaſt hope to the chiefeſt apoſtle; this opens an inviolable ſanctuary even for the greateſt of ſinners. None ever periſhed who laid their help upon CHRIST. He *ſaves*—he ſaves *to the uttermoſt*;—he ſaves not a few only, but *all*—all *that come unto* GOD *through him* ¶. Is our danger great? Our ſecurity is greater. Is our danger exceeding great? Our ſecurity is incomparably greater. In ſhort, our refuge and ſecurity are the greateſt that can be wiſhed, that can be imagined, that GOD himſelf could provide.——Chearing, charming, raviſhing truth! Suffer me to enlarge upon it, brethren. Let your attention hang on the glad tidings. May your hearts imbibe the precious doctrine!

Had *more than forty men bound themſelves with an oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed* * ſome one in this congregation; the danger would be great, and the caſe ſtartling. Nevertheleſs the endangered perſon would think him ſufficiently ſafe, if he could ſteal away, and hide himſelf in one of the deepeſt caves of America, with a vaſt tract of unknown land, and all the waters of the vaſter ocean between himſelf and the ruffians. Much ſafer will your ſouls be under the hiding, cleanſing, atoning efficacy of this blood of ſprinkling; by which unrighteouſneſſes are forgiven, ſins are covered, and iniquities done away, as though they had never been.

Were you overtaken by a violent and impetuous ſtorm? If you ſought ſhelter under a covert that was firmer than boards of cedar, harder than ſlabs of marble, thicker than the roofs of all the houſes in Europe, you would reckon yourſelves ſecure from torrents of rain, or from volleys of hail. Much more ſecure will you be from everlaſting wrath; ſecure, even when *the LORD ſhall rain ſnares, fire and brimſtone, ſtorm and tempeſt* †, provided you are found under the covert of CHRIST's magnificent and meritorious righteouſneſs; by virtue of which, *all that believe are juſtified*——I ſay not from millions, or from thouſands of millions, but—*from all* offenſive, provoking, criminal *things* ‡.

Should you be purſued by a conquering foe, determined to cut you in pieces? If you turned into a caſtle whoſe walls were ſtronger than braſs, ſtronger than adamant, ſtronger than all the rocks in the world; you might laugh at the attempts of your enemy; you are guarded from the power and peril of the ſword. So, and abundantly more, are you guarded from every ſpiritual enemy, and from every ſpiritual evil, when you fly to the ſtrong-hold of CHRIST's death and atonement. The ſouls that abide in CHRIST, *they ſhall dwell on high;* beyond the rage of the old ſerpent, and the great dragon: *their place of defence ſhall be the munitions of rocks* ‖; againſt which all the aſſaults of earth and hell ſhall never be able to prevail. They may ſay, with the triumphant apoſtle, *How much more ſhall we, who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs,* be delivered from ruin, and *reign in life by* CHRIST JESUS §!

And will you not prize ſuch a ſtrong-hold? ſhall not ſuch a covert be dear to your guilty ſouls? will you not ſet an exceeding great value upon ſuch an hiding-place? eſpecially when the ſtorm is gathering and threatening all around; when days of deſolation and perplexity are coming upon the world, and judgments, inflicted by men, may tranſmit us to the everlaſting judgment of GOD.——How did Iſrael bleſs and adore their moſt merciful JEHOVAH, for granting them ſuch an effectual means of preſervation, as the blood of the paſchal lamb! and ſhall not we bleſs aud adore the ſame moſt gracious JEHOVAH, for granting us a means of preſervation altogether as effectual, and incomparably more wonderful?

If you ſhould ſay, "How does it appear, that the "blood of CHRIST is ſuch a ſecurity? ſo great, ſo "wonderful, ſo matchleſs!"——Becauſe it is the blood of him who is JEHOVAH's *fellow* ¶; of him who *is GOD over all, bleſſed for ever* †; of him *in whom dwells all the fulneſs of the GODHEAD bodily* ††.——Permit me, brethren, to clear up and eſtabliſh this doctrine; as it is a doctrine of the laſt importance; on which the very ſtrength of our ſalvation is built; and from which the fulneſs of our conſolation flows.

There are in CHRIST, in his one undivided perſon,

* Rom. v. 6.
† Rom. v. 10.
‡ Iſ. liii. 12.
‖ Pſal. lxviii. 18.
§ Pſal. xci. 5, 6.
¶ Heb. vii. 25.
* Acts xxiii. 21.
† Pſal. xi. 6.
‡ Acts xiii. 39.
‖ Iſ. xxxiii. 16.
§ Rom. v. 17.
¶ Zech. xiii. 7.
† Rom. ix. 5.
†† Col. ii. 9.

ſon,

ſons, two diſtinct natures. One nature is eternal, infinite, almighty; which is called by the apoſtle, *the form of GOD* *. The other nature had a beginning; is limited as to extent, and limited as to power. This is termed by the apoſtle, *the ſeed of Abraham* †.——As GOD, he is ſubject to no authority; and infinitely ſuperior to all poſſibility of ſuffering. To become capable of obeying, ſuffering, and dying, he humbled himſelf, and was found in faſhion as a man: that by obeying, ſuffering, and dying in human fleſh, he might triumph over ſin and Satan, in that very nature which Satan had overcome, and ſin had ruined: that, by accompliſhing all this in the room and ſtead of his people, he might bring many ſons unto glory; not without a full ſatisfaction to the rights of injured juſtice, and to the demands of a violated law.

JESUS CHRIST then, in his divine nature, is the moſt high GOD. The heaven of heavens is the auguſt palace, and royal reſidence, of this bleſſed and only Potentate. Thouſand thouſands miniſter unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtand before him. The church militant rely on him; the church triumphant adore him; while all the hoſts of angels pay homage to him. JESUS CHRIST, in his divine nature, is the majeſtic and adorable I AM; ſelf-exiſtent and independent. All worlds and all beings are derived wholly from him, and depend continually upon him: *he made the worlds, and upholdeth all things* ‡.—View the beauty, the magnificence, the harmony, obſervable in heaven, on earth, through the univerſe. All is intended, like the miracle wrought at Cana of Galilee, to *manifeſt his glory*; to tell every one who has eyes to ſee, and a heart to underſtand, how great our SAVIOUR is, how ſublime his majeſty, and how marvellous his perfection. All things, ſays the SPIRIT of inſpiration, were created by him, and *for* him §.—Judge then, whether the obedience and atonement of *ſuch* a REDEEMER are not ſufficient to ſecure, perfectly to ſecure any ſinner, every ſinner, all ſinners, that fly by faith under his wings. As perfectly ſufficient they are for this bleſſed purpoſe, as the unmeaſurable circuit of the ſkies is roomy enough for a lark to fly in, or as the immenſe orb of the ſun is beamy enough for a labourer to work by.

Behold now the dignity and excellency of this blood, which is your covert, your hiding-place, your ſtrong-hold. It has all the power and efficacy that every divine perfection can give it. It is the blood and righteouſneſs of him who is eternal, incomprehenſible, and exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe. Surely then nothing can bear any proportion to it. Guilt, all guilt, though ever ſo execrable and horrid, compared with the grandeur and riches of this invaluable blood ¶, is as a glow-worm before the ſun. All manner of ſins and blaſphemies are blotted out by ſuch an expiation, as the ſhades of night are aboliſhed by the light of day. Every ſinner waſhed in this blood muſt be whiter than the unſullied wool, whiter than the virgin ſnows. Every ſinner clothed in this righteouſneſs, muſt be unblameable and unreproveable, even before the eye of Omniſcience itſelf.

For this, therefore, bleſs the *LORD*, O my ſoul; and all that is within me, bleſs his holy name. Bleſs the *LORD*, O my brethren; and let every thing that hath a being praiſe his unutterable grace. For *behold! GOD is our ſalvation.* GOD himſelf is made fleſh, and become our ſacrifice, our ſin-offering, our juſtifying righteouſneſs: *therefore will we truſt, and not be afraid* *; truſt in this infinitely-ſufficient SAVIOUR; and not be afraid of death or hell, of any enemy or any evil.—But this leads me to apply the whole: which I ſhall do by way of

Examination,
Direction,
Exhortation,
Conſolation.

I. By way of *examination*, *Examine your own ſelves*, ſays the apoſtle †. Have you kept the paſſover? have *you* ſprinkled the blood?—Many, perhaps, will be ready to anſwer, "We have."—But beware, my friends, leſt ye deceive your own ſouls. Let me give you a touchſtone, whereby you may try your ſpirit, and pronounce aright concerning your ſtate.

Have you been convinced of your *great ſinfulneſs*? of your ſinful nature and your ſinful practice? Have you been made ſenſible, that hell, the deepeſt hell, is your deſerved portion? is what you deſerve for any tranſgreſſion,—for every tranſgreſſion?——how much more for the many thouſands,—how much much more for the many millions,—how much more for the numberleſs multitude of your provocations? If you have never been convinced of theſe moſt alarming, but certain truths; if you have never been touched with a ſenſe of your extreme guilt, and undone ſtate; I fear, you are ſettled upon your lees, you are in the dead ſleep of ſin. You are not ſo much as awakened; much leſs have you applied *CHRIST*.

Again, have you been made to ſee, that *nothing but CHRIST* and his precious blood, nothing but *CHRIST* and his divine righteouſneſs, can be your

* Phil. ii. 6. † Heb. ii. 16.
‡ Heb. i. 2. 3. ‖ John ii. 11. § Col. i. 16.

¶ St Chryſoſtom's explanation of a verſe lately quoted is ſo important in itſelf, and ſo appoſite to our purpoſe, exhibits ſuch a magnificent and delightful diſplay of *the ſalvation which is in JESUS CHRIST*, that I promiſe myſelf, the reader will allow me to preſent him with a tranſlation. *How much more ſhall they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs, reign in life by one CHRIST JESUS!* Ουχ ὑπερ ἐνταυθα Χαριν, &c. "The apoſtle ſays not, grace, but *abundance of grace*. For we receive, not barely what may ſuffice to obtain our pardon, but incomparably more. We are delivered from all puniſhment, and from every evil. We are juſtified, we are ſanctified, made the children of GOD, and the brethren of his only begotten SON. We are conſtituted heirs, joint heirs with the PRINCE of heaven. Yea, we become the members of his body; moſt intimately and indiſſolubly united to that divine head.

"All theſe privileges St Paul ſtyles *the abundance of grace*: intimating, that the antidote is not only qualified to counteract and expel the poiſon, but is ſovereign alſo to eſtabliſh health, to create beauty, to impart honour, and from the moſt malignant of all evils, to produce the moſt diſtinguiſhed bleſſings: any one of which, ſeparately conſidered, would have been ſufficient to overcome and diſarm death; but, under their *combined* influence, it is abſolutely deſtroyed, it vaniſhes entirely away, "and leaves not ſo much as a trace of miſchief, or a ſhadow of "terror.

"Let us ſuppoſe ſome poor debtor owing a conſiderable ſum, "and, for want of payment, caſt into priſon. A generous "friend, pitying his condition, diſcharges the whole debt, and "releaſes him from confinement: and not this only, but beſtows "upon him ſplendid apparel, with thouſands of ſilver and gold; "introduces him to court, and recommends him to the royal favour; procures his advancement to the higheſt honours, and "puts him in poſſeſſion of the grandeſt preferments. Where "now is the diſgrace of his impriſonment? and where are the "diſtreſſes of his inſolvent ſtate?

"Such is the caſe with regard to us ſinners, and our moſt gracious REDEEMER. He has paid inconceivably more than we "either did or could poſſibly owe. Being GOD, the true GOD, "the infinite and eternal GOD, his payment exceeds our debt, "as much as the waters of the great deep exceed the ſmall drop "of a bucket.—Doubt not, therefore, poor ſinner, that fleeſt for "refuge to this all-glorious SAVIOUR; doubt not but thy ſins, "though more virulent than all plagues, are done away; and "death, though he be the king of terrors, is aboliſhed; this abo"liſhed, and thoſe done away, before *ſuch* grace and merit; even "as a ſpark of fire is extinguiſhed, when plunged into the abyſſes "of the ſea."—For, indeed, compared with a *divine* perſon, and an *infinite* righteouſneſs, whatever guilt you have contracted, whatever thing you can name, is, as our devout orator ſpeaks, ῥανις μικρα προς πελαγος απειρον, *no more than a ſcanty drop compared with the boundleſs ocean.* Vid. Chryſoſt. in loc.

* Iſ. xii. 2. † 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

ſecurity from vengeance? Have you been convinced, that thouſands of rams, and ten thouſands of rivers of oil, could never expiate the leaſt of your iniquities? that no tears, no confeſſions, no amendment, nothing but the ſacrifice of the body of *CHRIST*, can make your peace with *GOD?* If you have not been taught the abſolute inſufficiency of every remedy, ſave only the meritorious ſufferings of *JESUS CHRIST*; you have not ſeen him, neither known him; much leſs is his blood ſprinkled upon your conſcience.

Once more, have you a ſupreme, a *matchleſs eſteem* for *CHRIST?* Is *CHRIST* and his great ſalvation the thing that you long for? is he to your ſouls the pearl of great price? do you account all things but loſs, that you may win *CHRIST*, and be found in him? If this is not the ſtate of your ſoul, I dare not flatter you with vain hopes; I muſt not buoy you up with ungrounded imaginations. You are not, as yet, in your hiding-place; neither have you fled to your ſtrong-hold. All the curſes of the divine law ſtand charged and pointed full againſt you. You have no ſecurity from being hurt by the firſt death, nor from being irrecoverably ruined by the ſecond death. If judgments ſhould come upon a ſinful and backſliding people, you have no defence; there is no wall of fire around you. You muſt therefore expect to fall among thoſe that fall; and, falling by the ſword, may immediately drop into hell.

Can you hear this, and be unconcerned? can you liſten to this warning, more awful than the voice of ten thouſand thunders, and not ſtart from your inſenſibility? are you not looking around, and ready to cry out, "What then ſhall I do to be ſafe in the day of "evil?"—O! that this inquiry came from the very bottom of your hearts. I ſhould then proceed, with great chearfulneſs, to

2. A word of *direction*.——Fly to *CHRIST*, alarmed ſinners. Come under the covert of his blood. Appropriate the bleſſed JESUS; look upon him and his merit as your own. Thus ſprinkle his blood: ſprinkle it upon your lintel and door-poſts; upon all you are, upon all you have, and all you do; upon your conſciences, that they may be purged; upon your ſouls, that they may be ſanctified; upon your works, that they may be accepted.——Say, every one for himſelf, "I am a poor, "guilty, helpleſs creature; but in *JESUS CHRIST*, "who is full of grace and truth, *I have righteouſneſs and* "*ſtrength* *.——I am a poor, polluted, loathſome crea- "ture: but *JESUS CHRIST*, who is the image of the "inviſible *GOD*, and the brightneſs of his Father's "glory, has *loved me, and waſhed me from my filthineſs in* "*his own blood* †.—I am by nature a perverſe depraved "creature; and, by evil practice, a loſt damnable ſin- "ner; but *JESUS CHRIST*, who made the worlds; "*JESUS CHRIST*, whom heaven and earth adore; "even *JESUS CHRIST* himſelf came from the man- "ſions of bliſs, on purpoſe *to ſeek* me, *to ſave* me ‡; to "give himſelf for me.—And how can I periſh, who "have ſuch a ranſom? how can I be undone, who "have ſuch a repairer of my breaches? how can I "come into condemnation, who have the blood, not "of ten thouſand ſacrifices; the merit, not of ten "thouſand angels, but the blood and merit of *JEHO-* "*VAH* himſelf, for my propitiation?"

Should you ſay, "Have I a warrant for ſuch a truſt?" —You have the beſt of warrants, our *LORD*'s expreſs *permiſſion*; *Whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely* ‖. It is not ſaid, this or that perſon only, but *whoſoever*; including you and me; excluding no individual man or woman.—It is not ſaid, whoſoever is worthy, but whoſoever is *willing*. *Wilt thou be made whole?* was our *LORD*'s queſtion to the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. *Wilt thou*, all terms and conditions apart, inherent grace and glory? is his moſt benevolent addreſs to ſinful men, in all ages.—*Let him take the water of life*; let him receive ME and my righteouſneſs; let him look upon all that I have done and ſuffered, as done and ſuffered for *his* redemption. This will adminiſter peace of conſcience, and joy in the *HOLY GHOST*: this will produce love of *GOD*, and alacrity of obedience; in which things the true *life* of the ſoul conſiſts.—All theſe bleſſings are to be received *freely*, without money, and without price: that is, without any good works, any good qualities, or any preparatory requiſites whatever: to be received, as the infinitely-rich gift of divine grace, vouchſafed even to the *loſt*---the *guilty*---the *undone*.

You have our *LORD*'s moſt generous *invitation*; *Come unto ME*. And whom does he call? The righteous? No. The excellent? Quite the reverſe. He calls ſinners; miſerable ſinners; even the moſt miſerable of ſinners; thoſe who are *weary and heavy laden*; overwhelmed with iniquities; bowed down to the very brink of hell, and ready to think, "There is no hope "for them." Yet them he encourages; them he invites; to them he declares, *I will give you reſt* *; reſt in the enjoyment of peace with *GOD*, and peace in your own conſciences.——Obſerve and admire the riches of your *REDEEMER*'s grace. He ſays not, Ye are vile wretches; polluted by ſin, and enſlaved to the devil; therefore keep at a diſtance; but, *therefore come*. Come and be cleanſed by my blood; come, and be made free by my *SPIRIT*.—He ſays not, Furniſh yourſelves with this, or that, or the other recommending accompliſhment, but only come: come juſt as you are; poor, undone, guilty creatures. Yea, come to ME for pardon and recovery; to ME, who have given my life, myſelf, my all, for your ranſom.

Should you ſtill queſtion, whether theſe ineſtimable bleſſings are free for you? Remember, brethren, they are free for *ſinners*. Is this your character? Then they are as free for *your* acceptance, as for any perſon's in the world. *To us eternal life is given* †; not us who had deſerved it by our goodneſs, but us who had forfeited it by our ſins.—*To you is preached the forgiveneſs of ſins* ‡; not you whoſe tranſgreſſions were inconſiderable, but you whoſe iniquities were more in number than the hairs of your head.—Even to you, who are the loſt and periſhing ſinners of Adam's family, *is the word of this ſalvation ſent* ‖. And, by a commiſſion from *GOD*, we publiſh it; that, as ſinners, you may receive it; that receiving it, you may commence believers; and *believing, may have life through his name* §.

Some, perhaps, will be inclined to debate; "Is this "ſo extraordinary a matter? will this exerciſe of *be-* "*lieving* do ſuch great things for us, or put us in poſſeſ- "ſion of ſuch ſingular bleſſings?"—Moſes might have formed the ſame ſcruple with regard to the *ſprinkling of blood*. Will this ſeemingly-inſignificant circumſtance be ſuch an extraordinary ſafeguard to us? will this preſerve us from the impending blow, more effectually than the labours of the engineer, or the ſhield and ſpear of the warrior?—But Moſes conſulted not with fleſh and blood; Moſes rejected all ſuch carnal reaſonings. *By faith* he and his people kept the paſſover, and were made partakers of the temporal ſalvation. *By faith* may you and I receive *CHRIST!* So ſhall we be partakers of pardon and eternal ſalvation.

By believing the promiſe of *GOD*, and by truſting in the perſon of *CHRIST*, we are united to the *LORD JESUS* ¶; ſo as to have a real intereſt in

* If. xlv. 24. † Rev. i. 5.
‡ Matth. xviii. 11. ‖ Rev. xxii. 17.

* Matth. xi. 28. † 1 John v. 11.
‡ Acts xiii. 38. ‖ Acts xiii. 26.
§ John xx. 31. ¶ Eph. iii. 17.

his blood and righteouſneſs. Being united to CHRIST, our ſins are done away, by virtue of his infinitely-precious atonement; and eternal life becomes ours, on account of his everlaſting righteouſneſs.—Whoever thus believes, believes merely as a ſinner, not upon the ſuppoſition of any goodneſs in himſelf, but upon the ſole warrant of GOD's promiſe, in the infallible word of the goſpel. Such a perſon ſhall not be aſhamed of his belief; ſhall never be diſappointed of his hope; *according to his faith ſhall it be unto him* *.

Come then, fellow-ſinners; believe the record of heaven. Set to your ſeal, that GOD is true. Honour his word, which cannot lie; honour his grace, which is abſolutely free; honour his dear SON, who has obtained eternal redemption for ſuch unworthy creatures as you and I. What ſhall hinder you?——But this leads me to

3. A word of *exhortation*. I ſay then, what ſhall hinder you? what ſhall with-hold you, a ſingle moment, from believing? *ſince all things are ready* † in CHRIST JESUS. The great propitiation is made by him; the perfect obedience is performed by him; all the conditions of the new covenant are fulfilled by him. Come then, and partake of the heavenly bleſſings; as you partake of a marriage-feaſt, when the entertainment is all prepared, and the bridegroom bids you welcome.

Fain would I prevail in this moſt important addreſs. LORD, make bare thy arm; incline their hearts; *make them willing in the day of thy power* ‡.——My dear friends, if you turn away from ſuch invitations, you are ruined to eternity: miſery awaits you here, and damnation hereafter. Suffer me then to be importunate. Refuſe not him that calleth you by my mouth; that bids you truſt and not be afraid; that offereth himſelf, with all his fulneſs, to you.——Why are you backward? why ſlow of heart to believe? why do you ſtand at a diſtance from the all-gracious JESUS?

Is it becauſe you are guilty wretches? Then he publiſhes the act of indemnity to you: *I, even I, am he that bloteth out your tranſgreſſions, for mine own ſake* ‖.——Is it becauſe you are polluted creatures; loathſome in your own eyes, and much more loathſome in the eye of infinite purity? Then hear the word of the HOLY ONE: *I will ſprinkle clean water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean. From all your filthineſs, and from all your idols will I cleanſe you* §.——Is it becauſe your ſins are more numerous, and more heinous than the ſins of others? Be they ever ſo heinous, or ever ſo aggravated, thus ſaith the GOD of immenſely-rich grace in CHRIST; *Though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow; though they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool* ¶.

Are you ſtill objecting, "I am weak; I have no "ſtrength; I cannot believe?"——Look then to a promiſing GOD, that he may help your unbelief; that he may fulfil in you all the good pleaſure of his will, and the work of faith with power. For he who is truth itſelf hath ſaid, *Your GOD will come and ſave you. Then ſhall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf ſhall be unſtopped: the lame man ſhall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb ſhall ſing* ⸸.—Has the LORD given you a deſire to believe in his dear SON? doubt not but he will alſo give you the power. Does GOD the *LORD* bring to the birth, and not give ſtrength to bring forth? That be far from him! the ſuſpicion be far from us! He has, in unſpeakable mercy, appointed his bleſſed SPIRIT for this purpoſe. The *HOLY GHOST*, the Comforter, attendeth continually on this very thing; to teſtify of CHRIST, and to reveal CHRIST in our ſinful ſouls; enabling us to diſcern the all-ſufficiency of *CHRIST*, to diſcern our right to make uſe of *CHRIST*, and to receive *CHRIST* as our own—*our own GOD* and *SAVIOUR*.

Be it then your daily endeavour, your continual buſineſs, to believe; firmly, confidently, aſſuredly to believe in *JESUS CHRIST*, as the great and glorious REDEEMER, in whom *you* have pardon, *you* have righteouſneſs, and eternal life. Thus exerciſe yourſelves unto godlineſs, and *GOD will help you: GOD will ſtrengthen you; yea, GOD will uphold you with the right hand of his righteouſneſs*.—Thus exerciſe yourſelves unto godlineſs, depending on the divine faithfulneſs, proceeding upon the divine warrant, in obedience to the divine command, which expreſsly ſays, *Believe in the LORD your GOD, ſo ſhall ye be eſtabliſhed: believe his prophets, ſo ſhall ye proſper* *: *believe in his dear SON, ſo ſhall ye be ſaved* †.

Pharaoh ſaid to Joſeph, *Now thou art commanded, this do* ‡. Let me alſo ſay to my hearers, Now ye are allowed, invited, commanded to believe in the *SON* of *GOD*, this do. 'Tis your grand concern; the one thing needful. Without this, nothing will profit you.——Therefore I repeat my exhortation; therefore I am ſo urgent; therefore I cannot diſmiſs the ſubject, without beſeeching the FATHER of mercies to command a bleſſing upon the word; that you may indeed *believe* ‖ *unto righteouſneſs*, unto life, unto ſalvation. Thus will you glorify the ineffable goodneſs of *GOD*, and the ineſtimable merit of *CHRIST*: thus will you find a ſure, a full, an incomparably-rich proviſion made for your ſafety: and thus will you moſt effectually comply with that tender and gracious invitation of the *LORD* your *GOD; Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and ſhut thy doors about thee: hide thyſelf as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpaſt. For behold! the LORD cometh out of his place, to puniſh the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity* §.

And what will ye do, when the *LORD* cometh forth to puniſh, if you are not received into the hiding-place? What will ye do, ye men of *ſober* and *decent* converſation; who have nothing but an outward regularity, and ſome cuſtomary conformity to religious worſhip? Theſe, though in their place valuable, yet are no ſecurity. They are only the outworks, not your fortification, nor your citadel. When the righteous Judge *ſhall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that obey not the goſpel* ¶; theſe, without the blood of ſprinkling, will be but as a withered leaf amidſt the inextinguiſhable burning.

What will ye do, ye men of *wealth* and large poſſeſſions? *Will riches profit you in the day of wrath* ⸸? will riches protect you in the day of the LORD's controverſy? Alas! they will mark you out for a prey, and ſerve only to lure the vultures. If riches have been your idol; hoarded up in your coffers, or laviſhed out upon yourſelves; they will, when the day of reckoning comes, be like the garment of pitch and brimſtone, put upon the criminal condemned to the flames.

What will ye do, ye *mighty men* of valour? If the LORD turn his hand upon you, your heart ſhall fail, and your knees be feeble; your arm ſhall loſe its ſtrength, and your ſword ſhall loſe its edge. Your fleets and armies *ſhall be as tow*, and the commanders of them *as a ſpark; and they ſhall both burn together, and none ſhall quench them* →.——If you are not ſheltered and ſecured by *this* blood, what will ye do, when the ſhout of the archangel is made, and the trump of GOD is heard? Undaunted as you now ſeem, you will then, in an agony of deſpair, *call upon rocks to fall upon you, and mountains to cover you* ↔.

What will ye do, ye *voluptuous* men, and ye *careleſs* women? ye that eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midſt of the ſtall? ye that drink

* Matth. ix. 29. † Matth. xxii. 4. ‡ Pſal. cx. 3.
‖ Iſ. xliii. 25. § Ezek. xxxvi. 25.
¶ Iſ. i. 18. ⸸ Iſ. xxxv. 4, 5, 6.

* 2 Chron. xx. 20. † Acts xvi. 31. ‡ Gen. xlv. 19.
‖ Rom. x. 10. § Iſ. xxvi. 20, 21. ¶ 2 Theſſ. i. 7, 8.
⸸ Prov. xi. 4. → Iſ. i. 31. ↔ Rev. vi. 16.

wine

wine in bowls, and anoint yourselves with the chief ointments? Ah! what will ye do, when *the whole land*, for the universal degeneracy of its inhabitants, for their contempt of CHRIST, and neglect of grace, *shall become brimstone, and salt, and burning; insomuch that it shall not be sown, nor bear, nor any grass grow thereon* *? Much more may I ask, What will ye do, when the heavens shall pass away will a great noise, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, when the whole earth, and all the works that are therein, shall be burnt up?

What will ye do, people of *all* ranks and conditions, when *mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour* †? when your houses shall be laid in heaps, and your streets be made a place of graves? when your cities, that were full of inhabitants, shall be solitary; and not a voice heard amidst them, but sighs of the disconsolate, and groans of the dying? when your children shall be slaughtered in one place, your parents in another; and the "slain shall lie behind the slayer, as the sheaves ‡ "behind the reaper, in the time of harvest?"——But, above all, what will ye do, when the great white throne is erected; when the earth and the heavens flee away from the face of him that sitteth thereon; and the dead, both small and great, stand before GOD to be judged? Without the blood of sprinkling, where can you be safe? how will you appear? what will you do?—Whereas, if CHRIST and his blood are yours, all is yours. You have nothing to fear, in time or eternity. "O! well "is it with you, and happy shall you be." But this reminds me of adding a word,

4. By way of *consolation*——Possibly you may be ready to inquire, "What consolation will this admini-"ster, amidst the presages, or under the approach, of "national calamities?"——Very great. *Fear not*, says the LORD, *for I have redeemed thee* ‖. Redemption by CHRIST is a preservative from all terror, and an antidote against every evil. This causes the serene breast, and the lightsome heart. Hence comes calmness of conscience, *quietness and assurance for ever*. Therefore, says the prophet, *This man shall be our peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land*. The blood and righteousness of our incarnate GOD shall be the sovereign support of our souls, even when the enemy invades our territories, and preys upon the vitals of our country: yea, when he *treads upon our palaces* §; not only demolishes our dwelling-houses, but lays our royal edifices in the dust, and makes us feel all the grievousness of war.

Further, when this blood is sprinkled, sin is done away, and GOD is appeased. His promises are your portion, and his arm is your defence. For the comfort of such people it is written; *He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. In famine, he shall redeem thee from death; and in war, from the power of the sword. Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue; neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction, when it cometh* ¶. In the hands of this reconciled and faithful CREATOR, this unwearied and almighty DELIVERER, how safely may you deposit yourselves and your families, your possessions and your all!

Be not then discouraged, ye followers of *CHRIST*, though troublous times should come. All creatures, and all events, are under the controul of your heavenly *FATHER*. If he has any further occasion for your service, or sees it conducive to your good, he will preserve you amidst the greatest dangers. He can draw a curtain of concealment over you, as he did over David in the cave *. He can plant an invisible guard around you, as he did around Elisha in Dothan †. He can turn the hearts of your adversaries, and make even the enemy and the avenger to be at peace with you; as he did in the case of Jacob and his enraged brother Esau.—Or, if you fall in the common calamity, *your latter end shall be peace*; your inheritance is unalienable, and *your joy no man taketh from you*. Your best things, your eternal interests, are secure, inviolably secure, being *hid with CHRIST in GOD* ‡.

Happy, unspeakably blessed and happy the people, on whom this blood is sprinkled! If vindictive visitations come upon the land, this may screen and protect their persons; like the mark, which the man clothed with linen set on the forehead of GOD's chosen ones ‖; or like the line of scarlet thread, which Rahab the harlot bound to the window of her house §. However, by this blood of reconciliation, all afflictions shall be disarmed, and every evil unstung. Nay, *all things*, not in prosperity only, but an adversity likewise, *shall work together for good* ¶. Death, even death, is vanquished for them, and become their gain. And the last judgment is no longer the object of their dread, but their unspeakable privilege. Being justified by this blood, they may even *glory in tribulation, and rejoice in hope*, in sure and stedfast hope *of the glory of* GOD †.

Will ye not then, brethren, ardently join with me? while I lift my voice to GOD in the heavens, and say, "Awake, awake, O arm of the *LORD*; let this be a "day of thy power, and a day of our redemption.—— "Behold, *O GOD* our SAVIOUR, and look upon thy "various congregations. See what a gathering of the "people there is in thy courts; let there be as great a "gathering of souls to thy blessed self. Fulfil the pro-"phecy, almighty SHILOH! Let sinners, won by "the discovery of thy grace, fly unto thee as a cloud; "and take shelter in thy wounds, as the doves in their "windows! that they may rest in the day of trouble; "and, when time shall be no more, may enter into that "everlasting rest, which remaineth for the people of "GOD." *Amen!*

* 1 Sam. xxiv. 3. † 2 Kings vi. 17.
‡ Col. iii. 3. ‖ Ezek. xi. 6. § Josh. ii. 18, 19.
¶ *Rom.* viii. 28. This seems to be the meaning of the HOLY GHOST, in the passage lately quoted from Job. *In six*, in manifold and various *troubles GOD shall deliver thee*. Or, if he suffer thee to be involved *in seven, there shall no evil*, no penal evil, *touch thee*. His gracious presence shall be more than deliverance.—— Thou shalt not feel *anguish*, but enjoy *comfort*; thou shalt not suffer *harm*, but receive *benefit*. Though the flames of tribulation kindle all around, they shall not consume thee; but (like the fire which surrounded the three Hebrew confessors) shall only loose thy bonds, and set thee free; set thy affections free from a troublesome world, or set thy soul free from a prison of clay.
† Rom. v. 1, 2, 3.

* Deut. xxxix. 23. † Ezek. vii. 26.
‡ Jer. ix. 22. ‖ Is. xliii. 1.
§ Mic. v. 5. ¶ Job v. 19, 20, 21.

SERMON III.

The Way of Holineſs.

EZEK. xviii. 27.

When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive.

MANY of my hearers, I obſerve, are huſbandmen; and the ſeaſon, if I miſtake not, is the ſeaſon of ſeed time. I will ſuppoſe a perſon, unſkilled in your buſineſs, brethren, taking notice of your work. Perhaps he goes home, and ſays,—"What ſtrange inconſiderate "creatures have I ſeen in the field! I ſaw them, inſtead of laying up their corn in the garner, throwing "it away by handfuls. Nay, they even buried it in "the ground, and left it to putrefy under the clods. Is "this the way to improve their ſtock, and increaſe their "ſubſtance? is this the way to get gain, and provide "for their families?"

Should any one make ſuch a reflection on your conduct, you have an anſwer ready. The ſame anſwer, only with an alteration of circumſtances, will be equally proper for your preacher. It is true, his uſual ſubjects are, the abſolutely-free grace of GOD, and the immenſely-rich merits of *CHRIST*; the infinite atonement, and everlaſting righteouſneſs of the *REDEEMER*. But becauſe he generally enlarges upon theſe doctrines, is he therefore throwing away his words? does he *neglect* the cauſe, or *diſregard* the intereſts of *holineſs*? Far from it. He is ſowing the ſeed of vital holineſs; without which ſeed, holineſs will never flouriſh in your hearts, will never bring forth fruit in your lives; any more than your ploughed lands would produce a crop of corn, without receiving the appointed grain. It is *through the knowledge of our* adorable SAVIOUR, *as calling us to glory and virtue*, that *we have all things pertaining unto life and godlineſs* *; unto the enjoyment of life eternal, and the practice of true godlineſs.

To convince you that this is my aim, I have choſen a text full to the purpoſe; and not unſuitable to the occaſion of our preſent aſſembly. *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive.*

The words naturally divide themſelves into the following particulars;

I. What the wicked man ſhould turn *from*—*wickedneſs*.

II. What he ſhould turn *to*—*to do that which is lawful and right*.

III. What will be the *effect* of ſuch turning—*he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive*.

May *CHRIST JESUS*, the Head of his church, and the wonderful Counſellor, enable us to open theſe truths; to add a word of lively application; and to receive godly edifying from the whole!

I. What the wicked man ſhould turn *from*—wickedneſs. Here perhaps you expect, that I ſhould mention ſeveral ſorts of wickedneſs; ſhould diſplay the deteſtable nature and deſtructive conſequences of each; and deter you, by ſuch conſiderations, from the commiſſion of them all; deter you from lying and defrauding, from curſing, and ſwearing, from drunkenneſs and uncleanneſs, from a ſpiteful temper and a backbiting tongue. Theſe are horrid evils. On account of theſe the land mourns. This brings the vengeance of GOD on a perſon, and on a people *. If I could ſpeak in thunder, I could never inveigh too loudly againſt theſe vices. "Ye that go on in ſuch iniquities, ye are *ſtar-* "*tering brimſtone upon your habitations* †; ye are *heaping up* "*wrath againſt the day of wrath* ‡. *How can ye eſcape the* "*damnation of hell* ‖?"

But let me forbear invectives. Let me reaſon with you in the ſpirit of mildneſs.——I will ſuppoſe you poſſeſſed of a pleaſant garden. In ſome favourite bed, many weeds ſpring up, alluring to the eye, but full of deadly poiſon. Will you order your gardener, to crop off the *leaves*, or to pluck up the *roots*?——To pluck up the roots moſt certainly. Becauſe, if he does the former only, it will avail but little; it will be no better than labour loſt; whereas, if he does the latter, he will effectually rid your ground of the pernicious incumberance. ——Thus would I act. Wickedneſs is this *pernicious* weed. It is full of deadly poiſon; it pollutes your ſouls, and will be the bane of your happineſs. I would not therefore be content with uſing the pruning-knife, and cutting off the ſhoots; but I would take the ſpade, and level my blow at the root.

I would fain have you turn, not partially and ſuperficially, but *thoroughly* and *habitually*;—not from ſome only, but from *all* wickedneſs;—and not barely from the practice, but even from the *love* of it, and any *fondneſs* for it.—This will never be accompliſhed, unleſs you turn

From a *thoughtleſs* } From a *prayerleſs* } ſtate. From an *inſenſible* }

1. From a *thoughtleſs* ſtate.—You are made for eternity; you are immortal beings. You muſt dwell either with GOD in heaven, or with devils in hell; and that to endleſs, endleſs ages. You know not how ſoon you may be ſummoned into the inviſible and eternal world; the following night, for aught you can tell; or before the preſent hour is expired. Do you ſeriouſly conſider, to which of theſe everlaſting abodes you are approaching? for which of theſe unchangeable conditions you are meet?

Except a man be born again, ſays our *LORD*, *he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven* §. This is the fixed determination of the righteous Judge. You all hope for heaven; and I humbly beſeech the *LORD* that you may not be diſappointed of your hope. But do you diligently inquire, whether you have experienced this new birth? Is there a ſpiritual change wrought in your ſouls; are your affections taken off from vanity, and fixed on the infinitely-amiable *GOD*? is your memory filled with the truths of the goſpel, and are your deſires riſing to things above? To expect the bleſſedneſs of heaven, and have no concern about this renewal of your nature, is to contemn the

* 2 Pet. i. 3.

* Col. iii. 6. † Job xviii. 15. ‡ Rom. ii. 5. ‖ Matth. xxiii. 33. § John iii. 3.

counſels of *CHRIST*, and to trifle with his unalterable decree.

Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the LORD *. This is the ſtanding rule for our preſent conduct, and indiſpenſably neceſſary for our future happineſs. You may be civil and decent in your behaviour; you may attend the place of divine worſhip, and paſs for reputable perſons: yet, unleſs you are holy in your hearts, and holy in your converſation, you cannot enter into GOD's bliſsful preſence. To be holy is to *put on CHRIST* †; to reſemble *CHRIST*, in your ſpirit and carriage, as one man reſembles another, when he puts on his dreſs, or imitates his manners. Do you look to *CHRIST* as your pattern; follow CHRIST as your guide; and, in the general courſe of your life, walk as CHRIST walked? ——Perhaps you have never ſo much as aimed at this; never ſo much as ſeriouſly conſidered eternity, regeneration, and a conformity to CHRIST. Theſe things are ſeldom, if ever, in your thoughts: then be aſſured you are far from holineſs; you are not turned from your evil way; no, nor ſo much as *beginning* to turn.

Say not, "This duty of ſerious conſideration is a "ſlight matter. If I had been guilty of injuſtice or per-"jury; if I had committed adultery or murder; theſe "indeed were heinous crimes: whereas, the omiſſion "which you have inſiſted on, is but a ſmall offence." ——*Small offence!* Preſume not to think ſo. However ſuch guilt may appear little in your view, or ſit eaſy upon your conſcience, it is heinous enough to make heaven and earth amazed. For *thus ſaith the LORD; Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! I have nouriſhed and brought up children, and they have rebelled againſt me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the aſs his maſter's crib: but Iſrael doth not know, my people* DOTH NOT CONSIDER ‡. To ſay the truth, an inconſiderate careleſs life is an unintermitted courſe of ſin; it is one continued act of rebellion againſt GOD.——It oppoſes his compaſſionate wiſh; *O that they were wiſe! that they underſtood this! that they would conſider their latter end* ‖!—It diſobeys his poſitive command; *Thus ſaith the LORD of hoſts*, the ſupreme Ruler of the world, *Conſider your ways* §.—It defeats the deſign of his holy word, and would make the blood of his SON to be of none effect.

2. Turn from a *prayerleſs* ſtate. Alas! how many of thoſe whom we call Chriſtians are ſtrangers to prayer! How many *ſervants* riſe to their work, and never bend a knee before their MASTER in heaven! how many *maſters* ſet their ſervants an ungodly example; enter upon the affairs of the day, without imploring the GOD of all grace, either to proſper their buſineſs, or to ſanctify their ſouls! How many *parents* know not what it is to make earneſt ſupplications for the converſion and ſalvation of their children! and how many *children* are as ignorant of the nature, the neceſſity, the advantages of prayer, "as the wild aſs's colt ¶!"

Shall I reckon *theſe* good people! are theſe turned to their GOD! No; they are deſpiſers of the Moſt *HIGH*; they caſt contempt upon his majeſty. The language of their practice is, "Depart from us, Omnipotent as thou "art, we have no need of thee; no need of thy "SPIRIT, to make interceſſion *in* us; no need of thy "SON, to make interceſſion *for* us."——Moſt juſtly, therefore, is it reckoned by Eliphaz, as part of a wicked and abandoned character, *Thou reſtraineſt prayer before GOD* †. Nay it is mentioned by the pſalmiſt as the finiſhing part, that which ſeals up the ſoul under the dominion of iniquity, and ſhuts out all reaſonable hope of a reformation: *They are corrupt; they do abominable works*; and there is no proſpect of their doing otherwiſe, ſince *they call not upon the LORD* ←.

* Heb. xii. 14. † Rom. xiii. 14. ‡ Iſ. i. 2, 3.
‖ Deut. xxxii. 29. § Hag. i. 5, 7. ¶ Job xi. 12.
† Job xv. 4. ← Pſal. xiv. 4.

Religious, yet neglect prayer! Impoſſible. Can a man live without food? can he breathe without air? No more can you withſtand temptation, or exerciſe godlineſs, unleſs you *watch unto prayer* *.—The neglect of prayer is not only ſinful in itſelf, but the ſure ſign of an unſanctified heart, and the wide inlet to every unrighteous practice. "Shew me a prayerleſs perſon," ſaid one, "and I will ſhew you a graceleſs perſon."—Turn then, ſinners, turn, without delay, to a habit of prayer; of ſecret, ſerious, earneſt prayer: otherwiſe, you cannot expect that the wrath of GOD ſhould be turned away from you. No; when he whets his glittering ſword, and his hand takes hold on judgment, *you* are the perſons that cauſe the indignation; *you* are the perſons who have reaſon to tremble at the ſtroke. For thus it is written in that venerable book, which is a tranſcript of the divine will, and the rule of the divine procedure; *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen, that know thee not; pour out thy fury upon the families that call not on thy name* †.

3. Turn from your *inſenſible* ſtate.——Be ſenſible of your guilt, your miſery, your ruin. Thoughtleſs and prayerleſs people, you are ſinners before the GOD of heaven; you are the children of his wrath; you are the objects of his vengeance; condemned and accurſed by his holy word. O! may the LORD of all power rend the veil from your underſtandings, and ſhew you your perilous, your dreadfully-perilous condition.

If, while I am ſpeaking, the *earth* ſhould *reel* to and fro, and be in ſtrong convulſions under your feet; if it ſhould open its horrid jaws, and gape frightfully wide to devour you; not one in the aſſembly but would be greatly alarmed. How then can you be careleſs and unconcerned, when hell from beneath is opening her mouth, to ſwallow you up in endleſs perdition?——If this building was *rocking* over your heads, and tottering on every ſide; if the beams were burſting, and the walls cleaving; you would be ſtruck with aſtoniſhment and horror. And how is it that you are under no apprehenſions, when the indignation of an almighty GOD is ready to fall upon you; which, far more inſupportable than the fall of loaded roofs, or ponderous millſtones, muſt even grind you to powder.——If the French were landed, and an army of deſperate Papiſts ravaging the nation; if you were purſued, or ſurrounded, by thoſe barbarous enemies of your religion and country; if their ſwords, reeking with Britiſh blood, were now at your throats; you would tremble for your lives. And will you not feel ſome concern for your ſouls, when the ſword of Omnipotence is ſharpened to cut you in pieces! when, for aught you know, it may be already unſheathed; may have received a commiſſion to give the fatal blow; and, before another hour paſſes, may actually ſtrike.——If the late diſtemper among the cattle, ſhould turn to a *plague* among men; if it ſhould ſweep away thouſands and ten thouſands to an untimely grave; if you ſhould ſee multitudes of your neighbours *ſickening*, *dropping*, *dying* on every ſide? certainly you would be terrified. How then can you remain unimpreſſed, when the curſe ‡ of GOD is approaching you? when the curſe of GOD is hovering over you? when the curſe of GOD is ready to be poured out upon you? and turn all your delights into weeping, wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth?

Behold then, ſinners, inconſiderate and inſenſible ſinners, you are this day impleaded at GOD's bar: you are found guilty before the JUDGE of the world: you are upon the very brink of everlaſting deſtruction. ——Not the earth, but *hell*, is opening her mouth to devour you; not the ſtones and timber of your houſes, but the *vengeance* of the Moſt HIGH, is ruſhing down upon you. The ſword, not of an enraged adverſary, but of GOD's moſt *tremendous* diſpleaſure is

* Eph. vi. 18. † Jer. x. 25. ‡ Gal. iii. 10.

drawn,

drawn, perhaps ſtretched out to deſtroy you: the peſtilence, or what is infinitely more to be dreaded than the peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs, the *curſe* of GOD is ready to break forth upon you.——And will not theſe terrors awaken you, alarm you, perſuade you *?—Thou GOD of the world, and GOD of our ſouls, let not thy judgments and thy threatenings go forth in vain!

I hope ſome of you are inclined to aſk,—How or to what ſhould we be perſuaded? If ſo, thy ſecond particular will ſuggeſt the proper anſwer.

II. What the wicked man ſhould *turn to?—To do that which is lawful and right:* to repent of ſin, and love GOD; to be pure in heart, and holy in all manner of converſation. This is implied in the exhortation of the text; this is the indiſpenſable duty of all men; and to promote this is the continual aim of our miniſtry.

But you are guilty, ruined, impotent creatures.——*Guilty*, and can you, under a load of treſpaſſes, ariſe and do your LORD's will?——*Ruined*, and can you, amidſt ſuch diſcouraging circumſtances, have any heart to ſet about the work of reformation?——*Impotent*, and can you, under the moſt deplorable weakneſs, perform the moſt difficult of all ſervices?—No; you muſt firſt be relieved and enabled, before you can be ſufficient for theſe things. Like the woman bowed down with a ſpirit of infirmity, or like the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, you muſt receive reſtoration and ſtrength from GOD your SAVIOUR. Turn then to CHRIST, who ſays by his prophet, *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf, but in ME is thy help* †.

If you ſhould inquire, What ſhall I find in CHRIST?—All that you can want; all that you can wiſh; incomparably more than I am able to expreſs. For *it hath pleaſed the FATHER, that in CHRIST ſhould all fulneſs dwell* ‡.

Becauſe you are *guilty*, and have a burden of iniquity on your ſouls, HE is *the Lamb of* GOD, *that taketh away the ſin of the world* ‖: a lamb of *GOD*'s own appointing; a lamb of infinite excellence and dignity; to whom nothing is equal, nothing comparable. This Lamb of *GOD* has ſhed his blood for ſinners; has ſuffered death for ſinners; yea, has died in their ſtead, and endured all that vengeance which they have deſerved. In this moſt wonderful and perfect manner has he obtained their pardon! pardon, not of ſome only, but of all ſins; be they ever ſo numerous, or ever ſo heinous, it maketh no difference with him. An infinite *SAVIOUR* taketh away millions, unnumbered millions of the moſt abominable iniquities, with as much eaſe as he expiates a ſingle offence, or the ſmalleſt fault. *He blotteth out tranſgreſſions*, aggravated tranſgreſſions, innumerable tranſgreſſions, *as a cloud* §: as eaſily and as completely as the wind ſweeps away a floating cloud from the face of the ſky. Delivered from this load of guilt, you will be fitted to *walk* in the way of *GOD*'s commandments, *and not be weary*; yea, *to run, and not faint* ¶.

Becauſe you are ruined, and have nothing that may recommend you to the moſt high *GOD*, CHRIST has brought in a righteouſneſs—a complete righteouſneſs—a divine righteouſneſs. Conſider the unſpotted purity of his nature, and the unſinning obedience of his life; conſider his fervent charity to man, and his patient reſignation to *GOD*; conſider all his exalted virtues, and all his exemplary actions; theſe, all theſe, in their utmoſt perfection, are not only for the imitation, but for the juſtification alſo, of ſuch ſinners as you and I. *His name is JEHOVAH*, which ſpeaks incomprehenſible grandeur in him; *JEHOVAH, our righteouſneſs* †, which ſpeaks unutterable comfort to us. In this righteouſneſs we may be fully accepted, and entitled to life eternal. Of this we may make our boaſt, and ſay, *In the* LORD *have I righteouſneſs* *; I, a tranſgreſſor, have a real righteouſneſs; I, a defective creature, have a conſummate righteouſneſs; I, a frail relapſing Chriſtian, have an invariable and everlaſting righteouſneſs. O! what a treaſure is this! what an unſpeakable gift is this! Is there a cordial that can revive our ſpirits, is there a motive that can animate us to duty, like juſtification through IMMANUEL's righteouſneſs?—Bleſſed LORD! this makes thy yoke eaſy, and thy burden light.

Becauſe you are weak and *diſabled*, CHRIST has the *reſidue* of the SPIRIT †; the *fulneſs* of the SPIRIT ‡; the *ſeven* SPIRITS of GOD are before his throne ‖. The HOLY GHOST, in all his operations, and with all his graces, CHRIST ſends to whomſoever he pleaſes §.——He gave this ineſtimable bleſſing to Saul the perſecutor and blaſphemer: he gave this ineſtimable bleſſing to many of his murderers and crucifiers: he ſtill confers the heavenly gift on his enemies; *yea, on the rebellious alſo* ¶. And the promiſe, the free gracious promiſe, *is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the* LORD our GOD, by the preaching of his goſpel, *ſhall call* †.

How ſalutary and beneficial are the effects of this gift! our LORD himſelf, who beſt knew, has admirably ſhewn. *He that believeth on ME, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water* +. This ſpake he of the SPIRIT, which every one that turns to him, and believes on him, ſhall receive. Obſerve ſome beautiful and copious river; how it exhilarates the country, and fructifies the ſoil through which it paſſes; beſtows a thouſand conveniencies, and gives birth to a thouſand delights, where-ever it takes its winding courſe. So the COMFORTER dwelling in the heart, gives ſuch charming views of CHRIST and his unſearchable riches, as gladden the conſcience, and make us truly happy. Hence, as from an inexhauſtible ſource, true holineſs flows, and every ſpiritual good. This diſpoſes us to love our neighbour: this teaches us to be meek in ſpirit: and this will raiſe our deſires far above earthly, ſenſual, tranſitory things, even as David's thoughts were raiſed far above the ſhepherd's ſcrip, when he ſat exalted on the throne of Iſrael.

Under the influence of this divine SPIRIT, you will ſay, "CHRIST has taken away the execrable filth of "my ſins; and ſhall I wallow in the mire of iniquity "again?——CHRIST has delivered me from the pit "of everlaſting deſtruction; and ſhall I leap into thoſe "unquenchable flames, from which, as a brand, I have "been ſnatched?——In my adorable REDEEMER, I "have a perfect righteouſneſs, and am completely juſ-"tified; and ſhall I not endeavour to walk worthy of "ſuch favours; to ſhew my gratitude for ſuch bene-"ficence, by bringing forth the fruits of righteouſneſs "in all my converſation?"

Yes, brethren; when you are turned to CHRIST, to receive his atonement, to rely on his righteouſneſs, to be filled with his SPIRIT; it will be with your ſoul as it is with the *earth*, when it is turned to the *ſun*. The earth, you ſee, is now barren and unfruitful, becauſe it has been very much withdrawn from the enlivening beams of the ſun. 'Ere long it will be replaced under the full influences of that fountain of light and heat. Then what a change will take place! how will the flowers appear on the ground! how will the leaves adorn the trees! how will the ſinging of birds be heard in our land! So ſhall holineſs and a heavenly temper be produced in your ſouls; ſo ſhall obedience, with all the fruits of godlineſs, flouriſh in

* 2 Cor. v. 11. † Hoſ. xiii. 9.
‡ Col. i. 19. ‖ John i. 29.
§ If. xliv. 22. ¶ If. xl. 31. † Jer. xxiii. 6.

* If. xlv. 24. † Mal. ii. 15.
‡ Col. i. 19. ‖ Rev. i. 4. § John xvi. 7.
¶ Pſal. lxviii. 18. † Acts 39. + John vii. 38.

your

Your lives; when this *Sun of righteousness* manifests himself in your hearts, makes you partakers of his salvation, and thus *arises upon you with healing under his wings*.

Should any one doubt, whether this is the way to do that which is lawful and right; I ask,—Is it not a *pleasing* way? such as we should wish for; such as we should prefer above all others; and such as will render our LORD's service perfect freedom?—Is it not a *rational* way? apparently adapted to engage the heart, to strengthen the hand, and thereby to fit the whole man for every good work?

Besides, is it not the way appointed by GOD?—— Would we "earnestly *repent*, and be heartily sorry for "all our misdoings?" The wisdom of GOD assures us, this sorrow must arise from believing views of CHRIST; from *looking unto him whom we have pierced* †; looking unto him as wounded for *our* transgressions, and bruised for *our* iniquities. This, if any thing, will incline us to be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, for all our abominations. Thus, and thus only, shall we experience that *godly sorrow, which worketh repentance not to be repented of*.

Would we *love* GOD? The oracles of heaven inform us, that we must first see his love; his infinitely-free, and infinitely-tender love towards us; his love not imputing any sin to our souls, but laying all our iniquities upon his own SON. Then shall *we love him*, when we perceive and know, that *he has*, in this most divinely gracious manner, regarded—*loved*—blessed us.

Would we be *pure* in heart? The LORD *purifieth the heart by faith* ‡: faith in CHRIST, as shedding his most precious blood, as giving his most glorious person, for our ransom; and, by his one oblation, *finishing our transgression; making reconciliation for our iniquity*; yea, *perfecting us for ever*: insomuch that we may boldly and assuredly say, *Through the grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST we shall be saved*. He that hath this faith and this hope *purifieth himself, even as he is pure*.

Would we *renounce all ungodliness*? would we *live soberly, righteously, and godlily* ‖? By grace we must be enabled; even that grace which brings salvation, a finished and free salvation to sinners. That grace, appearing in the heart, and appropriated by faith, is the sure, the effectual means of true sanctification; the sure, the effectual motive to willing obedience.—Therefore our LORD says, *He that eateth me, even he shall live by me* §. *He that eateth me*, that receiveth my righteousness and redemption; that maketh a daily use of me and my benefits, for the refreshment and health of his soul; as people make a daily use of their necessary food, for the nourishment and support of their bodies: *even he shall live by me*; he shall live to GOD in real holiness here, and live with GOD in everlasting glory hereafter.—— This method will strengthen and prepare us for discharging all the duties of a Christian life, as bread strengthens and prepares the labourer for dispatching the business of his toilsome calling. Whereas, without using this sovereign expedient, we shall be as incapable of exercising ourselves unto godliness, as the hireling, deprived of his usual meals, would be incapable of performing his daily task.

Upon the whole, brethren, we do not urge you to make brick without straw: we do not call upon you to arise and work, without shewing you from whence you ability and vigour are to proceed.——— Some, perhaps, might exhort you to all holy obedience; but, neglecting these most necessary directions, their exhortations would be comfortless and insignificant; because you might fetch a sigh, and may answer, "All this "I would gladly do, but alas! we are not able!" Whereas here is grace sufficient for you in CHRIST.—— Whatever hinders you, CHRIST removes; whatever you want, CHRIST bestows; *that, being delivered from your enemies, and from the hand of all that hate you*; from the influence of all that embarrasses, and all that discourages you; *you may serve him, without* slavish or disquieting *fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of your life* *.

Happy deliverance! thrice happy conduct! but happier still the issue of all!—Which reminds me of my last inquiry; namely,

III. What will be the effect of this turning?—*He*, the wicked man, thus turned, *shall save his soul alive*.

He shall *save*—Safety shall be his companion; safety shall be his guard; safety shall escort him through the dangers of life. All the days of his appointed time he *shall dwell under the defence of the Most HIGH, and abide under the shadow of the ALMIGHTY* †.——Most desirable situation! especially when judgments, desolating and destructive judgments, are abroad.——While the storm of calamity is gathering, or when the tempest of tribulation is raging, O! what a calm must it create in the heart, to have the eternal GOD for our refuge! to say within ourselves, "The hand that *is stretched over* "*the sea, and shakes the kingdoms* of the earth; the "hand that *rends the mountains*, and *scatters the everlasting hills* ‖; that hand is my defence and my shield!"

Save his *soul*—It is not improbable, but his bodily welfare may be secured. GOD may set a mark upon his forehead, and command the sword of the destroying angel to pass over his house. But however this may be determined, his soul shall be safe. As to his spiritual welfare, he has a *unit of protection* under the great seal of heaven. The LORD JESUS is his ever faithful guardian, and *none shall pluck him out of the divine* REDEEMER's *hand* §. The roaring lion may go about, seeking to devour him: but he has a strong city, which the infernal adversary cannot storm; he has an impregnable bulwark, which the powers of darkness cannot scale. Though he fall, the arm of CHRIST will raise him; though he be defiled, the blood of CHRIST will cleanse him; though he die, it will be no loss, but gain. HE that has the keys of the grave, will give commandment concerning his mouldering bones; HE that lives for evermore, will receive his departing soul.—This, perhaps, may be meant by that other emphatical word, *alive*;

He shall save his soul *alive*—He shall not barely be safe, but happy. He shall enjoy what truly deserves the name of life. A man may escape from his enemy, by flying to a fortified castle: but in the castle there may be drought and famine. He may perish by these disasters, though preserved from the pursuing foe. It shall not be thus with the returning, believing, renewed sinner. He shall be saved with a complete and everlasting salvation. He is a child of GOD, and an heir of glory: he shall rejoice in CHRIST JESUS here, and shall enter into the joy of his LORD hereafter.——When the earth is burnt up, he shall see it; when the heavens pass away, he shall stand with boldness; when all nature sinks into dissolution, he shall not only survive, but enjoy the ruin. He shall leave a dissolving world, to possess a kingdom in heaven; to wear a crown of righteousness; and to be for ever with, for ever like, his blessed and glorious LORD.

* Mal. iv. 2. † Zech. xii. 10. ‡ Acts xv. 9.

‖ Tit. ii. 12. § John vi. 57.

* Luke i. 74, 75. † Psal. xci. 1.

‡ Deut. xxxiii. 27. ‖ Hab. iii. 6.

§ John x. 28.

We

We have now shewn—what the wicked man should *from*,—what he should turn *to*,—what will be the of this turning.——Give me leave to ask, Has the of the LORD been revealed? are you impressed the awful, or encouraged by the comfortable truths? ly, perhaps you will be ready to say, "Will *CHRIST* ceive *me*? will he make *me* a partaker of these in- comparable benefits? shall such a one, who is so very *worthy*, find favour in his sight?"

Yes, such a one may find favour. Any one, every e who comes, he will receive. He sends his ministers *invite* you; he sends his judgments to *compel* you; he s every expedient to *gain* you.—He bids earthquakes r the foundations of nature, and turn mighty cities o ruinous heaps, that you may be built on that rock hich shall never be shaken. He calls the sword of r out of its scabbord, and commands it to be bathed blood, that you may fly for safety to the Prince of ace. While ruin and desolation are pursuing their eadful work all around, he throws open the doors of grace and righteousness, and most compassionately ks, "Come, my people; come, poor offenders; enter into these chambers, and find rest *."

Is any of you inclined to reply, "Will *CHRIST* in- deed receive me, who am not only a sinner,—but a *great* sinner,—a *long persisting* sinner,—and now seem to come but at the *last hour*; more like one driven by fear, than drawn by love?"——What thinkest thou? ould the widow of Nain, who went mourning after e corpse of her only son, almost inconsolable with her ss; would she be unwilling to receive him, when our *ORD* reanimated the cold clay, and *delivered him* alive *his mother* †? Would she need much importunity, and rdly be prevailed on, to embrace her beloved, her mented child? Impossible to suppose. Remember hat *CHRIST* has *done* for sinners; what he has *suffered* r sinners; how his bowels *yearn* over sinners; and it ll appear equally impossible that he should reject any turning prodigate.

Reject! No. The good father, aged and venerable he was, hastened; yea, *ran* to meet the prodigal. e fell on his neck, and tenderly kissed the dissolute outh ‡. So, with such readiness, and such compas- on, will the everlasting *FATHER* receive you to his mily, his favour, his love.——Nay more, he will re- ive you with *joy*. He is the good Shepherd; you are e lost sheep; he is come, in his word, to seek you; hen you turn to him, he has found you. Then, says e scripture, the good shepherd goes home with his re- overed sheep, *rejoicing* ‖. O let your minister, and hich is unspeakably more engaging) let the blessed *ESUS* have joy of you, my brethren; even that *JE- US* by whom sinners are *dearly beloved and longed for* §; ho has no greater delight than to save them from their iquities, and number them among his children.

If you should answer,—"This a matter of the utmost importance. It lies at the very root of all my com- fort. Let me hear it confirmed from our *LORD*'s own mouth. *I will hearken what the LORD GOD will say concerning me* ¶."

Hear then his own *promise*; the most precious pro- mise that words can form, or fancy conceive; *Whoso- ever cometh to me*, for pardon, for justification, for holi- ness, *I will in no wise cast him out* ††.——*Whosoever*; whe- ther he be high or low, learned or illiterate; whether e be a servant or a master, a prince or a beggar; no one is excepted, no one shall be refused. *In no wise*: on no consideration of past transgressions, on no account of present depravity, on no fore-knowledge of future fail- ings. Only let him come, *only let him come*, and nothing shall debar him from the enjoyment of my benefits; nothing shall separate him from the endearments of my love.

Hear his kind *invitation*; *Return unto me, for I have redeemed you* *. Ye that have hitherto been strangers to serioufness, and always alienated from me; *turn unto me*, and I will not so much as upbraid you † with your folly.——Ye that are now backsliders, and have for a season ungratefully departed from me; *turn unto me*, and I will heal your backslidings; my stripes shall make you whole.—Ye that have been slaves to vice; have sold yourselves to work wickedness; and are grown old in abominable practices; it is not too late even for you. *I have redeemed* even such as *you*.—I shake the pillars of nature, and rock the foundations of the world; *I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering* ‡. Yet, for such as you, *I gave my back to the smiters, and hid not my face from shame and spitting* ‖. Yes, sinners; sinners of every kind; I bore the curse of the law, and died the death of the cross, on purpose that I might re- deem such as you.—Most amiable *REDEEMER*! who would not listen to a call so wonderfully endearing? Sinners, how can you withstand a motive so sweetly constraining!

Hear his solemn *oath*; *As I live, saith the LORD GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel* §? Was there ever any declaration so charming? or any address so affectionate?—See! how the high and lofty ONE condescends! He commands in heaven, on earth, through hell; yet, more like a supplicant than a sove- reign, he vouchsafes to solicit and beseech you. From the habitation of his glory he cries, *Turn ye*, poor pe- rishing creatures.—Again he cries, *Turn ye* to your GOD and SAVIOUR; that ye may be delivered from all your transgressions, and iniquity may not be your ruin. —To take away all your reluctance, he pleads, he ex- postulates, *Why will ye die?* why will ye destroy your- selves, and be undone for ever?—That you may have no doubt of a free pardon and a favourable reception, *he sweare*; swears by himself, by his own life and im- mortal perfections, that he *has no pleasure in your death*; but shall rejoice, infinitely rejoice in your recovery and salvation.

Here then you have the *promise*, the *invitation*, the *oath* of the *LORD*. Can there be greater encourage- ment? will not this threefold cord draw you?——Should you say, "I cannot turn; I am tied and bound "with the chain of my corruptions. O! that *CHRIST*" --Fear not: he will, he will. He that sends his mi- nister to give you this exhortation; he that sends his SPIRIT to work this desire in your soul; he that spilt his blood to obtain all blessings for you; he will put forth his strength, and turn you to himself. He stretched his beneficent hand, and saved Peter from sinking in the tempestuous sea. What he did for him is a pattern and a pledge of what he is ready to do for you.—Only continue to seek his face; let your heart talk of him; set his unbounded goodness and almighty power before your eyes; meditate on his in- finite propitiation and incomprehensible merits; con- sider his everlasting righteousness and never-ceasing intercession; look upon all these as your own. To look upon them as *your own*, you have a *warrant*, you have a *command*.—And if *CHRIST* has done so great things for you, you may assuredly believe, that, in his due time, in his wise manner, he will *bring you spiritual health and cure*; he will carry on what he has begun, and enable you to grow in grace. He will

* Is. xxvi. 20. † Luke vii. 15.

‡ Luke xv. 20. ‖ Luke xv. 5. § Philip. iv. 1.

¶ Psal. lxxxv. 8. †† John vi. 37.

* Is. xliv. 22. † James i. 5. ‡ Is. l. 3.
‖ Ver. 6. § Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

begun, and enable you to grow in grace. He will comfort our hearts, and ſtabliſh you in every good work.

Shall I proceed?—I have already been copious, perhaps ſomewhat tedious. Yet you will bear with me on this diſtinguiſhed and ſolemn occaſion: yes, you will bear with me a little longer; for I am loath, very loath to diſmiſs you, without perſuading you. Perſuading! alas! I cannot. *GOD, and none but GOD, can perſuade Japheth* *. However, as an inſtrument in his all-powerful hand, let me addreſs you once again.

I obſerve ſeveral perſons here, on this day of humiliation, who very rarely attend the public worſhip.—Why, my friends, why do you wrong your own ſouls? why do you withdraw yourſelves from the preaching of the goſpel? Know ye not, that *JESUS paſſeth by* †, in the way of his ordinances? Here you may, like Bartimeus of old, approach the Son of David; here you may obtain faith and holineſs. Faith cometh by hearing, and holineſs by the word of *GOD*. And are not theſe bleſſings worth your attendance? can you live happily without them? can you die comfortably without them? or can you, without them, be prepared to meet your *GOD*, when he cometh to judge the world?—Why ſhould you forſake the aſſembling yourſelves together? Do you hear terrifying or diſtreſſing doctrines in this place? is not this the houſe of praiſe, as well as of prayer? does not the *joyful ſound* echo under theſe roofs? Is not *CHRIST* ſet forth crucified before your eyes? crucified for ſuch offenders as you! crucified that ſuch offenders as you may be pardoned, may be accepted, may be glorified? And will you depiſe ſuch a divinely-compaſſionate *SAVIOUR*? will you refuſe ſuch aſtoniſhingly-rich mercies? O! that hereafter you may *be glad when they ſay unto you, Let us go into the courts of the LORD* ‡.

Should my wiſhes prove vain, I have at leaſt delivered my meſſage. If you periſh through obſtinacy and unbelief, I am clear from your blood. I call heaven and earth to witneſs, you have been *warned*, you have been *inſtructed*, you have been *exhorted*. You cannot ſay, you periſh for lack of knowledge; for life and ſalvation have been ſet before you, have been brought to your very door, and your are importuned to lay hold on them. You will therefore be without excuſe, and have no cloke for your guilt.

But why ſhould I leave you with ſuch melancholy apprehenſions? Let me hope better things of you: let me hope that you will not diſregard *theſe* admonitions, however they may have diſregarded *too many* exhortations of this kind. This is a remarkable day; O! that it may be memorable on account of your turning to GOD. Let this be its diſtinction through all your future life; let this be its diſtinction through all the ages of eternity: that you may ſay,—when death ſummons you into the inviſible ſtate; when the trump of GOD calls you to the great tribunal; when you mingle with ſaints and angels in the kingdom of heaven,—"Bleſſed "be GOD for that ſolemn day, and its ſacred exerciſes! "That was the day of my better birth. Then I began "to conſider; then I began to pray; then I began to "ſee my undone condition, and my extreme need of "a *SAVIOUR*: then too I ſaw *JESUS*, giving himſelf "a ſacrifice for my ſins, and redeeming me to GOD, "with his blood."—Happy! thrice happy! inexpreſſibly-happy day! if *thus*, if *thus* improved!

You have, I preſume, abſtained from your uſual food, as you have been joining in confeſſion, ſupplication, and prayer. This is well done: but this is only half; rather it is, by infinite degrees, the ſmalleſt part of your duty. It is not ſaid, When the wicked man abſtaineth from his uſual food; but *when he turneth from his wickedneſs*, as the conſequence of his believing in *CHRIST*. It is not ſaid, When the wicked man jo in public confeſſion to *GOD*; but when *he doth t which is lawful and right*, as the fruit of his fellowſh with *CHRIST*: THEN he ſhall *ſave*—he ſhall ſave *ſoul*—he ſhall ſave his ſoul *alive*. O that all, from t king on the throne, to the labourer in the barn; fr the higheſt nobleman, to the meaneſt tradeſman; t all might now be inclined, now be enabled, to turn u the *SAVIOUR* of the world. In him millions, unnu bered millions of wretched ſinners, have found recove and liberty; *recovery* from the death, and *liberty* fr the bondage of ſin. *And* (bleſſed be his unbound grace) *yet there is room.*

Then the national faſt would be a *national bleſſ* Whereas, without this all-important turning to t adorable *SAVIOUR*, what will the formalities of our d votion ſignify? They will be a mere lip-labour, a re gious trifling: nay, they will be a ſolemn mockery the *ALMIGHTY*, and provoke his abhorrence.—Do not *JEHOVAH* himſelf ſpeak to the ſame purpoſe? *it ſuch a faſt that I have choſen? a day for a man to afflict ſoul? is it to bow down his head as a bulruſh, and to ſpr ſackcloth and aſhes under him* *? to diſcontinue your or nary buſineſs, and refrain from a meal's meat? to ma a little doleful lamentation, and put up a few petitio extorted by fear? *Will you call this a faſt?* ſaith the hig and holy One, with an air of ſovereign contempt; *t an acceptable day to the LORD?* No verily; it is the mo odious hypocriſy; like crying, Hail maſter, with t tongue, while treachery and enmity fill the heart: *u leſs* you turn to *CHRIST*, that you may be waſhed, th you may be juſtified, that you may be ſanctified; tha having remiſſion of ſins through his blood, and pea of conſcience through his grace, you may feel the ban of wickedneſs looſed, and may become the willing ſe vants of righteouſneſs.

What is the *grand* ſin of our nation? Ignorance a neglect of *CHRIST*.—What is the *cauſe* of all our oth ſins? Ignorance and neglect of *CHRIST*.—Why ar the *judgments* of the *ALMIGHTY* hanging over ou heads? For ignorance and neglect of *CHRIST*. Neve therefore, ſhall we anſwer the end of our ſacred a ſembly, nor the deſign of *GOD*'s alarming viſitation till we begin to know *CHRIST*, to receive *CHRIST*, t make uſe of *CHRIST* by faith. When this is done, w may reaſonably hope,—that our prayers will go up wit acceptance, and not return again, till a bleſſing be ſent —that, as individuals, our *light ſhall break forth like t morning, and our health ſhall ſpring forth ſpeedily*;—that, a a community, *the favour of GOD ſhall go before us, and t glory of the LORD ſhall be our rere-ward* †.

Then may we look *around* on our moſt enraged ene mies, and ſay with the pſalmiſt, *Though an hoſt of me ſhould encamp againſt me, yet ſhall not my heart be afraid* ‡. —Then may we look *backward* to the late deſolatin earthquake, and ſay with the believers of old, *GOD i our refuge and ſtrength; therefore will we not fear, thoug the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carrie into the midſt of the ſea* ‖.—Then may we look *forward* to an incomparably more dreadful ſcene, even to the righteous *JUDGE*, and the great tribunal, and ſay with the triumphant apoſtle, *Who ſhall lay any thing to our charge? It is GOD that juſtifieth; who ſhall condemn us? it is CHRIST that died.*

Let me entreat you therefore, brethren, for the ſake of your own immortal ſouls, and for the welfare of our endangered nation; let me charge you, by all that is deſirable in time, and awful in eternity, not to neglect theſe counſels. Being ſo ſolemnly reproved, if you *harden your neck*, your deſtruction cometh ſudden-

* Gen. ix. 27. † Matth. xx. 30. ‡ Pſal. cxxii. 1.

* Iſ. lviii. 5. † Iſ. lviii. 8. ‡ Pſal. xxvii. 3.
‖ Pſal. xlvi. 1, 2. § Rom. viii. 33. 34.

ly,

ly, and *that without remedy* *. Having these warnings from the divine word, and warnings from the divine providence, *if ye still do wickedly*: it is not man, it is not an angel, it is GOD HIMSELF who declares, *Ye shall be consumed*—even *ye*—your country—*and your king* *.

* Prov. xxix. 1.

* 1 Sam. xii. 25.

SERMON IV.

The Cross of CHRIST the Christian's Glory.

Preached at the visitation of the Rev. John Brown, D. D. Archdeacon of Northampton, held at All Saints church in Northampton, on the 10th of May, 1753.

GAL. vi. 14.

GOD forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

THE cross of CHRIST was the favourite topic of St Paul's contemplation:—the cross of CHRIST was the chosen subject of his sermons, and the grand theme of his writings.———At all times, and in every capacity, he professed, he avowed, he *gloried* in the cross of CHRIST.———Nay, what is very remarkable, he gloried in *nothing* else;—and, what is still more observable, he *abhorred* the thought of glorying in any thing else. He speaks of such a practice in the language of detestation and dread, accounting it a high degree both of folly and of wickedness: *GOD forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

It may therefore be an employ worthy of our present attention, to inquire into the *nature*, the *reasonableness*, and the *wisdom* of this resolution. All which, I hope, will appear, if we consider,

I. In what the apostle would *not* glory.
II. In what he *did* glory.
III. What *reason* he had to glory in the cross of CHRIST.

These points being briefly dispatched, I shall beg leave to add a word of *application*, suggested by the tenor of the discourse, and adapted to the circumstances of my several hearers. And may that adorable JESUS, who has exchanged his cross for an heavenly crown, accompany all with his *divine blessing!*

Let us then inquire,

I. In what the apostle did *not* glory.——Not in the *greatness* of his *learning*, as a scholar. He was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; educated by the most famous tutor of the age. Nor was his genius, or his industry, inferior to the other advantages of his education. Yet all these advantages, with their correspondent acquisitions, he accounted no better than pompous ignorance, or refined folly.

Not in the *strictness* of his *life*, as a Jew.——In this respect he profited above his equals; *was taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers* *; *after the strictest sect of their religion he lived a Pharisee* †: was zealous, exceedingly zealous, of the whole ceremonial law, and of all the traditional constitutions. Which accomplishments must finish his character among his country men; must open his way to some of the first honours of the nation; and give him a name among those worthies, who were reputed *the excellent of the earth*. But what others counted gain, this *he* counted loss for CHRIST.

Not in the *eminency* of his *gifts*, nor in this *extent* of his *usefulness*, as a Christian minister.———He had been caught up into the third heaven; had heard the words of GOD, and seen the vision of the ALMIGHTY; had wrought all manner of wonders, and signs, and mighty deeds.———What was still more valuable, he had planted churches, and converted souls. His labours were gone out into all lands, and his words into the ends of the earth.———Yet all these acquirements, before the infinite GOD, were *defective*: all these performances, in point of justification, were *insufficient*. Therefore in *none* of these he gloried.——Which reminds me of the second inquiry;

II. In what the apostle *did* glory.——He gloried in a cross. Strange! What so *scandalous* as a cross? On a cross rebellious slaves were executed. The cross was *execrable* among men, and *accursed* even by GOD *. Yet the apostle glories in the cross.———Crucifixion not being used among us, the expression does not sound so *harsh*, neither is the idea so *horrid*. But to the ear of a Galatian, it conveyed much the same meaning, as if the apostle had gloried in a halter, gloried in the gallows, gloried in a gibbet †.

"Stupid creature," perhaps some may reply, "to "undervalue the most substantial endowments, and "glory in infamy itself!"——But stop a moment, and hear the apostle farther. He glories in the cross of

* Acts xxii. 3.

† Acts xxvi. 5.

* Gal. iii. 13.

† Some persons, I am informed, were disgusted at these words, *halter*, *gallows*, *gibbet*; they are so horridly contemptible?—To whom I would reply, that the cross, in point of ignominy and torment, included *all this* and *more*. Unless the English reader forms to himself some such image, he will never be able to apprehend the scandalous nature and shocking circumstances of his divine Master's death.

The words, I must confess, were *diversified*, and the sentiment was *reiterated*, on purpose to effect the mind with this astonishing truth. Neither can I prevail upon myself to expunge the expressions; unless I could substitute others of a more ignominious and execrable import. Only I would beg of the serious reader, to spend a moment in the following reflection:—"Is it so, that a *polite* and *delicate* ear can hardly endure

"so

CHRIST; that illustrious person, who was *anointed* to be the all-instructing Prophet, the all-atoning Priest, and the all-conquering King of the church.——In the cross of CHRIST JESUS; who, by the discharge of all those important offices, should *save* his people from the dominion of sin, and from the damnation of hell.——In the cross of CHRIST JESUS our LORD; and not ours only, but LORD of all; who doth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth *; *who hath on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written*, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS †.

And is it possible for any human heart to contemplate the cross of so *divine* a being, and not to glory? Is it possible to say, *Angels, he rules over* you; *but he died, he died on a cross for* me; and not exult in such transporting beneficence?—This will be more evident, if we examine,

III. What *reason* the apostle had to glory in the cross of CHRIST.——The cross, though in itself an ignominious tree; yet being the cross of CHRIST, is infinitely ennobled. It becomes the *tree of life*; it bears the divinest fruit; its clusters are all *spiritual* and *heavenly* blessings. Two or three of those clusters you will permit me to select; and may the GOD of all mercy make them better than a feast to every humble soul.

One blessing is the *pardon* of *sin*: the pardon of *all* sin, original and actual; sin that is remembered, and sin that is forgotten; sin, however circumstanced, or however aggravated. The pardon of all was purchased by the death of CHRIST;—completely purchased:—so that, against the true believer, sin shall never rise up in judgment; *shall not so much as be mentioned unto him* ‡; shall be done away, as though it had never been. For thus saith the ambassador of the Prince of peace, *Be it known unto you, man and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things* ‖.——Oh, my soul! my guilty soul! what are all the kingdoms of the world, and the glories of them, compared with this ineffable blessing! Yet this is but one among a multitude.

Another benefit, accruing from the cross of CHRIST, is *reconciliation with GOD*.——*When we were enemies, we were reconciled to GOD by the death of his Son* §. Not pardoned only, but accepted; from a state of *enmity*, restored to a state of *favour*; even that *favour which is better than life* ¶.——A privilege of such superlative excellency, that it was celebrated in the hymns of angels. When the heavenly host uttered a song, *this* was the subject of their harmonious joy; *Glory be to GOD in the highest; and on earth peace, good-will towards men* †.—— "By the birth of this wonderful child, and the death he "shall sustain, peace is made between heaven and "earth: and not *peace* only, but a divine *friendship* +— "commences. GOD regards the poor apostate race "of men, not only without indignation, but with com- "placency and delight. *He rejoices over them, to do "them good* *."

Another benefit is *holiness*; or, if you please, the truer the Christian morality.——Let none think, the believer in JESUS disparages *true morality*. True morality is the image of the blessed GOD; it is most charmingly delineated throughout the whole Bible; it is the beginning of heaven in the human soul; and its proper origin is from the cross of our divine Master.——For, through the merits of his death, sinners are made partakers of the *Holy Spirit*; who writes upon their hearts, and makes legible in their conversation, what was anciently written upon the mitre of the high priest, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.—And oh! what a *motive* is the cross of CHRIST to the exercise of every virtue! *He died; my* LORD, *my* JUDGE, *my* KING, *died; to redeem me from all iniquity, and make me zealous of good works.* How powerfully, far beyond any *naked instructions*, or *abstract reasonings*, do such considerations invite us,—urge us,—constrain us †, to *renounce* all ungodliness, and *adorn* the gospel of GOD our SAVIOUR!

Another blessing is *victory over death*.——This also is the fruit of that once detested, but now ever-beloved tree. For thus it is written, *That, through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage* ‡. The devil is said to have the power of death; because, by tempting too successfully our first parents, he *brought* death into the world; because, by tempting their posterity to sin, and too often prevailing, he *arrays* death in horror; he *arms* death with its sting. But CHRIST, by expiating our guilt, has disarmed this last enemy; has taken away its sting; and made it not loss, but *gain to die* ‖.——The *gay*, and the *healthy*, know not how to form an estimate of this deliverance: nor can any words of mine describe it with proper energy. Go to *dying* beds; *there* you will learn its true worth. Ask some *agonizing* friend; he, and he alone, can tell you, what a blessing it is, to have the king of terrors converted into a messenger of peace.

One blessing more I would mention, and earnestly wish it, in due time, to all my hearers; *an entrance into heaven*. This too is the produce of our REDEEMER's cross.——St John saw a bright assembly of happy beings, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, rejoicing before the throne of GOD. *These*, said one of the venerable elders, *are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the LAMB.* THEREFORE *are they before the throne* §.——*They came out of great tribulation:* they suffered, it is probable, in the service of CHRIST: perhaps they laid down their lives for his sake. But *this* was not their passport into the regions of bliss.——*They washed their robes in the blood of the LAMB:* they had applied to their own souls the merits and atonement of the crucified JESUS. By *this* means they were presented without spot and

" so much as the *sound* of the words? How amazing then was " the condescension! how charming and adorable the goodness " of GOD's *illustrious Son*, to *bear* all that is signified by these in- " tolerably-vile terms! bear it *willingly*, bear it *chearfully*, for us " men, and our salvation!"

* Dan. iv. 35. † Rev. xix. 16.

‡ Ezek. xviii. 22. ‖ Acts xiii. 38, 39.

§ Rom. v. 10. ¶ Pfal. lxiii. 3. † Luke ii. 14.

+ There seems to be a beautiful *gradation* in this angelic hymn. *Good-will* is more expressive, and denotes a richer blessing, than *peace*.—The original Εὐδοκία is a word of the most amiable and noble meaning. It signifies a very *high esteem*, and a very *tender benevolence*. By a word of the same import, the almighty Father expresses has infinite satisfaction in the person and undertaking of his beloved Son. Matth. iii. 17.

Would my reader have the liveliest paraphrase on this passage, or see the actings of this divine complacency described with inimitable delicacy; let him attend to the prophet Zephaniah; *The LORD thy GOD, in the midst of thee, is mighty. He will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing*, chap. iii. 17.

* Deut. xxviii. 63. † 2 Cor. v. 14.

Religion! thou the soul of happiness;
And, groaning Calvary, of thee! *There* shine
The noblest truths; *there* strongest motives sting!
There sacred violence assaults the soul;
There nothing but *compulsion* is forborne.

Night-Thoughts, No. IV.

‡ Heb. ii. 14, 15.

‖ Philip. i. 21. § Rev. vii. 9, 14, 15.

blameless;

blameleſs; on *this* account they were admitted to ſee the "King of heaven in his beauty *;" and to be ever, ever with the *LORD*.

Since then the croſs of *CHRIST* was *demonſtrative* of ſuch ſtupendous *love*; ſince it is *productive* of *benefits* innumerable, invaluable, and eternal; was there not a *cauſe* for the apoſtle to glory on this behalf?—Nay, might not the very ſtones have cried out, to reproach him with *inſenſibility* and *ingratitude*, if he had neglected to glory in the croſs of *CHRIST*?—And ſince this love was ſhewed, theſe benefits were procured, not for *him* only, but for *us*, and for all generations; does not this afford me an opportunity of applying the doctrine to each particular hearer?

1. Let me addreſs, or rather let me congratulate, my *brethren in the miniſtry*.——Though you cannot control the laws of nature: though you cannot ſee into the ſecrets of futurity; you have the ſame cauſe of glorying with the very chiefeſt of the apoſtles; a cauſe of glorying, which that holy man of GOD eſteemed far above all ſuch miraculous abilities. You have the croſs of *CHRIST*,

For your *ſtudy*, as *men*;
For your *hope*, as *Chriſtians*;
For your *preaching*, as *miniſters*.

For your *ſtudy*, as *men*. Here the *reaſoning* faculties may exert themſelves with everlaſting improvement, and everlaſting delight.—Here we contemplate the wonders, the unparalleled wonders of a GOD made *man*; dying as a pattern of patience, as a martyr for truth, as an all-perfect ſacrifice for ſin.—Here the *LORD JEHOVAH* hath fully granted, what his ſervant Moſes † ſo earneſtly requeſted; he hath made *all his glory* to paſs before the aſtoniſhed eyes of angels and of men. Here *Juſtice* has let her moſt awful terrors in array; even while *Goodneſs* appears, with inexpreſſible lovelineſs, and the moſt attractive beauty.—Here *Truth*, more unſhaken than a rock, takes her immoveable ſtand; and *Mercy*, tenderer than the mother's tear, yearns with bowels of everlaſting pity.——In a word, the croſs of *CHRIST* is a conſpicuous theatre, on which *all* the divine perfections unite, and harmonize, and ſhine forth with tranſcendent luſtre.

As *Chriſtians*, we have, in the croſs of *CHRIST*, the *ruheſt proviſion* for our own ſpiritual wants. This is a foundation of the ſublimeſt *hope*, and a fountain of the moſt exuberant *joy*: this affords matter for the deepeſt *humility*, and yields fuel for the moſt flaming *love*. Faith in our crucified JESUS is an ever-active principle of the moſt chearful and exact *obedience;* is an ample and inexhauſtible magazine, from which we may fetch arms to conquer, abſolutely conquer the allurements of the world, the ſolicitations of the fleſh, and the temptations of the devil.—By this a way is opened for us unto *the holy of holies*: and what may we not venture to aſk, what may we not expect to receive, who have the blood of the everlaſting covenant to plead, in all our approaches to the throne of grace?—Having therefore *ſuch* an high prieſt; having in his croſs, *unſearchable* riches; who ſhall make our glorying void? what ſhall hinder us from rejoicing and ſaying? "Bleſſed be *GOD* for theſe opening beauties of ſpring! bleſſed be *GOD* for the expected fruits of autumn! bleſſed be *GOD* for ten thouſand thouſand gifts of his indulgent providence! but *above all*, bleſſed be *GOD* for the croſs of *CHRIST*!"

As *miniſters* of the goſpel, we are not left to ſet before our hearers a ſyſtem of *refined Heatheniſm*; or to entertain them with *cold ſpiritleſs* lectures of virtue. No; we have the *infinitely-tender* love, the *immenſely-free* grace, of the bleeding, dying IMMANUEL, to diſplay—to improve—to enforce. And is there a topic in the whole compaſs of *oratory*, is there an argument amidſt all the ſtores of *reaſon*, ſo admirably calculated to touch the *fineſt movements* of the ſoul? to ſtrike all the *inmoſt ſprings* of action, with the moſt perſuaſive, the moſt commanding energy?—Would we alarm the *ſupine*, or intimidate the *preſumptuous*? we may call them to behold GOD's own Son weltering in blood, GOD's own Son tranſfixed with the arrows of juſtice; we may bid them conſider, if judgment begins with the immaculate MEDIATOR, where ſhall the irreclaimable ſinner appear? how will he *eſcape* the ſtroke? how *bear* the weight of GOD's everlaſting vengeance?—Would we comfort the *diſtreſſed*? we may point them to an atonement, whoſe merits are infinite, and able to ſave to the *very uttermoſt* *; we may lead them to a righteouſneſs, whoſe efficacy is unbounded, and ſufficient to juſtify *the ungodly*. And what *balm* can be ſo ſovereign for a wounded conſcience? Are we to ſupport the *weak*, and animate the *doubting*? here we may ſhew them promiſes, free promiſes †, exceeding great and precious promiſes, ratified by the oath of JEHOVAH, and ſealed by the blood of his Son. And what *cordials* can be ſo reſtorative to the drooping Chriſtian?

In ſhort, the doctrine of the croſs is ſuited to anſwer all the *great ends* of our miniſtry, and promote all the truly *valuable intereſts* of our people. By this the HOLY SPIRIT delights to work: and this, O *Satan*, *ſhall be thy plague*; this, O ſin, *ſhall be thy deſtruction* ‡.—However, therefore, the croſs might be to the Jews a ſtumbling block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs; GOD forbid that *we* ſhould glory in any thing elſe!—Let this be the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and ending ‖, of all our *public* miniſtrations.—Let us leave a ſavour of this knowledge, which is far better than precious ointment, in every *private* company!—Let it appear, from *all* our converſation, that the *affections* of our heart, and the *labours* of our life, are devoted, wholly devoted to our adored REDEEMER's croſs.—*Happy* the *people* who are under the care of ſuch miniſters! and *bleſſed* the *miniſters* who walk according to this rule!

2. Let me exhort all *true believers*; thoſe who are *vile* in their own eyes, and to whom *CHRIST* alone is *precious*.—Remember, brethren, what is written in the prophet: it is a deſcription of your ſtate; it is a direction for your conduct. *In the LORD*, the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, *ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and in him ſhall they glory* §.

Let none ſay that religion is a *gloomy* or *uncomfortable* ſtate; I call upon you this day to *rejoice* ¶. Let none ſay that religion is a *mean* or *deſpicable* thing; I call

* If. xxxiii. 17. † Exod. xxxiii. 18.

* Heb. vii. 25.

† To man the bleeding croſs has promis'd all:
The bleeding croſs has ſworn eternal grace:
Who gave his life, what grace will he deny?
Night-Thoughts, No. IV.

‡ Hoſ. xiii. 14.

‖ The author who could write the *ſpirited* and *weighty* lines which follow, muſt doubtleſs have had this conviction *deep* on his heart.

——Thou, my *all!*
My theme! my inſpiration! and my crown!
My ſtrength in age! my riſe in low eſtate!
My ſoul's ambition, pleaſure, wealth!—my world!
My light in darkneſs! and my life in death!
My boaſt through time! bliſs through eternity!
My *ſacrifice!* my *GOD!*—What things are theſe!
Night-Thoughts, No. IV.

§ If. xlv. 25.

¶ 'Tis this makes *Chriſtian triumph* a command;
'Tis this makes joy a *duty* to the wiſe.
Night-Thoughts, No. IV.

upon you this day to *glory*; and have the *divine* authority for both*.—You will diſhonour the bleſſed JESUS, you will diſparage his ſurpaſſing excellency, if you do not *confide* in him, and make your *boaſt* of him. CHRIST is King of heaven, CHRIST is Judge of the world, CHRIST is GOD over all. And of *ſuch* a SAVIOUR ſhall we not glory? Yes, verily; and in all circumſtances, and on every occaſion.

Amidſt your manifold *infirmities*, glory in CHRIST. For, though he was crucified in weakneſs, he hath all power in heaven and earth. And it is written before him, it is one of his immutable decrees, *ſin ſhall not have dominion over you* †.—Amidſt your various *failings*, glory in CHRIST. For his righteouſneſs covers all your imperfections, his righteouſneſs ſecures you from wrath and condemnation; and, though deficient in yourſelves, you are complete in him ‡.——Under the preſſure of *tribulations*, lift up your heads, and glory in the croſs; becauſe the Captain of your ſalvation was made perfect through ſufferings. If you ſuffer with him, you ſhall alſo reign with him. And the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the happineſs which CHRIST hath purchaſed with his agonies, and will quickly beſtow on his people.——When *death* approaches, death that cuts off the ſpirit of princes, and is terrible among the kings of the earth; do you ſtill glory in the croſs. Adhering to this banner, you may boldly and triumphantly ſay, *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory* ‖?—When that great, *tremendous day* ſhall come, which puts an end to time and terreſtrial things; when that awful, that *majeſtic voice* is heard, which commands all the race of Adam to appear at the bar; *then*, my dear brethren in CHRIST, *then* alſo ſhall *you* glory in the croſs. When others, in an agony of terror, call upon rocks to fall on them, and mountains to overwhelm them; *this* ſhall be *your* ſedate appeal; rather, *this* ſhall be *your* heroic challenge; *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of GOD's elect? It is GOD that juſtifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is CHRIST that died* §.—Then ſhall you enter the harbour of eternal reſt; not like a ſhipwrecked mariner cleaving to ſome broken plank, and hardly eſcaping the raging waves; but like ſome ſtately veſſel, with all her ſails expanded, and riding before a proſperous gale ¶.

3. Let me caution the *ſelf-righteous*: thoſe who more frequently think of *their own* piety than of CHRIST's *obedience*; are more apt to cry out with the Phariſee, *I am no extortioner, no adulterer*; than to confeſs with the publican, *GOD be merciful to me a ſinner*.—What ſhall I ſay to theſe perſons? Let me not be thought *cenſorious*, when my only aim is to be *faithful*. Beware, I beſeech you, beware, leſt you build for eternity, not on a *rock*, but on the *ſand*. However you may appear in *your own* ſight, before the *adorable* majeſty of the everlaſting GOD, before the *conſummate* perfection of his holy law, you are leſs than nothing, you are worſe than nothing: you are, indeed you are, deficiency and ſin. Renounce, therefore, renounce all dependence on ſelf. Truſt no longer in a refuge of lies; leſt all your admired attainments, at the day of final retribution, be like *ſtraw*, and *hay*, and *ſtubble*, in Nebuchadnezzar's burning fiery furnace.——Imitate the bleſſed penman of my text. Are you blameleſs in your external carriage? ſo was he. Are you exemplary in many points? ſo was he. Yet all this righteouſneſs he *accounted but dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS his LORD* *.—Be this your pattern. Write *emptineſs* upon your own duties, *emptineſs* upon your own works; and you ſhall be filled with all the *fulneſs* of GOD your SAVIOUR. Every other cauſe of glorying will be like the morning cloud, or the early dew, which *paſſeth away* †: but this cauſe of glorying will *ſtand faſt for evermore as the moon*, and *as the faithful witneſs in heaven* ‡.

Can I conclude, without adding a word of admonition to the *wicked?* thoſe, I mean, who are enemies to the croſs of CHRIST; who mind earthly things, but neither hunger nor thirſt after righteouſneſs.——My ſoul remembers the wormwood and the gall of ſuch a ſtate, and cannot but tenderly pity theſe unhappy people.—Alas! my friends, what have *you* to glory in? The devil and his angels expect ere long to glory in your deſtruction. Thoſe malignant fiends are eying you as their prey, and are impatient to begin your torment. Great, inexpreſſibly great is your danger: the *LORD* almighty open your eyes to diſcern it.—Nevertheleſs, your caſe is not deſperate. You may *yet* be *delivered*, "as a bird out of the ſnare of the fowler." Look unto the crucified JESUS. *Why* does he hang on that bloody tree? *why* are his hands pierced with iron? *why* is his body racked with pain? why his heart torn with anguiſh? It is for *you*, ſinners, for *you*. That blood is poured out, to cleanſe *you* from guilt; thoſe wounds are ſuſtained, to heal *your* conſciences; that anguiſh is endured, to obtain reſt for *your* ſouls.——In that mangled body *dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead* ‖. Great, beyond imagination great, is the merit of thoſe ſufferings. Why then, O! why will you die? why will you periſh for ever, who have an *all-ſufficient* propitiation in the croſs of CHRIST? Fly to this ſanctuary: fly before it be too late: fly, without a moment's delay. 'Tis an *inviolable* ſanctuary. None ever periſhed that fled by faith to the compaſſionate, the *divinely-compaſſionate* REDEEMER.——His death ſhall be a full ſatisfaction for your iniquities. A ſenſe of his immenſely-rich goodneſs ſhall *win* your affections; ſhall incline (what all the threatenings of damnation could never effect), ſhall incline you to *loath* your ſins, and to *love* his ſervice; ſhall ſmooth your path, and expedite your progreſs, to the regions of immortal honour and joy.

Having now, with great plainneſs of ſpeech, addreſſed my *brethren* in the *miniſtry*; having exhorted *believers*, cautioned the *ſelf-righteous*, and warned the *wicked*; let me commeud the whole to your *ſerious recollection*, and to GOD's *gracious benediction*.—And, "O LORD moſt "holy! O GOD moſt mighty! O holy and merciful "SAVIOUR! by thine agony and bloody ſweat—— "by thy *croſs* and *paſſion*"---let not the word now ſpoken be in vain in the LORD! *Amen*, and *amen*.

* Καυχασθαι, the word in our text, denotes the act of *rejoicing*, as well as of *glorying*. Thus it is tranſlated, Rom. v. 11. And indeed this it always implies.——See Pſal. v. 11. Pſal. cxlix. 5. *Sept. tranſl.*

† Rom. vi. 14. ‡ Col. ii. 10.

‖ 1 Cor. xv. 55. This is evidently the language of a *conqueror*, addreſſed to ſome *formidable*, but *vanquiſhed* enemy.—We ſhall form no improper idea of this ſignificant and beautiful paſſage, if we picture to ourſelves the good apoſtle, in the attitude of thoſe Hebrew captains, who ſet their feet on the necks of the five Canaaniteiſh kings, Joſh. x. 24. If we ſuppoſe him, in ſuch a poſture, to utter this animated exclamation, or rather this *pious inſult*, over the two grand, but proſtrate adverſaries of mankind; "O "*death, where is now thy ſting*, ſince CHRIST has expiated ſin, "by the ſacrifice of himſelf? O *grave, where is now thy victory*, "ſince CHRIST is both riſen himſelf, and has aſcertained to his "people a joyful reſurrection?"

§ Rom. viii. 33, 34.

¶ St Peter's expreſſion Εισοδος πλουσιως επιχορηγηθησεται, is perhaps too nervous, and too noble to admit of an *adequate* tranſlation. The above compariſon is, I think, a very pertinent illuſtration of the delicate ſentiment, and the delighful doctrine. A ſhip wafted into the port, under the full influence of wind and tide, ſeems to afford the fineſt repreſentation of a *large*, a *rich*, an *abundant* entrance; 2 Pet. i. 11.

* Phil. iii. 8. † Hoſ. vi. 4. ‡ Pſal. lxxxix. 37.

‖ Col. ii. 9.

SERMON V.

The Miniſtry of Reconciliation: repreſenting the benign tendency of the goſpel; and that it is the friendly office of miniſters, as the ambaſſadors of Chriſt, to preſs men, with all imaginable tenderneſs, humility, and earneſtneſs, to accept the treaty of reconciliation, as eſtabliſhed in him, and urged by him, while on earth.

We are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you *by* us: *We pray you, in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled unto God.* 2 Cor. v. 20.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS this is a poſthumous piece, it may be neceſſary to obſerve, for the ſatisfaction of the public, that Mr Hervey was, many years ago, ſolicited to print this ſermon, by ſeveral who heard it; but as he was a man of great modeſty, and had not *then* appeared as an author, he could not at *that* time he prevailed on, by any ſolicitations, to comply with their requeſt.——However, at a particular friend's deſire, he tranſcribed it from his ſhort-hand copy, and gave it to him.——Some years afterwards, this friend deſired Mr Hervey to reviſe it, with a view of its being publiſhed; which (in conjunction with a very eminent divine) he accordingly did; and then returned the copy to his friend; telling him, that as the *Meditations on the tombs*, &c. had been ſo well received, he had *now* no objection againſt publiſhing it, with ſome other ſermons; and that he might one day or another require it of him again for that purpoſe.——This ſermon is printed from that very copy; and Mr Hervey himſelf would probably have added it to the volume which contains his four ſermons, had he happened to recollect that it was in the poſſeſſion of a friend, who would willingly have relinquiſhed it to its author for publication.

2 COR. v. 18.

All things are of GOD, who hath reconciled us to himſelf by JESUS CHRIST, and hath given to us the miniſtry of reconciliation.

THE love of God, that ſupremely-glorious, and ſupremely-gracious Being, is, of all other tempers, the moſt delightful and divine; a ſacred flower, which in its early bud is happineſs, and in its full bloom is heaven.——To plant this noble principle in the breaſt, to cultivate its growth, and bring it to maturity, is the grand end of all religion, and the genuine fruit of faith unfeigned.———Angels are happy, becauſe the love of GOD triumphs eternally, and without a rival in their exalted affections *. True believers are happy, becauſe the love of GOD, in a prevailing degree, is ſhed abroad in their hearts. The goſpel is a diſpenſation of happineſs, becauſe it diſcovers the ſuperabundant loving-kindneſs of GOD to man, and urges the moſt engaging motives for our ardent love to his almighty Majeſty.

The goſpel repreſents the great GOD, not only as beſtowing upon his creatures all the good they enjoy, but as effecting their reconciliation to his own adorable ſelf; effecting this moſt deſirable of all bleſſings, not barely by vouchſafing a pardon, but a pardon procured by the death of his Son; and, by this enriching circumſtance, infinitely enhanced; arrayed in all the charms that heaven itſelf could give.——To render the purpoſes of his love more effectual and extenſive, he has inſtituted an order of men to publiſh theſe glad tidings; and to invite, yea to beſeech the world, to partake the exceeding riches of his grace.——All which the apoſtle has expreſſed in my text, with his uſual energy and conciſeneſs; *All things are of GOD, who hath reconciled us to himſelf by JESUS CHRIST, and hath given to us the miniſtry of reconciliation.*

From which words, permit me, with all that ſimplicity which becomes a miniſter of the humble JESUS,

I. To enlarge a little upon that glorious and amiable repreſentation of the bleſſed GOD, diſcoverable even by the light of nature, *All things are of him.*

II. To remind you, how much more illuſtriouſly the delightful attributes of the DEITY are diſplayed in the accompliſhment of our redemption; in that *he hath reconciled us to himſelf by* JESUS CHRIST.

III. To obſerve the benign import and beneficial tendency of the goſpel-miniſtry, expreſſed in that remarkable clauſe, *He hath given to us the miniſtry of reconciliation.*

Firſt, Then let me enlarge a little upon that glorious and amiable repreſentation of the bleſſed GOD, diſcoverable even by the light of nature, *All things are of Him.*——Heaven, and the heaven of heavens are his, with all their hoſts. Thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, all the happy beings, that ſit at the fountain-head of felicity, were produced by his power, and are ſupplied with bleſſings from his hand, are filled with joy from his countenance.——If we trace the various emanations of comfort and advantage that refreſh our lower world, we ſhall find reaſon to acknowledge with the pſalmiſt, "All our freſh ſprings are in GOD."——The day is thine, ſays the ſame ſacred writer, and the night is thine; thou haſt prepared the light and the ſun. The magnificent luminaries in the ſky, are lamps of the LORD; hung up on high, to diſpenſe the chearing gift of light amidſt all the families of nature. The interchanges of night and day, with the viciſſitudes of revolving ſeaſons, are his miniſters; all ſent on errands of kindneſs, and bringing the moſt valuable preſents in their hands. The innumerable variety of living creatures, and of nutrimental vegetables, are the portion, not which our own induſtry has procured, but which our heavenly Father's bounty has ſettled upon us.

Every great endowment, beſtowed on the children of men; every noble achievement, accompliſhed by renowned

* To be *good* is to be happy:—Angels are happier than men, becauſe they are better.

Guilt is the ſource of ſorrow; 'tis the fiend,
Th' *avenging* fiend, who follows us behind
With whips and ſtings; the *bleſs'd* know none of *this*,
But reſt in everlaſting peace of mind. ROWE.

renowned perſonages; theſe derive their original from the uncreated Fountain of perfection and of power.—If Solomon is poſſeſſed of enlarged wiſdom, and kingly qualities; he expreſsly acknowledges, it is from the LORD, ſuperintending human affairs, that ſuch kings are advanced to reign; and by the LORD enlightening their minds, that ſuch princes decree juſtice. If, at one period, Nebuchadnezzar purſues his conqueſts with irreſiſtible impetuoſity, it is to ſcourge the offending people of the LORD; and baniſh idolatry from their worſhip, as the driving wind ſwept the chaff from their floors. If, at another juncture, Cyrus is equally victorious, and "comes upon princes as upon mortar, and "as the potter treadeth clay;" it was the LORD of hoſts that raiſed up this accompliſhed commander from the Eaſt, and bid him execute his deſigns of reſtoring love to his reformed nation.——All thoſe arts which meliorate, and ſciences which embelliſh life, even theſe are from the LORD, "who is wonderful in counſel, "and excellent in working."

The time would fail me to enumerate particulars.—Whatever is beneficial to communities, or comfortable to individuals; whatever ſprings from the rain of heaven, or is produced by fruitful ſeaſons; whatever adminiſters to the improvement, or chears the heart of man; all, all acknowledge GOD for their Author. He is the Giver of every good and perfect gift. The whole earth is filled with the profuſion of his beneficence.—And where, where is the creature, that has not taſted, that does not ſubſiſt on, the inexhauſtible ſtores of his bounty?—And though affliction alſo comes from the Father of our ſpirits, yet this is no derogation from his tender mercies: ſince he chaſtens, not with an arbitrary ſeverity, but with a parental pity; he chaſtens, only to amend; and theſe light, theſe tranſient tribulations, are preparatives for an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory.

And is not ſuch a being worthy of our higheſt admiration, and our devouteſt love? Has he not, by ſuch ineffable excellencies, ſuch unmeaſurable benignity,—has he not an undoubted claim to the affections of our hearts, the prailes of our tongues, and the unintermitted ſervices of our lives? He is the ſource of all our good; ſhould he not alſo be the centre of all our gratitude, and of our whole obedience?——But our obligations will riſe unmenſely higher, if we conſider,

Secondly, How much more illuſtriouſly the delightful attributes of the DEITY are diſplayed in the accompliſhment of our redemption; in that *he hath reconciled us to himſelf by* JESUS CHRIST.——Man was created upright, immaculate, and in the image of GOD. Heavenly wiſdom ſhone bright in his underſtanding, and true holineſs ſat enthroned in his heart.——But how ſoon, how fatally, did he fall! from what height of perfection, to what depth of degeneracy! Since that deſtructive tranſgreſſion, all fleſh has corrupted his way; every man is become brutiſh in his knowledge; and the imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually. "Our iniquities ſeparated between us and "our GOD, and our ſins hid his face from us," as from an abominable object. Nay, our ſins accuſed us at his righteous tribunal, and, like the blood of Abel, cried to heaven for vengeance. Vengeance and fiery indignation was our expected doom, and eternal death the wages due to our offences.——What rendered the miſery of mankind ſtill more exceſſively deplorable, and only not deſperate, was, that they *were without ſtrength*; without any power to make ſatisfaction for their provocations, or extricate themſelves from this abyſs of wo.——O wretched, wretched man, if left in this ſtate of guilt and ruin! If abandoned by the GOD, from whom thou haſt ungratefully revolted, better had it been for thee never to have exiſted.

But behold the kindneſs and love of GOD our Saviour! Hearken to the ſounding of his bowels and his mercies towards us! "I have ſeen," ſaid he, (as in the caſe of enſlaved Iſrael), "I have ſeen the affliction "of my fallen creatures. They have undone them-"ſelves, but in me* is their recovery. Satan has de-"ceived, and deceiving has deſtroyed them; but I, even "I will deliver them."——Wherewithal will the LORD accompliſh this deſign? By his free, unmerited goodneſs. By the blood of bulls, or of goats, or of all the cattle upon a thouſand hills? Contemptible to the laſt degree are ſuch beggarly oblations; only ſo far as they typify the all-glorious ſacrifice.—Was an angel charged with this important buſineſs, or the higheſt ſeraph bidden to interpoſe as the repairer of our breach? The angels were abſolutely incapable of executing ſo great a work. It required a far abler agent, to negotiate our reconciliation. It muſt coſt incomparably more to redeem guilty ſouls. Therefore the GOD of our ſalvation "laid the help upon one that is mighty." He appointed, to the moſt momentous of all offices, the moſt illuſtrious of all beings. He appointed his own Son, the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.

Behold then the Son of GOD, taking our nature, that he may act as our Mediator. Admirable conſtitution! full of wonder, and full of grace!—How joyful to the ſinner! The work muſt infallibly proſper in ſuch hands. Such a Surety cannot fail of ſucceeding in all he undertakes.——How gracious in the Father! Could there be a ſtronger aſſurance, or a more emphatical demonſtration of his boundleſs beneficence, than to ſend the Son of his boſom; the Son of his eternal delight; the Son dearer to him than all worlds?—How condeſcending in the Saviour! Would Ahaſuerus abdicate his imperial diadem, or the great ruler of Babylon forego the honours of his enlarged dominions, to attend on the welfare of ſome ignoble captive that grinds at a mill, or of ſome infamous malefactor that chained in a dungeon?—Yet the everlaſting Potentate of heaven and univerſal nature, undertakes a more humbling office of friendſhip, for a race of abject creatures, that dwell in duſt, and were doomed to hell.——Let every child of Adam look unto CHRIST by faith, as all the people of Iſrael looked unto Moſes, when he went into the tabernacle of the congregation to intercede before the LORD. (See Exodus xxxiii. 8.)

We have ſeen the *perſon* reconciling, let us next contemplate the *manner* of reconciling. A ſubject equally aſtoniſhing and delightful! The Father reconciled us to himſelf, by laying upon his Son the iniquities of us all; by admitting him to ſtand in our ſtead, and by exacting from him, the puniſhment which we had incurred.——GOD reconciled us to himſelf, not only by the humiliation, but by the ſuffering of this Prince of heaven; and not by ſome ſlighter ſuffering, but by his ſuffering unto death; and not by his undergoing a common death, but the moſt ignominious and tormenting of all deaths, the death of the croſs.—— "It pleaſed the Father," ſays the apoſtle, "to recon-"cile all things to himſelf; making peace by the blood "of the croſs."——Becauſe we deſerved ſhame, the LORD of glory was numbered with malefactors, and loaded with infamy. Becauſe we deſerved the bitterneſs of death, the LORD of life endured the pangs of diſſolution, in their unabated and moſt racking extremities. Becauſe we were obnoxious to the curſe of the law, therefore the ever-bleſſed "JESUS delivered us "from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for "us."

Glorious propitiation! and altogether as complete as glorious! What now ſhall terrify the true believer? What ſhall ſtand between him, and his eternal hopes?——Shall Satan muſter up his accuſations, and ſet them in frightful array? Yet, though there may be much

* See Hoſ. xiii. 9.

guilt,

there is no condemnation to them that are in *JESUS CHRIST*.——Does the law take the guilty mortal by the throat, and with its rigorous severity, say, "Pay me that thou owest?" It is paid, fully paid by the intervention and suretiship, not of a mean man, but of the mighty GOD made flesh.——Does divine Justice demand satisfaction, for the wrongs received from sinners? It is not only satisfied, but most awfully glorified, by this wonderful oblation.——In short, this is a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It vindicates the honour of GOD's holiness; it displays his unsearchable wisdom; it manifests his unutterable goodness; it gives the most magnificent and lovely lustre to all the divine perfections.—May we not then, looking unto our bleeding Saviour, and pleading his inestimable propitiation, venture to adopt the apostle's challenge? "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of GOD's elect? it is GOD that justifieth;" not imputing our trespasses unto us, but transferring them to his dear Son. "Who is he that condemneth? it is *CHRIST* that died," and by his precious death hath made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness.

I have been the more copious upon this subject, because it is not only the grand point in my text, but is the very heart of the gospel; the fountain of all our comforts, and the foundation of all our hopes.——But I proceed, and with greater brevity,

Thirdly, To observe the benign import and beneficial tendency of the gospel-ministry, expressed in that remarkable clause, *He hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.* Here I am not attempting to magnify my office, or to aggrandize the ministerial character; but only to render our services *acceptable* to our brethren.—Some persons, whether through prejudice or mistake, are apprehensive of being terrified by our message, or "tormented before the time" by our doctrine. But can the news of reconciliation to the LORD GOD of hosts terrify, or the offer of remission of sins torment? How welcome should be the approach, or to speak in the elegant language of a prophet, "how beautiful the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!" And can there be better tidings, more reviving, or more transporting, than those of the everlasting gospel? which saith unto Zion, "Thy iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged:" thy GOD is reconciled, and instead of abhorring thee as a rebel, is willing to embrace thee as a child.—When our armies have been in the field, and some very important, some decisive engagement drawing near; with what eagerness have you expected, and with what delight have you received, the account of complete victory gained? And is not our report equally worthy of all acceptation, which declares Satan vanquished, and sin destroyed; declares death abolished, hell deprived of its prey, and all the rich advantages of peace with heaven restored?—When Peter lay bound in prison, was the angel an unwelcome minister, who struck away his fetters, opened the gates of iron, and transmitted him, free and unmolested, to the cordial salutations of his friends? As you are all, by nature, in bondage to sin, our business is, to take you by the hand, and lead you out of this ignominious slavery, into the glorious liberty of the sons of GOD; while the Spirit of the Most High breaks off your shackles, and makes you free indeed.—What manna can be more refreshing than such a message? what balm more healing than such a service?—If, at any time, we arm our words with terror, and denounce the vengeance of GOD on every soul of man that doth evil; this is only to awaken you from that gay insensibility, which would lull you into irretrievable ruin. It is like the gathering clouds, and the distant peals of thunder, which might warn Noah to retire into the ark, before that infinitely more tremendous deluge came, which was to sweep the careless world away.—Whether therefore we display the allurements of divine love, it is for your delight; or whether we bend the bow of divine indignation, it is for your benefit; to win you to happiness, or drive you from misery. So that in every respect, and by all our ministrations, we are to be "helpers of your faith, and furtherers of your "joy."

And let not any one suspect, that a message of such free and rich grace has a tendency to soothe men into supineness, or serve the cause of licentiousness. It is, of all other expedients, most effectually calculated to reconcile us to GOD, in another sense of the word; to subdue our enmity, and captivate our perverse affections; to impress our alienated hearts with adoring gratitude, and engage our refractory wills to dutiful obedience.—For can we be cold and indifferent to such immense benignity? can we affront and grieve such unspeakably-tender kindness? What effect had David's clemency in sparing Saul's life, when it was in the power of his hand to have dispatched that implacable enemy? It overcame, for a while, even malice itself; it fetched tears of sorrow from the persecutor's eyes, and expressions of the most endeared affections from his lips *. And when GOD, the GOD to whom vengeance belongeth, not only spares us guilty wretches, but punishes his immaculate Son in our stead; when he bids the sword of Justice pass by our devoted heads, and sheathe itself in the heart of his beloved Son; can we resist such heavenly goodness? can we spurn such bowels of mercy? Must not love, so divine and infinite, melt even the most obdurate heart; make us fling down, with abhorrence, the weapons of rebellion, and constrain us, sweetly constrain us to obedience †?

Let me now, conformably to my sacred commission, beseech you all to be reconciled. Especially let me beseech the humble penitent, and the haughty self-righteous moralist.——Ye humble penitents, that are convinced of sin, and mourn for sin, be of good comfort. GOD has abounded in the riches of his grace towards you, and has given you a ransom to rely on, of higher dignity than all heavens, of more value than all worlds. The men of Tyre made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend ‡; the GOD of glory has constituted his dear Son, your atoning sacrifice, your prevailing advocate. The men of Tyre desired conditions of peace; the *LORD JESUS* hath both obtained and fulfilled the conditions of your peace. Could there be a more glorious person chosen to act as your reconciler, than the Prince of heaven, and Heir of all things? could there be a more effectual method of reconciliation, than his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross?——Fly then to this all-sufficient Redeemer. Rely on his most meritorious and satisfactory sufferings. Be your sins ever so numerous, ever so enormous, these need be no bar to your acceptance. For *GOD* has received an atonement; an infinite atonement *GOD* has received. So that he can admit you to his favour, unworthy as you are, without the least blemish to his avenging justice. He can, he will admit you, as freely, as if you had never done amiss. Trust therefore in your reconciling Saviour. Place a chearful confidence in his propitiating merits. Only let the grace of GOD, which has appeared with such transcendent loveliness in the bleeding JESUS, let this grace teach you, with a prevailing efficacy, "to deny all ungodliness, and worldly "lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in "this present world."

* 1 Sam. xxiv. 16.

† Mr Hervey had added, by way of a note, the following words, in the copy which he transcribed, and from which this is printed. "When I preached this sermon, I recapitulated, in this "place, (as you, or any reader may do if he pleases), the preceding heads; but I thought it unnecessary to transcribe such a recapitulation."

‡ Acts xii. 20.

As to those of a contrary character, who are righteous in their own eyes, what shall I say? Shall I decry the exercise of morality, or disparage the duties of holiness? *GOD* forbid. The gospel is a doctrine according to godliness, and true holiness is the health, is the happiness of the soul. These duties, issuing from faith, and recommended by the intercession of *CHRIST*, are acceptable to the divine Majesty. But these are *not* your *SAVIOUR*. *GOD* has not reconciled the world to himself by their *own* pious practices, but by his Son *JESUS CHRIST*.——Can your charitable deeds expiate your innumerable offences? As soon may a single drop of pure water correct and sweeten the unfathomable brine of the ocean. Can your defective performances satisfy the demands of a perfect law, or your wandering devotions screen you from the displeasure of an injured GOD? As well may your uplifted hand eclipse the sun, or intercept the lightning when it darts through the bursting cloud.—There is no other name given under heaven whereby you may be reconciled to GOD, and saved from wrath, but only the name, only the name, remember, of *JESUS CHRIST*. Here fix your hopes and you shall never be disappointed. Fix them on any other object, and everlasting confusion will ensue.—We beseech you therefore, in *GOD*'s stead, we beseech you for your own souls sake, reject not this abundant mercy, neglect not this *GREAT SALVATION*.

Now, unto him who has reconciled us to himself, and washed us from our sins in his Son's blood, be glory and thanksgiving, love and obedience, henceforth and for ever.

A DEFENCE, *by* R. Y. *of the foregoing sermon, from the groundless objections raised against it by some inconsiderate readers.*

IT is scarcely credible, that any one should assert, that Mr Hervey's posthumous sermon on the *Ministry of reconciliation, is contradictory to the dialogues in Theron and Aspasio, and affirm that it has done injury to the work.*—But such an assertion is easily refuted.——This complaint is either lodged by the friends or foes of the deceased: If by his friends, then I suppose it is because the doctrine of imputed righteousness, which makes so great a figure in those dialogues, is not mentioned in the sermon.—These people would do well to consider, that if it is not mentioned, it is strongly implied; and what is strongly implied in this place, cannot be contradictory to what is expressed in others. In that sermon, do we not read in the strongest terms, "That our iniquities are imputed to "CHRIST, by the FATHER's admitting him to stand "in our stead, and exacting from him the punishment "which we had incurred?" Do we not here find, "GOD reconciling us to himself, not only by the humiliation, but by the sufferings of the Prince of heaven; and not by some slighter sufferings, but by his sufferings unto death; and not by his undergoing a common death, but the most ignominious and tormenting of all deaths, the death upon the cross."

And as we find the imputation of our sins so plainly asserted here, so we find in the Dialogues, that "this "part of our LORD's meritorious humiliation is by a "very usual figure put for the whole. The death of "CHRIST includes, not only his sufferings, but his "obedience. The shedding of his precious blood, was "at once the grand instance of his sufferings, and the "finishing act of his obedience. In this view it is considered, and thus it is interpreted by his own ambassador, who, speaking of his divine MASTER, says,— "*He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*— "When the scripture ascribes our justification to the "death of CHRIST, we are not to think that it would "set aside, but imply his obedience." (*Theron* and *Aspasio*, above, p. 200.) Now, if we are not to think this of the scripture, in Mr Hervey's opinion, how then can we think it of him? And, without thinking it, where lies the inconsistence between the sermon and the dialogues?

But I rather imagine, that the charge is brought by Mr Hervey's enemies. Some of these people, to avoid being thought Socinians, seem willing to allow the satisfaction of CHRIST, while they declare against the doctrine of justification by the imputation of his righteousness; and such are extremely willing to interpret Mr Hervey's silence into a consent to their own pernicious sentiments: *Theron* and *Aspasio* is a dead weight upon them; they have not, nor can they answer it; willingly, therefore, would they come off, by saying the author had contradicted himself. But false is their pretence, and as false is their profession. *That they allow the satisfaction of* CHRIST for imputation, is as reasonable, and as justifiable, in the one case as in the other; they both stand upon one and the same footing, so he that throws down one, throws down both; whoever rejects the doctrine of our SAVIOUR's righteousness being imputed unto man, rejects, by so doing, the doctrine of man's sins being imputed to our Saviour, and all the consequences of it; or, in other words, he who rejects the doctrine of free justification, rejects, by so doing, the doctrine of CHRIST. (See *Theron* and *Aspasio*, above, p. 155.)

As the main design in writing *Theron* and *Aspasio*, was to prove the fundamental doctrine of justification by the imputed righteousness of CHRIST; and as it appears that the sermon does not contradict it in this most important article; I suppose it will be allowed, that the charge of contradiction, as to what is most material, is entirely got over. But perhaps, in a matter of less consequence, it may still be objected, that Mr Hervey, in the Dialogues, appears plainly to be Calvinistic, in the doctrine of *PARTICULAR* redemption; but, in the sermon, he says expressly, that CHRIST's *death is a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the WHOLE world.*——The church of England says this, as well as Mr Hervey, in the office for the communion; and yet no unprejudiced person will question, but she is perfectly Calviniftical in her articles and homilies.

The truth is, there is no Calvinist but will allow, that the satisfaction of CHRIST is full, perfect, and sufficient for ALL; but then they distinguish between the sufficiency and efficiency of his sacrifice. With regard to the value of the oblation, it is sufficient for the redemption of every man; with regard to its efficacy, as every man is benefited by the death of CHRIST, so CHRIST died for him; but these benefits are not of one kind.—Some are common to every man; all the earthly blessings which unbelievers enjoy, are the fruits of CHRIST's death; so far as they are benefited by him, so far he died for them; other benefits belong to the members of the visible church, and are common to all those who live under the gospel: many graces such may receive from CHRIST, which through their own fault are not saving; and so far as they are benefited by CHRIST, so far CHRIST died for them: other benefits still, according to the will of GOD, and the intention of the MEDIATOR, are peculiar to those which he himself says are given unto him by the FATHER; his sheep, his elect, such as a true faith, regeneration, sanctification, adoption, &c. In this sense, says those Christians

ians called Calviniſts, CHRIST died for his people only, to bring them effectually to grace and to glory.——This ſyſtem only is conſiſtent with Mr Hervey's notion of free grace.

The Arminian ſcheme is, That CHRIST died with a purpoſe to make the ſalvation of every man in the world poſſible, without any manner of difference, whether they are believers or unbelievers: That he died, not to bring any man actually to ſalvation, and make him a partaker of righteouſneſs and life, but to purchaſe a poſſibility of ſalvation and reconciliation, ſo far as that GOD might, conſiſtent with his juſtice, receive men into favour, upon condition of faith and repentance. This faith and repentance, ſay they, CHRIST merited not; for if he had, then GOD had been bound to give them unto every man, and ſo every man muſt have been ſaved. Thus, you ſee, according to theſe gentlemen, CHRIST died equally for all the world; and the reaſon why ſome are ſaved, lies wholly in themſelves, in attaining to that faith and repentance, by the good uſe of their natural powers, which CHRIST did not purchaſe for them. This is the meaning of every Arminian *, let him expreſs himſelf however he will. And how far this is inconſiſtent with Mr Hervey's exhortation to the ſelf-righteous moraliſt, in the cloſe of this ſermon, I believe I need not tell you. Indeed, Mr Hervey engages not here in the controverſy at all; but (going upon what both ſides are agreed in, *viz.* the ſufficiency of CHRIST's ſacrifice to ſave all that will believe) he invites all his hearers to fly unto him for ſalvation.——Now, if he never enters into the merits of the cauſe, how can he be guilty of inconſiſtency?

Upon the whole, then, this is a moſt excellent ſermon. As the dialogues in *Theron and Aſpaſio* were, ſo is this, the true offspring * of him who now reſts from his labours, and his works do follow him; the offspring of him who always ſought to exalt the SAVIOUR, to humble the ſinner, and to promote holineſs.

* That the reader may ſtill more clearly apprehend the doctrine of Mr Hervey, who was a Calviniſt,—and the difference between him and the Arminians, the following note is ſubjoined.

"The Arminians are ſuppoſed by ſome, (who are not ſufficiently acquainted with their tenets,) to maintain that we are to do *ſomething* for ourſelves, and Chriſt to do the reſt; or, in other words, that we have *partly* a righteouſneſs of our own, and that Jeſus Chriſt is to make up the deficiencies of that righteouſneſs. This, however, is not the common divinity of the Arminians. They have no ſuch notion of a *patch-work* juſtification, or that we are ſaved *partly* by the imputation of Chriſt's merits to make up the deficiencies of our own. But the principles of their ſcheme are briefly theſe.—That Chriſt is the *ſole* and *only* author of our ſalvation, not by *imputing* his righteouſneſs to us, but by *purchaſing* ſuch *favourable terms* of reconciliation for us, and by *reſtoring* to us ſuch *abilities* to fulfil them, by means of which we can only become *capable* of being juſtified in the ſight of God. Therefore we ſay, that thoſe in this life, who have uſed well the *grace* that is *given* them, and conformed to the terms of the goſpel, *God doth juſtify*; That is, were he to call them to the bar of judgment and try them, he would acquit or pronounce them not guilty.—Becauſe Chriſt, by his meritorious death and ſufferings, having purchaſed for them the *law* of *repentance*, as the law by which they are to be judged and tried; and they having *through grace* fulfilled the law, *i. e.* become *true penitents*, God therefore, *for the above merits of Chriſt*, admits of their qualifications, forgives them their offences, and rewards them as if they had never offended. Here then is no *ſplitting* of the *imputation*, no *copartnerſhip* with Chriſt: but Chriſt's righteouſneſs is repreſented, as the *ſole procuring cauſe* of our ſalvation, and ours as only the *applying cauſe*, by performing the requiſite conditions: *i. e.* They both tend to different *ends*: one to *procure* the terms of juſtification, and the other to *perform* them.—So that, in ſhort, according to this ſcheme of the Arminians, our juſtification is not *made up partly* of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and *partly* of our own; for his righteouſneſs is not *partly* imputed, but not at *all* imputed, in the Calviniſtical ſenſe of imputation. In order to make this difference of opinion ſtill clearer, it muſt be obſerved, that the Calviniſts (being accuſtomed to their ideas of *imputative* righteouſneſs) imagine, that when the Arminians affirm the neceſſity of *inherent* righteouſneſs, in order to juſtification, that they mean a borrowing of Chriſt's imputative righteouſneſs to make up the deficiencies of our own. Whereas the Arminians, indeed, ſuppoſe, that Chriſt did not, *in any degree*, fulfil the terms of juſtification *in our ſtead*; but, on the contrary, having *purchaſed* them for us, and *procured* us *ſufficient* powers and abilities of *performing* them, he left us to co-operate with thoſe powers, and ſo to fulfil them ourſelves." This is a fair, candid, and conſiſtent ſtate of the Arminian doctrine. No one can ſay it is miſrepreſented; for 'tis here given in the very words of an eminent divine, and dignitary of the church of England, who is himſelf an Arminian.——How much ſuperior the Calviniſtic (which was Mr Hervey's) doctrine is, to humble the ſinner, to exalt the Saviour, and to promote holineſs, let every reader judge.

* The ſermon itſelf, in Mr Hervey's own writing, is now in the hands of the Rev. Mr Robert Knight, the preſent Rector of Weſton-Favell, who married Mr Hervey's youngeſt ſiſter.

The Knowledge of Salvation precious in the Hour of Death;

PROVED IN A

SERMON,

Preached, *January* 4, 1759,

Upon the DEATH of

The Rev. Mr JAMES HERVEY.

By W. ROMAINE, M. A.

Lecturer of *St Dunſtan's in the Weſt*, London.

Righteouſneſs delivereth from death. PROV. x. 2.

LUKE ii. 29, 30.

LORD, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.

ACCORDING to the ancient prophecies, in the fulneſs of time, God ſent forth his Son. He came to his own, when there was a general expectation of his birth. Many juſt and devout perſons in *Jeruſalem* were then looking out for the Redeemer's coming in the fleſh; and among them good old *Simeon*, and *Anna* a propheteſs, are particularly mentioned. St *Luke* ſays, *There was a man in* Jeruſalem, *whoſe name was* Simeon, *and the ſame man was juſt*, a juſtified perſon, *and devout*, fearing to offend God, as the *Greek* word ſignifies, *waiting for the conſolation of* Iſrael; he was waiting for the incarnation of the divine Comforter, by whoſe birth all the promiſes of comfort were to be ratified and fulfilled, and the *Iſrael* of God was to receive everlaſting conſolation. The Lord was pleaſed to vouchſafe a particular revelation of his will in this matter to Simeon: *For the Holy Spirit was upon him, and it was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he ſhould not ſee death before he had ſeen the Lord's Chriſt* incarnate. And he came by direction of the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the holy child *Jeſus*, to do for him after the cuſtom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and bleſſed God that he had lived to this happy hour, when he could take up the prophet's words, and ſay, *Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will ſave us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his ſalvation.* Simeon waited to ſee God incarnate; and having ſeen him, he wanted to live no longer. He deſired his diſmiſſion. All the ends of living were anſwered; and therefore he put up this ſweet prayer;—*Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.*

With theſe ſame words one of our dear brethren, now with the Lord, finiſhed his courſe. They were the dying words of the Rev. Mr *James Hervey*. He had long deſired to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which he knew was far better than to abide in the fleſh; but he waited patiently for the Lord's time; and when it was come, he thus expreſſed the thankfulneſs of his heart, *Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, according to thy* moſt holy and comfortable *word: for mine eyes have ſeen thy* precious *ſalvation* *. The Lord heard him, and gave him a gentle diſmiſſion. He died, as he had lived, in a perfectly even and calm compoſure of mind. Death ſhewed that he came to him as a friendly meſſenger to call him to glory, for he chearfully obeyed the ſummons. There was no fear, no ſtruggle, not a ſigh or groan, but he departed in peace, and in full aſſurance of faith. Oh that you and I, my brethren, may ſo live by the faith of the Son of God, that when we come to die, we may be able to uſe this ſame prayer, and may receive of the Lord a like gracious anſwer.

Theſe ſweet dying words of our dear brother have made a great impreſſion upon ſeveral of his acquaintance: for they have been led to conſider them more cloſely than perhaps they ever did before, and ſeveral have meditated upon them with great comfort. In order that others might do the ſame, and that his happy death might be the means of ſtirring up many to ſeek to die the death of the righteous, and that their latter end might be like his, I have determined to ſpeak upon the words this day. May the ſame Spirit by which Simeon ſpake them be in all your hearts! may he teach you their true and full meaning, and in God's due time may he give you the comfortable experience of them! Under his guidance let us conſider,

Firſt, That when Simeon had ſeen the ſalvation of God, he was prepared to depart;

Secondly, He therefore deſired it, and prayed for it; and,

Thirdly, He expected he ſhould depart in peace according to God's word, which was fulfilled to him.—And, under each of theſe particulars, I ſhall ſpeak of the experience of our deceaſed brother.

Firſt, Simeon had it revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, that he ſhould not die until he had ſeen the Lord's Chriſt; and when Jeſus was brought into the temple, he was directed to go and receive him for the promiſed Meſſiah; and taking him up in his arms, he bleſſed God, and ſaid, *Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have*

* Several particulars in this ſermon reſpecting Mr Hervey, are more fully related in the account of his life prefixed to this work.

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by salvation. It is evident he ſpoke theſe words in a primary ſenſe, of his ſeeing *Jeſus* with the eyes of the body; but this could have been no great cauſe of joy to him, unleſs he had before ſeen Chriſt ſome other way; for multitudes ſaw him with their bodily eyes, while he was upon earth, who were no better for the ſight; and multitudes will hereafter ſee him in his glorified body, but it will be to their everlaſting confuſion. There is another kind of ſight to which our church referred you this afternoon, when each of you took up theſe words and ſaid, For *mine* eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation. If you knew what you ſaid, and ſpoke the truth as you had experienced it, you meant that you had ſeen the ſalvation of God with the eye of faith; according to what is ſaid of Moſes, *That by faith he ſaw him who is inviſible* (Heb. xi. 27.) He ſaw him by the eyes of his ſoul, who was inviſible to the eyes of his body; for the ſoul has its eyes as well as the body: but ſin darkened them; it put them into the ſtate in which the eyes of the body are when they have no light: then they can ſee nothing. So the ſoul is ſaid, in ſcripture, to be in darkneſs and blindneſs, until the eyes of the underſtanding be enlightened. They cannot ſee any ſpiritual objects until the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhine upon them; nor, when he does ſhine, can they ſee any lovelineſs in theſe objects, until they be able to act faith upon them; for the eye of faith not only beholds the object, but alſo diſtinguiſhes its own intereſt in it. Faith keeps all the ſenſes of the ſoul in act and exerciſe upon the proper object, which each apprehends; here the eye of faith is fixed upon ſalvation, not only viewing it as a bleſſing belonging to others, but alſo appropriating it to itſelf. *Mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation*: here *Simeon*, ſpeaking of our Saviour, calls him *ſalvation*, becauſe all ſalvation is in and from him. He is the author, and he is the finiſher of it. The great plan of it was laid by the co-equal and co-eternal Perſons of the ever-bleſſed Trinity, before the foundation of the world; it was carried into execution by our divine Saviour in the fulneſs of time; and he is an eternal ſalvation, an eternal deliverance from all evil, and an eternal poſſeſſion of all good. Upon the entrance of ſin into the world, this great ſalvation of our God was revealed, and by faith believers under the Old-teſtament diſpenſation enjoyed the benefits of it. At the appointed time *Jehovah* took a body of fleſh, and our divine *Immanuel* ſtood up to ſave his people from their ſins. He undertook to ſatisfy all the demands of law and juſtice. The law he ſatisfied, by paying it a perfect unſinning obedience; which being a divine, as well as a human obedience, did therefore magnify the law, and make it more honourable, than if all the creatures in heaven and earth had never offended againſt it. Juſtice he ſatisfied, by enduring the threatened puniſhment; and after his ſufferings and death, juſtice had no more demands upon him; for he came out of the priſon of the grave with a full diſcharge. This ſatisfaction, made to law and juſtice by the obedience and ſufferings of the Lord *Jeſus*, is what the ſcripture calls the *righteouſneſs of God*, becauſe it is a divine and infinitely-perfect righteouſneſs, a divine righteouſneſs wrought out by *Jehovah* himſelf, and as infinitely perfect a righteouſneſs as *Jehovah* could make it. In this all-glorious righteouſneſs of the God-man, Chriſt Jeſus, conſiſts the ſinner's ſalvation: for he is accepted and juſtified by it; the fruits of this righteouſneſs are his ſanctification, and the robe of this righteouſneſs is his glorification. So that ſalvation in time and in eternity depends upon the righteouſneſs of the incarnate God. This is the fundamental doctrine of the Chriſtian religion, for which our dear brother was a noble champion. He ſaw, he experienced the importance of it, and therefore in his converſation and in his preaching it was his favourite topic. How ſweetly, how profitably have I heard him dwell upon it! and how excellently has he defended it in his writings? Read his *Theron and Aſpaſio*; and when you are thoroughly convinced that Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one who believeth, and can ſay with faith, "In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſalvation;" then your mind will be ſettled in peace and comfort, and you will be delivered from thoſe dangerous errors which are now propagated concerning the righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus. Thank God for the maſterly defence of it in theſe dialogues *. In them Mr Hervey, being dead, yet ſpeaketh the praiſes of his adorable Redeemer, and clearly proves that we have our ſalvation through his righteouſneſs. *Immanuel* the Saviour is the juſtifier, as he ſays himſelf, *Iſ.* xlv. 21, 22. "There "is no God elſe beſide me, a God that gives righteouſ-"neſs, and a Saviour, there is none beſide me.—— "Look unto me and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the "earth; for I am God, and there is none elſe." How could they be ſaved by looking unto Chriſt? Certainly, not by a look of their bodily eyes. Simeon's joy did not ariſe from having Chriſt in his arms, and looking upon him; but from being able to look upon him by an act of faith. He knew him to be *his* Saviour. Thence aroſe his joy, and from thence muſt yours ariſe. It is the look of faith which ſaves; the eye of faith kept in exerciſe upon its proper object, even upon Jeſus, the author and finiſher of faith. It is this act of faith which our Lord requires:—*Look unto me*, with this promiſe annexed, *and be ye ſaved*. There is ſalvation in the look of faith: for it ſees and receives Jeſus, as he is offered in ſcripture, for a free, full, and complete Saviour. And whoever keeps the eye of faith in conſtant exerciſe, is prepared with good old Simeon, to depart in peace: becauſe, by having an intereſt and property in the ſalvation of our God, he is thereby delivered from every thing that can make death dreadful, and is in the poſſeſſion of every thing that can make death deſirable.

What is it that makes death dreadful? Is it not guilt in the conſcience, accuſing the ſinner for the breach of the holy law, and alarming him with fear of the threatened puniſhment, which the juſtice, and holineſs, and truth of God are concerned to ſee inflicted, in time and in eternity? Thus we read, "The ſting of death is ſin, "and the ſtrength of ſin is the law." Death has power to ſting, ſo long as the broken law gives ſin a right to accuſe and condemn: all unpardoned ſinners therefore are afraid of death. From this ſtate of fear and bondage our Lord came to ſave his people: "He came to deliver "them, who through fear of death were all their life-"time ſubject to bondage;" and he does deliver them, when their ſins are forgiven, and his righteouſneſs is imputed to them: for then the broken law

* About a week before Mr Hervey was taken ill, I mentioned to him a report that was ſpread about, concerning Mr Sandeman's *Letters on Theron and Aſpaſio*, to this effect: That he (Mr Hervey) had written a letter to Mrs Cooke, and therein had ſaid, that Mr Sandeman was in the right, and had convinced him of his error; or words to that purpoſe. To which he anſwered, That he had written a letter to Mrs Cooke, and therein he had acknowledged, that many of Mr Sandeman's remarks were judicious, and that he had corrected ſome of his expreſſions and inaccuracies. But he ſaid, that he was very far from having changed his opinion as to the ſubſtance and matter of the argument; for therein he thought Mr Sandeman was entirely wrong. Whereupon I deſired he would inſert an advertiſement in ſome of the London papers, ſigned by himſelf, to ſet this miſtake right, leſt it might hinder the ſale and reading of his books, and thereby prevent much good. To which he agreed; and added, that he would let that paragraph ſtand in his *anſwer to Mr Weſley*, relating to Mr Sandeman, only ſoftening the expreſſion a little: but all this was prevented by his illneſs and death. The truth of this I am ready to atteſt.

ABRAHAM MADDOCK,
Curate of Weſton-Favell.

cannot condemn, nor justice punish, there being no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Upon which death loses its sting; and when the pardoned sinner looks upon it, he sees nothing terrible in its appearance, but can boldly and without presumption say, "Yea, "when I walk through the valley of the shadow of "death, I will fear no evil: for thou my God art with "me."

And he is not only prepared to die because he is delivered from every thing that could make death dreadful, but also because he is in the possession of every thing that can make death desirable. He knows he has an interest in Christ, and Christ is the possessor of heaven and earth. He has all things in his hands, and has promised to make them all work together for the good of his redeemed people: so that whoever has Christ has all things. "All things," says the apostle, "are yours, "whether life or death, or things present or things to "come, all are yours." And the reason follows, "and "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." As all that Christ has is yours, and all that God has is Christ's, consequently all is yours. And death by name is yours: no longer a curse and a punishment, but turned into a real blessing; for it is the gate and entrance, through which you pass into endless life and never-fading glory.

Thus he is prepared to depart, who has seen with the eye of faith the salvation of God. The doctrine is clear from scripture; but how is it, my brethren, in your experience? Are you prepared to depart; and on what do ye build your preparation? on the Lord Jesus, or on what? Search and see; for nothing can comfort you in the hour of death, but having received him into your hearts by faith and love. You must see his salvation, and be able to keep the eye of faith intent upon it, before you can be prepared to depart; but when this is your happy case, then in whatever shape death comes, you will be able to say with our dear brother, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* He might well say, Mine eyes have seen thy salvation: for all that came near him were convinced that he had seen it. The effects shewed it. He had put off the old man, and had put on the new; and was under the influence of divine love to his adorable Saviour. The love of Jesus ruled in his heart; and was therefore constantly uppermost in his mouth. He loved to be telling of his salvation all the day long. And he did not talk like a professor full of mere head-knowledge; but what he spake had a warmth, and life, and power in it, which shewed that it came from his heart. He was perfectly enflamed with the love of his divine Lord and Master; and if you sat any time in his company, you could not help catching some of the holy flame. So that if strangers to his person may doubt of his experience of a Saviour's love, we who have conversed with him cannot. We are sure from what we saw and heard, that he had seen the salvation of God, and therefore was prepared to depart. He knew in whom he had believed, and was certain the power and the love of the dear *Immanuel* were in his interest; so that neither death, nor he that had the power of death, could hurt him.

A friend of mine was much with him on the 15th of *December*, and the discourse turned upon what Christ had done for his soul. Mr Hervey spake strongly and earnestly of the assurance of his faith, and of the great love of God in Christ to him. He declared, that the fear of death was taken from him; and it afterwards appeared, that death had no sting to hurt, nor the grave any power to get victory over him: for when death came, it found his mind in perfect peace. He had no uneasy apprehensions of dying, but had hopes full of glory and immortality. Doubtless then he had seen the salvation of God. The knowledge of salvation had been precious to him in life, and therefore he experienced the preciousness of it in death: for then he could give thanks to God for giving him the victory through Jesus Christ his Lord. Happy are they to whom God has given the knowledge of their salvation; they believe on good grounds, that their Saviour has brought them into a state of salvation; and therefore they are prepared to meet death, yea they can desire and pray for it, as Simeon did; which is the second particular I was to consider.

Simeon knowing that he was prepared, therefore desired to depart. And this is the believer's case. He longs for death, not out of an impatient discontented temper, but out of a real holy affection. When worldly men are oppressed with troubles on all sides, and see no way to escape, they are apt to desire death, that it may bring their misery to an end, and put them out of their pain. And there are some most miserable and abject cowards, who murder themselves to get rid of the troubles of life. These men court death as a less evil, but the believer desires it as a real blessing. He knows that his death will be to the glory of his Saviour; for it grieves him to the heart that he should ever do any thing displeasing to such a kind Benefactor. After receiving so many tokens of Christ's love, Oh it is indeed afflicting to give him the least offence. I appeal to yourselves. You that have the love of Jesus in your hearts, are not you sorry that you love him so little? Have not you reason daily to mourn for your ingratitude to him? and what will such thoughts suggest, but a desire to be where the very occasion of offence will be removed? It was on this account that Mr Hervey desired death: for the last morning of his life, when his brother came in to inquire after his welfare, he said, I have been thinking of my great ingratitude to my God. And these thoughts made him wish to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

And he desired it as Simeon did, and all believers do, upon another motive, namely, because the Lord will get himself honour, by the honour which he will give to his people in his kingdom. *He will be glorified*, says the apostle, *in his saints*; he will get himself glory by the great glory which he will bestow upon them. And as the believer has, in all things, an eye to God's glory, so has he especially in his desires to be dissolved and to be with Christ. He knows that God is glorified in him, and by him at present; but then it is imperfectly, and that grieves him. Self, or the creature, will be trying to share the heart with God, and thereby to rob him of his glory. A bare thought of this, when only rising in the mind, hurts the believer. He would have every thought brought unto subjection to Christ; and that makes him desire to be where temptation and sin shall be no more, and where he shall glorify God, and God shall be glorified in him for ever and ever. With this view Mr Hervey desired to depart. His great love to his Saviour's glory made him wish for death. He longed to be dissolved, that he might be freed from the frailties and infirmities of this mortal life, under which he laboured, and could not always, nor in a perfect degree, promote the glory of his redeeming God; therefore he desired to be with them who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and are ever receiving glory from him, and ever giving glory to him. And the Lord granted his desire; he literally answered his prayer; for he departed in peace, according to the word of God, as I purposed to shew under my *third* head.

What it is to be at peace with God, and to depart with a sense of this peace upon our minds, I cannot better express, than in the excellent words of the present Archbishop of Canterbury, in his *Nine Sermons*, p. 132. "*The peace of God* is that sense of being in friend-"ship with him, that feeling of comfort and joy flow-

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"ing from him, *which passeth all understanding*, exceeds "the conceptions of those who have not experienced "it, and will exceed hereafter the present conceptions of "those who have." And the believer, even when he is departing this life, has a sense of his being in friendship with God, and has a feeling of comfort and joy flowing from him. This is promised in scripture, and this is fulfilled to them who, being justified by faith, have peace with God: being reconciled to the Father through the Son of his love, they live, and they die in peace.

I suppose some weak in the faith are thinking thus within themselves: "Well, is it so, that true believers "die in peace and joy? I am sure I could not at pre"sent; for I am dreadfully afraid of death; and what "would not I give to be delivered from these fears? "for they make my life miserable." My brethren, why are you in bondage to them? God offers you deliverance. There are many general promises in his word, that let what will happen to believers, the peace of God shall rule in their hearts. Thus, *Is.* xxvi. 3. "Thou "wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid "upon thee." And as it is a perfect, so it is a continual peace. "The Lord of peace himself," says the apostle, 2 *Thess.* iii. 16. "give you peace always by all "means:" for after he has once given this peace, he makes all means, even the most unlikely, tend to the promoting of it; therefore death can by no means weaken, and much less destroy, this peace of God. These general promises he fulfilled to the patriarchs:—for St Paul says, *Heb.* xi. 13. "That they all died in faith:" —they acted faith in their death, and consequently had a sweet sense of the peace of God in their hearts when they died. David shews us the reason of their dying in faith, *Psal.* xlviii. 14. "This God is our God for ever "and ever, he shall be our guide even unto death."— They knew that their God would be with them to guide and keep them, when the body returned to dust, and the spirit returned to God who gave it: and therefore David spoke for himself what each of them also could say,—"When I walk through the valley of the shadow "of death, I will fear no evil, because thou my God art "then with me: thy rod and thy staff comfort me "even then," *Psal.* xxiii. 3. With this faith they looked upon death as disarmed of its sting and power to hurt; and therefore they laid down their heads, and fell asleep in the arms of death, with as much composure as any weary traveller ever longed for rest. They *fell asleep*. The scripture speaks of their death under this beautiful image, to teach us that death was as sweet to them as ever sleep was to a hard-labouring man.—— The faithful fell asleep quietly and composedly. And how should it be otherwise? they had no evil to fear; for they were at peace with God. And what could death do to hurt that peace? It does indeed dissolve all other bonds, but it strengthens this. It is the happy instrument of fastening the bond of peace with a tie which never can be dissolved. And when the faithful look upon death in this light, what is there in it but joy and peace, even a joy unspeakable, and a peace that surpasseth all understanding?

Perhaps some of you think this is not always the case; because there are very good men who have had strong conflicts and struggles before death. Nay, my brethren, think not so wickedly of God. Is it according to his word that the faithful shall depart in peace, and do they not? What! can the word of God be broken? No; it shall stand fast for ever and ever. And in the case which you state, it does not follow that this peace is weakened or destroyed, because it is tempted; by no means. The sense of this peace may remain when it is most furiously attacked; for it is the peace of God. God gave it, and God keeps it; and he may suffer the devil to tempt, but not to destroy it. The more it is tempted, the more honour redounds to God for preserving it in the fiery trial. It was more to God's glory to preserve his children in the fiery furnace, than to have kept them out of it. Doubtless he that has the power of death, will make his last efforts, and try to shake the faith of a dying believer. The devil will then set upon him with all his fury. But though he be a roaring lion, yet he is chained; and the almighty Saviour so over-rules his malice and rage, that he makes them work together for his glory and his people's good; as he did remarkably in the last efforts, which the enemy made against our dear brother. He saw him in great weakness of body, and then made a furious on-set against his faith; but the dear *Immanuel* was with him, and would not give him over into the enemy's hands. His faith was tried, and it came like gold out of the fire. He knew that it would be tried, and had therefore prepared himself for the fiery trial. Speaking of it to a faithful minister of Christ, who was often with him in his last sickness, he said,—"How many precious texts "are there, big with the rich truths of Christ, which we "do not comprehend, which we know nothing of; "and of those which we do know, how few do we re"member? *Bonus textuarius est bonus theologus*, and that "is the armour. The word of God is the sword; these "texts are the weapons, which I must use when that "subtle spirit, that arch adversary of mankind, comes to "tempt and sift me in my last conflict. Surely I had "need be well provided with these weapons, I had "need have my quiver full of them, to answer Satan "with texts out of the word of God when he assaults "me." Satan did assault him, but found him prepared and armed. Mr Hervey said to his friends the day that he died, "Oh you know not how great a conflict "I have." And after he had sat for some time with his eyes constantly lift up towards heaven, and his hands clasped together in a praying form, he said, "Now this "great conflict is over." Jesus made him conqueror over all the powers of darkness; having endeavoured to rob him of his peace; but in vain, they left him in the Saviour's arms, never more to be tempted; and he watched over him with the tenderest love, until he took him home. And when he went, he indeed departed in peace. His body seemed to be ready as well as his soul. When death came, he had not one struggle with it. There was not a single groan or sigh, or any thing that could shew the least unwillingness to depart. He had such a gentle dismission as he had prayed for in Simeon's words. He departed in peace, and fell asleep.

I have now finished what I had to offer upon the three particulars mentioned in my text; and it appears, that when a sinner is convinced of his want of a Saviour, and is convinced that Jesus is such a Saviour as he wants, able and willing to save to the uttermost, and when he is made to see his interest in the perfect complete righteousness of this adorable Saviour, and is assured of it from the word and Spirit of God, and from the fruits of righteousness produced in his life and conversation, then he is prepared to die; then he may desire it with submission to God's will; and whenever death comes, he may expect to depart in peace, according to the word of God. These great truths I have illustrated from scripture and from experience, more especially from the experience of our dear brother, now with the Lord, of whom I have spoken nothing more than what the words of my text naturally led me to say. If I were to attempt to draw the character of this excellent man, I would consider him in the several relations in which he stood to God and man, and would exhort you to follow him, so far as he followed Christ. But the compass of this discourse will not suffer me to enlarge. I can only just observe some particular instances, from whence it will evidently appear that he had seen the salvation of God

God. He had a clear view of it by the eye of faith, and was able to act faith upon it, for his was a faith working by love. "We love God," says the beloved apostle, "because he first loved us;" because we know by faith that he first loved us: so that our love is the reflex act of his love to us. And Mr Hervey had great experience of God's love to him, and therefore his heart was full of love to God; and out of the abundance of his heart his mouth spake. There was such a sweetness of heart-love upon his tongue, that he used to speak of the love of the adorable Redeemer, like one who had seen him face to face in the fulness of his glory. He would, with all the power of language and dignity of sentiment, speak for a long time together in praise of the ever-blessed Saviour. But you might plainly see, though every body else was pleased, yet he was not satisfied with what he had said. He thought he had not said enough, and what he had said fell far below his Lord's merit. But still he would try again, and indeed was never weary. You could not hear him speak for any time upon this his favourite subject, without being convinced that he felt what he said; and if you had any love of God, when you went into his company, his conversation would inflame it. He had an excellency, which I never saw to so great a degree in any other person. He never let an opportunity slip of speaking of the love of Christ. He would take occasion from the most common incident, and yet it would not appear forced: for he had a wonderful talent at spiritualizing and improving whatever happened about him; by which means he hindered the conversation from turning upon trifling matters, and, at the same time, kept it up with spirit and usefulness. Having set the Lord always before him, he saw the love of God in every thing, and therefore it is not to be wondered that all objects and events should give him occasion to speak of it. In his last sickness it continued still to be his favourite theme; for whenever my friend, who was much with him, came into the room, he would begin to talk of the love of Christ, and of the great things which Christ had done for him, until his breath failed him; and as soon as he had recovered himself a little, he would proceed upon the same sweet subject: so that he might have truly applied to himself the words of the prophet,—"My mouth shall be telling of thy righteousness and of "thy salvation all the day long; for I know no end "thereof."

This heart-love to God appeared evidently in every part of his character. As a minister, his faith wrought by love to the souls of men in all the offices of his function. While his health permitted him, he watched like a faithful shepherd over his flock. He used to visit them from house to house, and to speak freely to them of the state of their souls; and when the weakness of his body obliged him to drop these religious visits, he would often grieve, that he could not be more useful, and would speak with great concern and uneasiness of his not being able to preach oftener, and to do more for Christ. In the pulpit he was fervent and earnest with his people, and would often exert himself beyond his strength: for he preached the great doctrines of salvation, as one who had experienced the power of them. It was manifest to all who heard him, that he felt what he spake. And when we speak what we know, and testify what we have seen, then God blesses this experimental preaching. He puts a divine power and energy into it, and renders it effectual to awaken sinners, to comfort them that mourn for sin, and to edify and build up the faithful. Mr Hervey had many happy proofs of the usefulness of his preaching for each of these purposes; and therefore he did not think it enough to preach once a-week on the Lord's-day, but he set up a weekly lecture at Weston-Favell, which was very well attended, and was blessed to many of his neighbours, who will be his glory and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming.

He did not forget that he was a minister in his own house; for he called his family together twice a-day to serve God. It was his custom in the evening, after the servants had read the *Psalms* and the second lesson, to explain some part of what had been read. In this exercise he would sometimes dwell for half an hour; and when he met with a sweet passage upon the love of Christ, I have heard him speak for three quarters of an hour, and then he concluded with prayer.

In the morning, when the family were met together, he used to ask the servants,—"Well! where was our "text last night?" And after they had repeated it, he made them give an account of what had been said upon it; and then he would repeat and enforce his last night's discourse, concluding with prayer.

In the afternoon, when he was called down to tea, he used to bring his Hebrew Bible or Greek Testament with him, and would either speak upon one verse or upon several verses, as occasion offered. This was generally an improving season. The glory of God is very seldom promoted at the tea-table; but it was at Mr Hervey's. Drinking tea with him was like being at an ordinance; for it was sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

As a member of society, his faith wrought abundantly by love to his neighbour: for he was full of good works. His charities to the poor were very large; and that he might be liberal to them, he was very frugal in his own expences. He chose rather to clothe the poor than to give them money. He used to get some judicious person to buy linen, coarse cloth, stockings, shoes, &c. for them at the best hand, alledging that the poor could not buy so good a commodity at the little shops and with driblets of money. "I am God's steward," says he, "for his poor, and I must husband the little "pittance I have to bestow upon them, and make it "go as far as possible." But where money would be particularly serviceable to a family long afflicted with sickness, or to a prudent housekeeper who had met with great losses in trade, he would give five, ten, or fifteen guineas at a time, taking care it should not be known from whence the money came.

He gave away a great number of good books, with suitable instructions for their use, and especially Bibles. In the blank leaf he frequently wrote something striking, or else stuck in a printed paper, relating to the promises of God in and through Jesus Christ.

Mr Hervey's income was but small, and it may be wondered how he managed it so well as to have such sums to spare for charitable uses; but what money was left, after the family-expences were paid, and all the profits arising from the sale of his books, which was a very considerable sum, he gave away in charity. He made of it a bank for the poor. "And this," says he, "I have devoted to God. I will on no account apply "it to any worldly uses. I write not for profit or for "fame, but to serve the cause of God; and as he has "blessed my attempt, I think myself bound to relieve "the distresses of my fellow-creatures with the profit "that comes from this quarter." And he is still relieving them. He was not willing that his charities should die with him; for he ordered all the profit arising from the future sale of his books to be constantly applied to charitable uses. Thus, having believed in God, he was careful to maintain good works, knowing that these things are good and profitable unto men.

In his private life he was under the influence of the same faith, working by love to the will and commandments of God. His holy walking was very exemplary. What he said, in words, concerning his interest in the Redeemer's righteousness, he proved by his actions; for he was very sensible of the importance of this scripture, "He that saith he abideth in him, ought "himself also to walk, even as he walked." (1 John

ii.

(6) Mr Hervey walked very close after Christ; and found that the belief of Christ's righteousness being imputed to him for his justification, was so far from being a licentious doctrine, that it inspired him with the noblest motives to a grateful obedience. His holy life was an excellent recommendation of his principles: for I never saw one who came up so near to the scripture-character of a Christian. God had enriched him with great gifts, and with great graces, and had made him humble: for he was humbled by the power of grace. He had been a very vain proud young man; but the grace of God emptied him of pride and self, and clothed him with humility. Having put on Christ, he had put on with him the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit; which appeared in his great patience and resignation to the will of God. He had some very sharp trials of his faith and patience, both from God and from men, and he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. It was very remarkable, that in his long illness he was never known to fret or be uneasy; nor did the persons about him ever hear one angry, or one hasty word come out of his mouth.

The same principle of faith working by love was manifest in his studies, which he directed to the glory of God. He was once a great reader of the Greek and Roman authors, and his writings shew that he had a good taste for classical learning; but for some years past he chiefly applied himself to the study of the sacred scriptures. God had blessed him with a fine understanding, and a great memory, which he exercised in reading the Bible in the original languages. He was very well skilled in the Hebrew, and was an excellent critic in the Greek, and was a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, who, like unto a man that is an householder, bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old. He had a great veneration for this treasure of the Old and New Testaments. He used to talk of them in the highest terms, next to that adorable person of whom they treat. They were sweeter to him than honey and the honey-comb; and so they will be to every one who reads them, as he did, with faith. Whoever can act faith upon the exceeding great and precious promises contained in the sacred volume, will find so much sweetness in it, that he will have but little relish left for other books.

As to his writings, I leave them to speak for themselves. They stand in no need of my praises. They are in the hands of the public, and every reader will form his own judgment. Oh that the Spirit of the living God may direct it, that whoever reads his writings may learn to have no confidence in the flesh, but to make mention of Jehovah's righteousness, even of his only.

The time would fail me, if I was to enlarge upon all the particulars of his life and death. That was not my design. I only intended briefly to relate some things, from whence a tolerable judgment might be formed of Mr Hervey's character. But I cannot finish without taking notice of the last scene of his life, which was very triumphant and glorious. The last and great trial of his faith was more precious than that of gold which perisheth. Its preciousness never appeared more than in the hour of death; for then he evidently saw by faith, and apprehended the salvation of God, and could rejoice in a clear view of his own interest in it. When Dr Stonhouse saw him for the last time, namely, on Christmas-day, about two hours before he expired, Mr Hervey pressed home upon him his everlasting concerns, in the most affectionate manner; telling him that here is no abiding place, and begging of him to attend, amidst the multiplicity of his business, to the one thing needful.

The Doctor, seeing the great difficulty and pain with which he spoke, (for he was almost suffocated with phlegm and frequent vomitings,) and finding, by his pulse, that the pangs of death were then coming on, desired that he would spare himself. "No," says he, "Doctor, no. You tell me I have but few moments "to live; Oh let me spend them in adoring our great "Redeemer. Though my flesh and my heart fail me, "yet God is the strength of my heart, and my portion "for ever." He then expatiated in the most striking manner upon these words of St Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.——"All things are yours, life and death: for ye "are Christ's." "Here," says he, "is the treasure of "a Christian. Death is reckoned amongst this inventory;—and a noble treasure it is. How thankful am "I for death, as it is the passage through which I pass "to the Lord and Giver of eternal life, and as it frees "me from all this misery you now see me endure, and "which I am willing to endure, as long as God thinks "fit! for I know he will, by and by, in his own good "time, dismiss me from the body. These light afflictions are but for a moment, and then comes an eternal weight of glory. Oh welcome, welcome death! "—Thou mayst well be reckoned among the treasures "of the Christian.——To live is Christ, but to die is "*gain*."

After which, as the Doctor was taking his final leave of him, Mr Hervey expressed great gratitude for his visits, though it had been long out of the power of medicine to cure him.——He then paused a little, and, with great serenity and sweetness in his countenance, though the pangs of death were then on him, repeated these triumphant words—

"Lord, now letteſt thou thy servant depart in peace, "according to thy *most holy* and *comfortable* word: for "mine eyes have seen thy *precious* salvation. Here, "Doctor, is my cordial. What are all cordials to the "dying, compared to the salvation of Christ? This, "this supports me."—He found this supporting him in his last moments, and declared it, by saying, twice or thrice, *Precious salvation!* and then, leaning his head against the side of the easy chair in which he sat, he shut his eyes, and fell asleep. Oh precious salvation! how precious must it be to the dying man, who, interested in it, can thank God for death, and reckon it among his riches; who, supported by faith in the salvation of God, can account it his gain to die; and can gladly say, Oh welcome, welcome death! May this faith support you, my brethren, when all other supports fail, and make salvation as precious to you as it was to Mr Hervey! and of this you may be assured, that what the Lord did for him he is able also to do for you. He was indeed a glorious instance of the power of grace; for by the grace of God he was what he was. And grace is free; as free for you as it was for him; able also to make you live and die as much to the glory of God as he did. He was truly a burning and shining light; but the Lord's hand is not shortened. It can make your light shine also before men, and enable you to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour as much as Mr Hervey did. And the great use to be made of his example is, to stir you up to glorify God for the gifts and graces bestowed upon him, and to desire the same may be bestowed upon you.—With this view I shall apply it.

First, To those persons who have never seen the salvation of God, and, consequently, are not prepared to depart in peace; and these are all careless sinners, who live secure in the wilful commission of sin. Mr Hervey knew, that whenever the Lord should call him out of this life, he should be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; and, clothed in this righteousness, he was certain that he should appear at the bar of justice without spot of sin, unto eternal salvation.——But this is not your experience. Nay, you have never been awakened to desire it. You

have never been humbled under a ſenſe of your loſt condition, nor broken down under a conviction of your helpleſſneſs: ſo that you have never ſeen your want of a Saviour, and conſequently, have never ſeen the ſalvation of our God. If you entertain any hopes of departing in peace, while you are in this ſtate, you are of all men the moſt deceived; for when death comes, it will find you in your ſins unpardoned, without any faith in the Redeemer's righteouſneſs to make death deſirable, but with every thing that can make it terrible. The holy, juſt, and good law of the moſt high God will accuſe, conſcience will plead guilty, juſtice will condemn and puniſh, and the wrath of God will abide upon you for ever and ever. How is it poſſible you ſhould depart in peace, unleſs you die inſenſible? and that would be dreadful indeed. If ſin ſhould ſo far infatuate you, that you never awake out of its deluſive ſlumbers until you are are called to receive the wages of ſin. Oh think what ſort of a peace you ſpeak to yourſelves! ſince it leaves you in the greateſt danger, and, at the ſame time, inſenſible of it. To depart in ſuch a falſe peace, would be your everlaſting deſtruction. Oh Sirs, conſider then what a deluſion you are under! The wrath of an offended God abideth on you, the curſes of his broken law hang over your guilty heads, and you are liable to the vengeance of his almighty juſtice; and yet you think yourſelves ſafe. You are ſaying, Peace, peace, while all the powers in heaven and earth are at war with you, and in a moment you may be cut off, and delivered over to the tormentors; and then you will have a ſad and eternal experience of that awful threatening, "There is no "peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked."

Men and brethren, what do you ſay to theſe things? Are they true, or are they not? If they be true, why are you not influenced by them? And if you think them not true, why do you make any profeſſion of the Chriſtian religion? why do you come to the houſe of God to attend upon his ordinances? Your appearance here ranks you among profeſſors; and if you keep up the form, without the power of godlineſs, I have for you, in the *ſecond place*, a word of reproof.

There have ariſen, in the latter days, mockers, who pretend to ridicule the ſeeing of the ſalvation of God, and the being thereby prepared to depart in peace.—Poſſibly there may be ſome ſuch amongſt us to-day, who laugh at all vital and experimental religion. If there be, I would aſk them, whether the ſcripture has not promiſed deliverance from the fear of death? Is it not written, (Heb. ix. 15.) "That Chriſt came to "deliver them who through fear of death, were all "their life-time ſubject to bondage?" Obſerve, they were in bondage to the fear of death, but Chriſt came to deliver them. And did not he attain the end for which he came? Moſt certainly he did. "I have fi-"niſhed, ſays he to his Father, "the work which thou "gaveſt me to do." Now, it was the part of the work to deliver his people from the fear of death; and as the work was finiſhed, conſequently they are delivered. And they ſay they are. They atteſt it, and they have given the moſt convincing proofs of their having conquered all fear of death: they have been afflicted, tormented, ſtoned, ſawn aſunder, put on the rack; and yet they would not accept deliverance, becauſe they were ſure of obtaining a better reſurrection.—And of theſe there have not been two or three only, but a noble and numerous army, yea, a great multitude, whom no man could number; and, glory be to God, it is an increaſing multitude: there are ſome who daily depart in peace, and there are hundreds, thouſands now alive, who are waiting for their departure with hopes full of immortality; and why ſhould you think they will be diſappointed of their hope? Will Chriſt break his word? can his promiſe fail? No his word and his promiſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed, when heaven and earth ſhall be no more; and until the place of them ſhall not be found, the Lord will always have ſuch witneſſes of the truth of the doctrine in my text, as Mr Hervey, who will depart this life in the triumph of faith.

Againſt theſe plain facts what can you object? They are founded upon the clear promiſes of ſcripture, which are literally fulfilled at this very day; and you can have no pretence to reject their authority, unleſs you run into downright ſcepticiſm, and deny the authority of the holy ſcriptures. If any of you have arrived at this pitch of ridicule, I ſhall not reaſon with you at preſent. Let the day decide the point. If death does not, judgment will. You will be forced to be tried by that book which you reject, and by that Judge whom you have inſulted and vilified. O that you may be convinced of your error before it be too late! May God open your eyes to ſee your guilt and your danger, that you may ſue for mercy along with them who are ſeeking the experience of the doctrine in my text; to whom I have, in the *third* place, a word of comfort.

I ſuppoſe there are many perſons here, who find the ſting of death in their guilty conſciences, and who therefore deſire to be delivered from the fear and from the power of death. My brethren, there is a glorious Deliverer, who has, in his own perſon, conquered death, and him that had the power of death; and he is able to make you conquerors. His power is almighty: for he is the Lord God omnipotent; and he is an all-loving Saviour, who is more ready to give, than you are to aſk, his promiſed help. Since he has ſhewn you your want of it, aſk and you ſhall have, ſeek and you ſhall find.

You do ſeek, you ſay, but it is with many doubts and fears. Of what do you doubt? of Chriſt's power or of Chriſt's love? He can deliver you. All things are poſſible to him, becauſe all power in heaven and earth is in his hands. And he is a God of love; he has ſhewed mercy to the greateſt of ſinners, and has ſhed his love abroad in their hearts. He has given them faith to ſee their intereſt in him, and then they were happy, living or dying: for whether they lived, they lived unto the Lord; or whether they died, they died unto the Lord: ſo that living and dying they were the Lord's.

True, ſay you, I believe this was the happy caſe of Mr Hervey, and of many others; but I am full of doubts and fears, becauſe I am ſuch an unworthy creature, that I do not deſerve any mercy. Nor did they: God did not treat them upon the footing of deſert; what he gave them was mere bounty, flowing from the riches of his unmerited love. That is the way in which he beſtows his great ſalvation. All the bleſſings of it are free, as free for one ſinner as for another. None are excluded, becauſe they are great ſinners; Paul found mercy: and none are rejected, becauſe of their unworthineſs; Mary Magdalen was pardoned; and why may not you? For all the gifts of God flow from his free grace, and are beſtowed upon unworthy ſinners; and if you are one of them, you are a proper object to receive the bleſſings of free grace; and the ſenſe of your unworthineſs ſhould make you more earneſt in aſking, but it is no bar to your receiving, all the bleſſings of ſalvation; for Jeſus Chriſt aſſures us in his word, "that *he* came to ſeek "and to ſave that which was loſt;" ſuch loſt ſinners as you are.

Thus you ſee what encouragement you have to believe in God. You have his word and his promiſe to rely upon; you have the teſtimony of God's people, declaring that they were once, as you are, afraid of death, but now Chriſt has taken away the fear of it. They have ſeen the ſalvation of God, and know by faith, that all the bleſſings of it are freely given them in Chriſt Jeſus; therefore they are ready, they deſire

to

depart. May the tender mercies of our God bring every one of you into this happy ſtate! And to thoſe who are already in it, I make my *fourth* remark.

My Chriſtian friends and brethren, you have ſeen the ſalvation of God, and are delivered from the fear of death: what return will you make unto the Lord for all the benefits which he hath done unto you? Certainly you will not forget the great things which he has already given you, and the greater things for which you are waiting; and let theſe conſiderations conſtrain you to love this divine Benefactor, and to ſerve him without fear, in an holy obedience, all the days of your lives. Give evidence of the ſincerity of your love, as your Lord requires; "If ye love me, keep my commandments:"—Keep near to me in my ways, and walk cloſe with me in mine ordinances, and you will not only thereby give proof of your love, but it will alſo grow exceedingly; and as it grows, your deſire to depart will grow with it; for when the love of Chriſt rules in the heart, you will be ready, yea, you will deſire to depart, and to be with him. This was the happy experience of our deceaſed brother; and let his example ſtir you up to great care and watchfulneſs in your holy walking heavenwards, that your faith may be always working by love, as his did. Conſider the graces of his life, and ſeek the ſame. Stop not ſhort, but try to get beyond him. Conſider his death. Remember with what perfect aſſurance he ſpake of his intereſt in Chriſt, and what ſtrong proofs he gave of it; and then pray that your faith may ſtand as unſhaken as his was in that great time of trial. And, above all, forget not what ſupported him in his laſt moments; it was the clear view he had of his intereſt in the great ſalvation of God:—— "This, this," ſays he, "ſupports me,"—now at the approach of death. Oh how precious did ſalvation then appear to him, when he found death coming diſarmed, and without a ſting! and it grew ſtill more precious, when, with his laſt breath, he declared, that death had no power to hurt the peace of God, which ruled in his heart; for even then he found ſalvation precious. You need not fear, my brethren, but this will be your happy experience. God has given you the knowledge of ſalvation by the remiſſion of your ſins; and as your faith grows exceedingly, ſalvation will grow exceedingly precious. The greater experience you hereby get of the love of Chriſt, the more will you be ſupported under the trials of life, and the better prepared for the trials of death. You will find, that the ſweet ſenſe of Chriſt's love in the heart will enable you to rejoice in ſuffering, and then you need not fear but it will enable you to rejoice in the ſufferings of death. For who or what ſhall ſeparate believers from the love of Chriſt? Shall the troubles of life, or the pains of death? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? No; in all theſe things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. *More than conquerors!* Oh glorious warfare, in which believers not only conquer their enemies, but alſo reap innumerable and endleſs bleſſings to themſelves. Even death is to them a real bleſſing; they expect it, they find it ſo, and they are more than conquerors over it, through him that loved them.

In the *laſt* place, I muſt put you all in remembrance, that neither the words of my text, nor what has been ſaid upon them, will be of any benefit without a bleſſing from God. We cannot ſee his ſalvation with the eye of faith, nor experience the power of it, without the help of his grace. It is from him, who has done all for us, that all muſt be done in us; and if ſome good impreſſions have been made this day upon any of your hearts, they will ſoon wear away, unleſs he preſerve and ſtrengthen them. If you deſire, at preſent, to live Mr Hervey's life, and to die his death, this deſire will be ineffectual, unleſs it be carried into act by the mighty working of God's Spirit: he is all in all. For which reaſon we always begin and always end the hearing of the word with prayer; being aſſured, that if Paul ſhould plant, and Apollos ſhould water, yet it would be to no purpoſe, unleſs God ſhould give the increaſe. Oh that it may be abundant this day to his glory, and to the good of your ſouls. To that end let us pray—

O almighty and moſt merciful God, we humbly beſeech thee to look down with mercy upon this congregation, and to bleſs the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears. Make them the means of opening the blind eyes which have never ſeen their want of thy ſalvation. Lord, enlighten them, and help them to ſeek, until they find pardon and peace in thee. Be gracious to thoſe who are now waiting upon thee, believing, that after they have ſeen thy ſalvation, they ſhall be able to depart in peace. O Lord God, manifeſt it unto them, and add this day to the number of thoſe who have ſeen and experienced it. We deſire to glorify thee for every living Chriſtian who knows in whom he has believed, and is ready and prepared to depart in peace. We give all the praiſe to the riches of thy free grace. And we alſo bleſs thy holy name for all thy ſervants departed this life in thy faith and love, beſeeching thee to give us grace ſo to follow their good examples, as they followed Chriſt; that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom. Grant this, O Father, for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, our only Mediator and Advocate; to whom, with thee, and the Holy Spirit, three co-equal perſons in one Jehovah, be honour, and glory, and bleſſing, and praiſe, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

REMARKS
ON
LORD BOLINGBROKE's LETTERS
ON THE
STUDY and USE of HISTORY;
SO FAR AS THEY RELATE TO THE
HISTORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT,
AND ESPECIALLY TO THE
CASE of NOAH, denouncing a Curse upon CANAAN.
In a LETTER to a LADY of QUALITY.

Merſes profundo, pulchrior evenit. HOR.

PREFACE.

THE reader will ſee, from the *date* of the following letter, that it was written a conſiderable time ago. From which circumſtance he will probably conclude, that it was not intended for publication. A conjecture which is perfectly juſt. The publication is owing to the *Right Honourable* perſonage, whoſe name, though it would grace and recommend his papers, the author is not allowed to mention. Her Ladyſhip's commands, which would admit of no excuſe, drew the remarks from his pen; and her deſire, which with him will always have the force of a command, has brought them to the preſs.——It will give him the higheſt pleaſure, if, while he is paying the debt of obedience and gratitude to a Noble friend, he may ſupport the dignity of the divine word; may raiſe its *eſteem*, and promote its *ſtudy* among men: becauſe then he may reaſonably hope to promote the *beſt intereſts* of his fellow-creatures; and ſubſerve that grand deſignation of the almighty Majeſty, expreſſed by the pſalmiſt,—*Thou haſt magnified thy word above all thy name* *.

* Pſal. cxxxviii. 2.

A LETTER.

MADAM,

AS you was pleaſed to aſk my opinion concerning LORD BOLINGBROKE's remarks on the *ſcriptural hiſtory*, I have procured the book; have peruſed what relates to the ſubject; and ſubmit to your judgment the thoughts which occurred: aſſuring your Ladyſhip, that, though many might diſcuſs the point much more clearly and ſatisfactorily than the perſon you favoured with your commands; yet no one can think it a greater honour to receive them, or a greater pleaſure to execute them.

"The Old Teſtament," it is alledged, "is no ſuffi-"cient foundation for *chronology* from the beginning of "time *."—To enter upon the *niceties* of chronology, would, perhaps, be too *difficult* a reſearch; at leaſt, it would require from your Ladyſhip a more *painful* attention, than I ſhould chuſe to occaſion by any of my letters. And I very frankly own, that I am by no means maſter of the argument, nor equal to the taſk. Others, I don't doubt, whoſe inclination has diſpoſed, and whoſe genius has fitted them for this particular ſtudy, will undertake to decide the queſtion, and give the honour where the honour is due.——This, however, from a very ſcanty ſurvey of the caſe, I can eaſily diſcern; that the chronologer will no where find ſuch *memorable* events for fixing his æras, nor ſuch *early* and *ſubſtantial* aids for computing his time, as from the *Moſaic* monuments, and the ſacred annals.

From the beginning of the world to the flood, we have an *orderly gradation* of time, marked out by the lives of ten eminent patriarchs.——From the flood, we may proceed to that glorious promiſe of a Redeemer, made to *Abraham; In thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed* *.——From this promiſe, to the miraculous deliverance of the *Iſraelites* from *Egyptian* bondage. ——From thence, to the building of *Solomon*'s temple; which was an illuſtrious type † of that divine perſon, *in whom dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily.*—— From the building of this magnificent ſtructure, to the demolition of it by the *Babylonian* monarch.——From thence, to the conqueſt of *Babylon* by *Cyrus* the *Perſian*. ——And from the reign of *Cyrus*, to that grand, that moſt important of all tranſactions, the death of Meſſiah the Prince; when he *finiſhed the tranſ-*

* See *Lord Bolingbroke*'s letters on the ſtudy and uſe of hiſtory, vol. i. page 98.

* Gen. xxii. 18. † John ii. 21.

greſſion,

...and made an end of sins, and made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness *.

The intermediate spaces, between each of these very distinguished periods, may, I believe, be ascertained, to a considerable degree of exactness, from the sacred volumes. If so, this will constitute a more comprehensive and perfect system of chronology, than can be derived from the *Olympiads* of the *Grecians*, or the *Hegira* of the *Mahometans*; from the *Persian*, the *Roman*, or any other epocha.

But the *history* of the *Old Testament* is much more necessary to be known, and much more easy to be understood. Yet this, my Lord suggests, is not a *complete* history of the first ages †.—We allow the suggestion. It neither is, nor has materials for, a complete universal history. It pretends to nothing more, than to relate the affairs of *one* particular family; in which the *church* of GOD was to subsist, and from which the SAVIOUR *of men* was to spring. Nevertheless, so many *collateral* incidents are touched upon, so many branches of this main stream are occasionally pursued, as present us with a collection of the most *ancient*, the most *curious*, and most *instructive* facts.

Here we are brought acquainted with the *creation* of the world, and the formation of man. The *origin* of evil, both natural and moral, is discovered in the fall of our first parents; and the displeasure of GOD against sin, is manifested by the waters of a general deluge.—Here we see the preservation of our species in the ark, and repeopling of the earth by *Noah*; the invention of polite arts ‡, and the rise of useful manufactures ‖; the establishment of nations, and the founders of their principal kingdoms §. Not to add, that these records are the royal archives, in which the *charter* of our *sovereignty* over the creatures is preserved, and the original *draught* of the *covenant* of grace ¶ deposited.—Here then, may we not challenge *any*, or *all* the books, written in every language under heaven? What memoirs go *so far back* into antiquity? what memoirs are *so interesting* to all mankind?—Had they been transmitted to us by any *Grecian* or *Roman* author, how would they have been admired and valued! how lavishly, and indeed how justly, praised!

Another excellency of these writings (and peculiar to these alone) is, That they not only reach backward, as far as the *very birth* of things; but proceed forwards, even into the *remotest futurity*.—They foretold the ruin of *Babylon* ††, the noblest, the best fortified, and most commodiously situated metropolis in the universe; who said, and no one would have suspected it to be a vain boast, *I shall be a lady for ever* ‡‡. Yet the scriptures pronounced her utter *destruction* ==, and specified the *person* who should bring about this great catastrophe.—They pointed out the place of his *abode* ≈;—they described him by several *distinguishing* circumstances —;—they particularized the genius of his *warlike* enterprizes * *;—they mentioned his very *name* * ;—all this, some hundreds of years before the event took place, or the conqueror was born.

They foretold the *rejection* and *calamities* of the disobedient *Jews*, who are the chief subject of their history; (and this, surely, could not be with a view to aggrandize their nation, or to answer any sinister design): that they should be subdued by their enemies, lose the favour of their GOD, and the possession of their native land; yet not be *settled*, as a *colony*, in some particular tract of the victor's dominions, but be *scattered abroad* under the whole heavens †.——This was threatened by their *JEHOVAH*,—this is recorded in their books,—and this is, even *now*, so remarkably fulfilled, as to be a fact of the utmost notoriety. Go into the most polite or most barbarous countries, the nearest or most distant parts of the world; you will, every where, find *living evidences* of this scriptural prediction.

The scriptures speak in the most explicit and peremptory terms, with regard to the *restoration* of the *Jews* ‡.——This restoration could not be effected, at least could not be observed, if they had been blended and incorporated with the inhabitants of other climes. Therefore, to be a *presumptive proof* of its accomplishment; and to render it, when accomplished, the *most observable* of all revolutions; they have subsisted a *distinct* people, amidst all the regions whither they have been driven.——A most singular and astonishing circumstance! How soon were the *Danes*, the *Saxons*, and the *Normans*, mingled with the *Britons*! and how *entirely* are they all melted down and lost among the natives of our isle! But the *Jews*, like a drop of oil on the water, have continued a *separate* community; and, through *dispersed* into *all* nations, are not, through the long course of seventeen hundred years, *embodied* with *any*.——This is such a *peculiarity* in the dispensations of providence, as I can never sufficiently admire: and is, I think, an *undeniable voucher* to the authenticity of the scriptures; held forth, as it were by the hand of Omnipotence, in the sight of all the world.

Such events the ancient scriptures foretell, and *such* facts they relate; facts of incomparable *grandeur*, and events of the greatest *importance*. All which are delivered in such a *majestic simplicity* of style, as nothing

* Dan. ix. 24. † Pag. 83.

‡ Gen. iv. 21. ‖ Gen. iv. 20. 22.

§ Gen. chap. x. Which, though but little adverted to, is the noblest piece of *geographical antiquity* extant in the world. It shews us how the whole earth, from the three sons of *Noah*, was overspread, inhabited, and denominated. It discovers the *true* source of the several nations; about which profane authors either say nothing at all, or else say what is *chimerical*, *precarious*, *false*.

¶ Gen. i. 28. † Gen. iii. 15. †† Is. xiii. 19. &c. xvii. 24. ‡‡ Is. xlvii. 7. == Is. xiii. 19. 20. &c. xvi. 23. ≈ Is. xlvi. 11.

* That he should besiege and take the most impregnable of cities, *Is.* xlv. 1. 2.;—that he should enrich himself with immense spoils, *Is.* lv. 3.;—that he should not be a tyrant, but a *shepherd* to the captive *Jews*;—should release them from their captivity, and both permit and promote the rebuilding of their temple, *Is.* xliv. 28.

** He is called a *ravenous bird*, Is. xlvi. 11. denoting his *speed*, *agility*, and great *expedition*. Which were more like the flight of a *swift-winged* bird, (this is the exact sense of the original עיט, than the march of an army, with all its encumbrances. This is acknowledged by *Tigranes*, in his first expostulatory discourse with *Cyrus*: Ταχει δε τοσουτῳ περιεσῃ αυτων ωστε πορρωθεν αφικομενων σου πολλω σοφω, πριν τους παρ' εκεινων δυναμιν αθροισασθαι. *You far exceed the king of* Armenia *in the subtleness of your motions, that, before he could get together the few forces quartered in his neighbourhood, you are come from a distant country, and have surrounded him with a large army.* Xenoph. Cyropæd. lib. III.——Thus *Alexander*, whose marches and whose victories were almost incredibly swift, is beautifully and exactly characterized by the prophet *Daniel*: *As I was considering, behold! an he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground.* Chap. viii. 5. No *orator*, with all the powers of language, could more *beautifully* have described the rapidity and the extent of the *Macedonian* conquests; nor could any *historian*, though writing after the accomplishment of the events, have described them more *exactly*.

* Is. xliv. 28. xlv. 1. † Deut. xxviii. 64. Amos ix. 9.

‡ Ezek. xi. 17. Amos ix. 14. 15. Zech. xiv. 10. 11. I have not ventured to determine, whether this restoration of the *Jews* is to be understood of a return to *their own country*, or of their conversion to the *faith of* CHRIST. Though I think, the latter is the meaning of the Holy Spirit; will be no less wonderful than the former; and seems to be supported by such passages as the following.—*They shall look on ME, whom they have pierced, and mourn.* The gift of *repentance*, not the circumstance of *place*, is the material point, Zech. xii. 10.—*When it shall turn*, not the tribes of *Israel* to *Jerusalem*, but the heart of the *Israelites to the* LORD, 2 Cor. iii. 16.—Then *all* Israel *shall be saved*, Rom. xi. 26. shall be made partakers of the gospel, of its sacred privileges, and its great salvation. In which they will enjoy all, more than all the blessings, which *Canaan* could afford. Of which, that goodly land, in its utmost fertility, affluence, and glory, was but a type.

can equal but their preciſe veracity.—Yet *theſe* books Lord *Bolingbroke* diſparages; and, at the ſame time, extols the writings of *Tacitus*.—The remains of *Tacitus*, he tells us, "are precious remains *;" Thoſe of the *holy ſcripture* "are dark and imperfect accounts †." In *Tacitus*, "hiſtory preſerves her integrity, and her "luſtre ‡." In the *holy ſcripture*, inſtead of hiſtory, you have "an heap of fables; which can pretend to "nothing but ſome inſcrutable truths, and therefore "uſeleſs to mankind ‖."—Every line of *Tacitus* has weight ⊥, and cannot be mentioned without admiration. Whereas, the *ſacred hiſtory* is put upon a level with the extravagancies of *Amadis* of *Gaul* +, and "can never gain ſufficient credit from any reaſonable "man ++."

Who is this uncircumciſed Philiſtine, ſaid *David*, *that he ſhould defy the armies of the living GOD* =? And who is this *Tacitus*, would I aſk, this darling author, that *he* ſhould be raiſed to the ſkies, while the *divine* hiſtorians are trodden to the duſt?——If your Ladyſhip is unacquainted with his character, let me give it in the words of a moſt elegant and maſterly critic. "Having "conſidered the principal qualities of *Tacitus* as a "writer and an hiſtorian, I cannot help thinking, "that there is a falſe ſublime and affectation in his "deſcriptions; a ſcurrility and ſatirical vein, with "too epigrammatical a conciſeneſs in his wit; an a-"cuteneſs, but too ſpeculative, and a policy over-re-"fined in his obſervations; a malignant and ill-natur-"ed turn in his characters; a philoſophy too abſtract-"ed and elevated in his reaſonings, and a vanity in his "learning. In ſhort, that he is in antiquity a pedant; "in the philoſophy of nature a ſceptic; in morals "looſe; in deſcription gaudy and pompous; in poli-"tics ſubdolous, refined, and knaviſh **."

Yet *this* is the writer that muſt be placed in ſuch great ſuperiority to *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, and *Samuel*; *this* the hiſtory (riſe Criticiſm, and reſent the indignity!) that is ſpoken of with applauſe and rapture, even while the ſacred annals are treated with diſreſpect and obloquy.

I might recount the glorious *privileges* exhibited in this bleſſed book; the ineſtimable *promiſes* made to the righteous; the tenderly-compaſſionate *invitations* addreſſed to ſinners; the refined and exalted diſplays of *morality*; with many other noble particulars;—which it is the prerogative of *ſcripture* to contain,—the wiſdom of mankind to believe,—and the only felicity of our nature to be intereſted in them, and influenced by them.

But my Lord is ready to agree on theſe topics. He expreſſes, in ſome places at leaſt, no diſlike of the *doctrinal* and *prophetical* parts.——Nay, he has contrived an expedient to reſcue them from the diſhonour which he would bring upon the *hiſtorical*. He allows the former to be written under the inſpiration of the holy and unerring Spirit. The latter, he affirms, are "purely human, and therefore fallible ††."—Proceeding upon this ſuppoſition, he ſcruples not to repreſent them, as the devices of craft, or the blunders of ignorance *.

I muſt beg leave to obſerve, that ſuch a *diſtinction* is without the leaſt ground of reality to *ſupport* it; and would, if admitted, be an effectual method to *ſubvert* the whole of revelation. For, if it could be proved, that the authors of this hiſtory were ſo *weak* as to fall into palpable errors, where a common degree of ſagacity would have ſecured them from miſtaking; or if they were ſo *treacherous* as to palm upon the world a multiplicity of forgeries; ſo *impious* as to aſcribe their falſehoods to the GOD of truth; this would at once ruin their *character* as *men*, and deſtroy their *credit* as *writers*. At this rate, who could depend upon their teſtimony in *any* point whatever?

Beſides, many of the doctrinal parts of ſcripture *refer to*, and are *derived from*, the hiſtorical. If the latter were a parcel of impoſitions and miſtakes, what degree of veracity or dignity could the former claim? If the foundation is a bubble, how can the ſuperſtructure ſtand?—Whether his Lordſhip, by ſuch a ſpecious pretence of *ſerving* the intereſts of true religion, intended ſecretly to *undermine* it, I will not preſume to ſay. But this I may venture to declare, that his ſcheme is very ſhrewdly calculated to compaſs ſuch an end. Grant what his Lordſhip aſks; and what all the enemies of Chriſtianity wiſh, will undoubtedly follow.

Farther, Madam,—ſuch a diſtinction is contrary to the expreſs declaration of the *New Teſtament*; which poſitively aſſerts, that ALL *ſcripture is given by inſpiration of GOD* †.—Our bleſſed LORD, who was very well qualified to *diſcern* truth, and equally zealous to *maintain* it, makes no ſuch difference.——He ſays in general, *Search the ſcriptures* ‡; the *whole* collection of ſacred writings.—*Whatſoever things*, adds St Paul, not ſome particular paſſages only, but *WHATSOEVER THINGS were written aforetime, were written for our learning* ‖; and muſt therefore have been under ſuch a divine ſuperintendency, as ſecured them from all poſſibility of error. Otherwiſe, they might be written, not for our *learning*, but for our *deception*.——So that St *Paul*'s direction is as contrary to Lord *Bolingbroke*'s diſtinction, as the eaſt is oppoſite to the weſt. We may as ſoon bring thoſe two points of the hemiſphere together, as reconcile his Lordſhip's *refinements* with the apoſtle's *religion*.

I believe, it will be equally difficult to render his Lordſhip *conſiſtent* with himſelf.——His *conceſſion* overthrows his *diſtinction*.——Admitting the doctrinal parts of the ſcripture to be true, the veracity of the hiſtorical is, by *neceſſary conſequence*, and beyond all contradiction, eſtabliſhed. They are *indiſſolubly* connected: they mutually bear on, and mutually ſuſtain each other; and muſt ſtand or fall *together*. They are like an *arch* moſt exactly finiſhed; not a ſtone of which can be taken away, without diſconcerting the whole ſtructure; and like an arch, firmly founded, as well as correctly finiſhed, the more they are *preſſed*, the *ſtronger* they will appear.

My Lord ſays indeed, That "CHRIST came not "to conſecrate all the written traditions of the *Jews* ⊥." He *ſays* it, but where or how does he *prove* it?—By written traditions of the *Jews*, I ſuppoſe we are to underſtand all the *Hebrew ſcriptures*. The drift of the diſcourſe leads us to this ſenſe. Now, it is apparent, that our Saviour has *actually* conſecrated, has ſet the ſeal of authenticity and infallibility to *the law of* Moſes, to *the* pſalms, and to *the prophets* ++. By appealing to them as *deciſive*, and by allowing them to be *predictive*, he has acknowledged them to be divine.

* Page 161. † Page 108. ‡ Page 161.
‖ Page 121. ⊥ Page 161. + Page 121.
++ Page 118.——If, in the pages I have referred to, and the ſentences I have quoted, my Lord does not aim at the *ſcriptural records*, I ſhall very willingly, nay, *moſt gladly* acknowledge myſelf miſtaken. To me, after a repeated and attentive peruſal of the paſſages, he appears to mean *thoſe*, and thoſe *principally*. ——He means, according to his own profeſſion, *ſuch ancient hiſtory as he had been deſcribing* (ſee page 118.), and I am very ſure, the principal ſubject of the preceding ſheets was the *ſacred*.—But why ſhould not his Lordſhip ſpeak his ſentiments *plainly*? Is it for want of ingenuity? or owing to diffidence in the cauſe? = 1 Sam. xvii. 26.

** The treatiſe, which furniſhes me with this extract, is written by Mr *Hunter*; is entitled, *Obſervations on* Tacitus; and, if my reader has not peruſed them, I dare venture to aſſure him, that he has one of the *higheſt* entertainments in polite literature yet to come. See page 184. †† Page 96.

* That *this* is no *aggravated* imputation, every attentive reader of his Lordſhip's letters will eaſily perceive; and I believe, it will appear too plainly from the paſſages to be produced in the ſequel of this epiſtle. † 2 Tim. iii. 16. ‡ John v. 39.
‖ Rom. xv. 4. ⊥ Page 94. ++ Luke xxiv. 44.

ly inſpired; to be unqueſtionably true. And a very little acquaintance with *Jewiſh* antiquities will inform us, that, in theſe *three* partitions, *the whole* body of the *Hebrew* ſcriptures is comprehended?——What then becomes of his Lordſhip's aſſertion? or to whoſe diſcredit does it tend? that of the *Jewiſh* ſcriptures, or that of *his own* knowledge?

I muſt deſire your Ladyſhip to take notice of the *expreſſion* in this paſſage. It is ſomewhat ſingular, and deſerves a particular regard. *Written traditions* is the phraſe. Every one knows that we explode, and very juſtly, thoſe *ſuperſtitious* whimſies of the *Jews*, which paſs under the denomination of traditions. Yet my Lord thinks proper, to call the hiſtories of the *Old Teſtament* by this *diſreputable* name; only he admits one difference, that whereas the former were tranſmitted by ſtrength of *memory*, the latter are committed to *writing*.——But is this an *honeſt* repreſentation? is this free from all *malignant* diſguiſe?

Let us put the matter to the following trial. The word *legend*, when applied to any *modern* ſtory, raiſes the ſame contemptible and abſurd idea, as the word *tradition* excites, when applied to any *Jewiſh* notion. Would my Lord, or would his friends think, that due honour or common juſtice was done to his *ſketch of the hiſtory and ſtate of* Europe, if it ſhould be ſtyled, in our public papers, Lord *Bolingbroke's written legends*?——The impropriety and the malevolence of ſuch a title would be undeniable and odious: Who then can vindicate the propriety of his Lordſhip's language, or clear it from being a moſt injurious miſrepreſentation of the ſacred records? which, however ſome of the facts might come down, in a traditionary channel, to the writers, by paſſing through *their* hands, receive the ſtamp of undoubted certainty; and are no longer *traditions*, but *oracles*.

I wiſh, this had been the *only* inſtance of artifice and impoſition uſed in the letters under examination.——Why are ſo many idle tales, and ſcandalous ſtories, raked together, and expoſed to view *?——Why? but to put a cheat upon the inattentive reader, and depretiate † the dignity of the divine word? depretiate it, much in the ſame manner, as its moſt illuſtrious object and author was formerly diſhonoured; not only by the *falſe accuſations*, with which he was charged; but alſo by the *infamous company*, with whom he was numbered.——Did my Lord imagine, that theſe tales were really believed, even by the warmeſt advocates for holy writ? No: he muſt know in his conſcience, that they never were received by the generality of divines; neither are mentioned by authors of diſcernment, unleſs it be to *confute* and *reject* them.——However, be they credited or not, it was apprehended, they might ſerve a purpoſe. But whether it be the purpoſe of integrity, impartiality, and truth, I leave to the determination of others.

Still it is urged, That theſe ſcriptures are "full of "additions, interpolations, and tranſpoſitions ‡."——That they are *full* of additions, is more eaſily aſſerted, than evinced. I can find but *one* inſtance ſpecified by his Lordſhip. Which is the account "of the death and "ſepulture of *Moſes*, with a ſort of funeral panegyric *," recorded in the laſt chapter of *Deuteronomy*. Here it is taken for granted, that we are reduced to a terrible dilemma,—either to own, that this paragraph was written by *Moſes himſelf*; and then we may expect to hear of impoſſibility and abſurdity;—or elſe, that it is all *ſuppoſitious*; and then the ſcriptures muſt have paſſed through tampering fingers, and ſuffered adulteration?—But ſuppoſe this ſmall appendix was made by *Joſhua*; a man, whoſe mind was illuminated, and his hand guided, by the Spirit of the Moſt High? Does *ſuch* an addition deſerve to be branded with an *ignominious*, or even brought into diſeſteem by a *ſuſpicious* character?—Or, what if ſome other prophet, whoſe name is unknown, ſuperadded this valuable anecdote? Is the concealment of the penman's name ſufficient to impeach the genuineneſs, or invalidate the authority, of the paſſage? eſpecially, ſince it has been approved by other *inſpired* writers, and received the *Imprimatur* of the Holy Ghoſt?—I know not *who* is the printer of his Lordſhip's two volumes; yet, though ignorant of this circumſtance, for other *very ſatisfactory* reaſons, I have no doubt but they are the genuine productions of his pen.

My Lord would have done well to conſider,—whether it was a probable or a practicable thing, to *interpolate* a ſet of books, which were ſtudied with ſo much accuracy, and kept with ſo much vigilance; the *number* of whoſe verſes, eſpecially in the *Pentateuch*, was computed; and the *arrangement* of the very letters known.—Whether, after the coming of Chriſt, the jealous eye which the *Jews* and Chriſtians had on each other, was not an inſurmountable bar againſt any innovations or material alterations?——As for *tranſpoſitions*, they are uſed by the moſt approved hiſtorians. When uſed with judgment, they redound to the reputation of the writer, and increaſe the pleaſure of the reader. And would his Lordſhip make *that* a diſparagement of the ſacred narrative, which is a recommendation of any ordinary compoſition?

But my Lord imagines, that he has found out a ſubſtantial reaſon for the aforementioned diſtinction;——has detected ſuch *improprieties* in the ſacred *narrative*, as "contradict all our notions of order and of juſtice †." He produces, by way of *ſpecimen*, the caſe of *Noah* denouncing a curſe upon *Canaan*.——This, it ſeems, is the *capital* abſurdity; this the *glaring* error; which, he concludes, is ſufficient to uncanonize the hiſtories of the *Old Teſtament*, and degrade their writers from the claſs of inſpiration.——This, therefore, if your Ladyſhip pleaſes, we will *examine* a little more particularly.

The charge in general is thus expreſſed. "One is "tempted to think, that the patriarch was ſtill drunk; "and that no man in his ſenſes could hold ſuch lan-"guage, or paſs ſuch a ſentence."——Was I at leiſure to criticiſe upon words, I ſhould be tempted to obſerve, that the diction "no man could *hold* ſuch lan-"guage," may be *French*, but is ſcarcely *Engliſh*.——However, from the expreſſion I paſs to the ſentiment.——This, for *candour* and *ſolidity*, is much like the reflection of the *Jews*, on the memorable day of *Penteceſt*.——When the apoſtles addreſſed the inhabitants of various countries, each in his own native tongue; ſome of their hearers aſcribed this *miraculous* ability——to what? we are amazed, when we read,——to the *intoxicating* power of wine ‡.——Strange! that exceſſive drinking, which incapacitates other people for talking *common* ſenſe, ſhould enable the diſciples of CHRIST to ſpeak *all kinds* of languages!——Is it not equally ſtrange, that a drunken diſorder ſhould enable the patriarch to deliver prophecies, and foretell *future* events!

* See page 85, 86, 88.—102.—108, 109.

† I would by no means indulge a petulant or cenſorious humour. Yet I cannot forbear thinking, that the ſcriptures are too often depretiated in his Lordſhip's performance; ſometimes by *ſneer*; ſometimes by *cavil*; and ſometimes even by *languid* approbation, or a *counterfeit* ſort of praiſe. Such as,—"*If* the foundations of Chriſtianity have been laid in truth," page 123.——"ſages which *ſeem* favourable to the doctrine of the Trinity." Page 98.—Though I ſhould be loath to reject *any* teſtimony, in favour of Chriſtianity; ſtill more loath to give up ſo *eminent* a name as Lord *B——e* to the Deiſtical party; yet I cannot prevail upon myſelf to acknowledge, that we are much, if at all obliged to him, for theſe poor, jejune, cold compliments. Such a teſtimony, and ſuch compliments, are juſt as ſerviceable to the momentous cauſe, as *a broken tooth* is ſerviceable to the eater, or *foot out of joint* to the walker. Prov. xxv. 19. They are, in truth, mere δωρα αδωρα—or, as Mr. *Pope* more ſtrongly expreſſes the ſentiment,

They *damn with faint praiſe*.

‡ Page 95, 96.

* Page 102. † Page 110. ‡ Acts ii. 13.

events! which (as I hope to prove) was the real import of the ſpeech.

Perhaps, this curſe may ſeem to be the effect, if not of diſorderly indulgence, yet of *intemperate paſſion*. And how incompatible is this with the character of a preacher of righteouſneſs? Surely *Noah* ſhould not have been ſo forward to *call for* the thunderbolts of vengeance.—Any benevolent man, much more a pious progenitor, would rather have *deprecated* the blow.——I wonder, his Lordſhip did not ſtart this objection; which would have been much more plauſible, and much leſs ſhocking. To this, in caſe it had been ſtarted, we might reply,—That *Noah* acted as the oracle of GOD. This, and many other ſuch paſſages, which ſeem to be *imprecations*, are really *predictions*. Holy men ſpoke, as they were influenced by the Spirit; and uttered, not the ſuggeſtions of their own minds, but the will of almighty GOD.——Which inclines me to think, it might be no leſs proper, and much more ſuitable to the prophetic ſtyle, if we tranſlated ſuch paſſages, as *indicatives*, rather than *imperatives*; making them declaratory of what is decreed in the cabinet of heaven, and will as certainly take place, as if it already exiſted. Curſed *is*, rather than *be*, *Canaan*. Bleſſed of the LORD *is*, inſtead of *be*, his land, *Deut.* xxxiii. 13. Thus *Iſaiah*, foretelling the incarnation of that wonderful and adorable perſon, whom he ſtyles *the mighty* GOD, ſays, To us a child *is* born *; ſo *calling the things that are not, as though they were*.——Such a manner of ſpeaking would remove from this particular paſſage, all that ſounds *harſh*, or ſeems *uncharitable*; and would, in the general, impart an *unequalled majeſty* † to the language of ſcripture.

It was GOD then, and not man, from whom this avenging ſentence came. And GOD, to ſhew his utter deteſtation of all iniquity, to manifeſt his ſingular delight in all virtue, frequently takes occaſion to denounce vengeance, or promiſe happineſs, when ſome notorious evil is committed, or ſome laudable good performed. And was there not a moſt notorious evil committed here?—*Charity*, ſays the apoſtle, *covereth all things* ‡; draws a veil over the various infirmities of every *common* neighbour. But this man (man ſhall I ſay? rather monſter of ingratitude) ſees the ſhame of a *father*,——an *aged* § father,——a *pious* father; and inſtead of concealing, *when he cometh forth, he telleth it*.——*Fools* they are, abandoned profligates, that *make a mock at ſin*. What name then can be bad enough for a profane and unnatural wretch, who makes ſport with a parent's folly, a parent's ſinfulneſs, a parent's miſery?—Surely this was a moſt flagrant violation of filial reverence, filial love, and filial duty ||. Which not only implied ſo many *particular* offences, each attended with its *reſpective* guilt, but indicated the offender to be deſtitute of *all* piety. For, to argue in the apoſtle's ſtrain, how could this man venerate a father in heaven, whom he had not ſeen; if he was ſo irreverent to a father on earth, whom he had ſeen?

But ſuppoſing the turpitude and immorality of the action to be enormous, and ſuch as deſerved ſome ſignal vengeance; the vengeance, it is objected, was miſapplied. "For *Ham* alone offended: *Canaan* was inno-"cent,"——My Lord is not ſure that *Canaan* was innocent, though he aſſerts it pretty confidently. The contrary notion has obtained among the *Jews*. They apprehend, that *Canaan* was firſt in the tranſgreſſion, and, inſtead of being reproved, was imitated by his father. Biſhop *Patrick*, Mr *Poole*, and other eminent commentators, think this to be no improbable opinion.

If his Lordſhip was unacquainted with the *Hebrew*, he will ſcarcely be thought qualified to pronounce ſo peremptorily concerning a caſe related in that language. If he was acquainted with the *original*, he acts ſomewhat unfairly in ſaying, "This notion is not only without, "but againſt the expreſs authority of the text *." For he muſt know, that it receives ſome countenance even from the text itſelf. I would by no means offend your Ladyſhip's eyes, with any rugged figures, or uncouth quotations. But you may venture to believe me, when I aſſure you, that the moſt exact tranſlation of ver. 24. is, Noah *knew what his ſon had done to him, the* or *that little one* †. *Ham* could not ſo properly be ſtyled *the little one*; ſince he was the middlemoſt, and is always placed in that order; *Shem*, *Ham*, *Japheth*. But the deſcription agrees perfectly well with *Canaan*, the grandſon of *Noah*; and it was cuſtomary among the *Jews*, to call the grandchildren, the *ſons* of their grandfather ‡.

Canaan, it is added, "was alone curſed."——The *words* would run ſmoother, if tranſpoſed in this manner, *Canaan* alone was curſed. As for the *fact*, that wants ſome better confirmation than my Lord's bare aſſertion. To me it is evident, that *Ham* was not exempted from the curſe. What? If it did not fall upon him in perſon? yet to be puniſhed in his offſpring muſt be very *affecting*, and no leſs *afflicting*.

But hold; my Lord has foreſtalled us in this reply. Inſtead of waiting for it, or acquieſcing in it; he plays it upon us, with an air of triumph. "Will it be ſaid, "——this has been ſaid,—that *Ham* was puniſhed in his "poſterity ||."——It has; and, with his Lordſhip's leave, I will venture to ſay it again. Nor ſhould I, in caſe Lord *Bolingbroke* was alive, have went farther than *his own* breaſt, for a *proof* of my aſſertion. Would *he*, with all his exalted ideas of *liberty*, have thought it no puniſhment on himſelf, provided he had been the father of children, to have heard them doomed to a ſtate of *ſlavery*; nay, to be, as he very rightly explains the ſacred phraſe, "the vileſt and worſt of ſlaves?"—— eſpecially if, like *Ham*, he was appointed, in the courſe of providence, to be the father of ſeveral *nations*?—— and if the doom had been pronounced by a perſon, of whoſe *prophetic* ſpirit there was ſo inconteſtable an evidence, as the univerſal inundation was of *Noah*'s.

* If. ix. 6.

† *Bleſſed be*, is what any holy perſon might ſay, and comprehends no more than a *ſupplicatory* benediction. *Bleſſed is*, ſuits only the mouth of a prophet, and implies an *authoritative* bleſſing.

‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 7. *πανθα στεγει*. This is one article in the fineſt diſplay of *ſocial* virtue that ever was exhibited to the world; and ſhould, I think, be tranſlated (not *beareth*, but) *covereth* or *concealeth all things*. The natural import of the word juſtifies, and the context evidently requires this ſenſe. Otherwiſe, the firſt and laſt clauſes of the verſe will coincide in their meaning, or rather make an unmeaning tautology.

‖ Lev. xix. 32.

§ The turpitude and immorality of this offence will appear in blacker colours, if we conſider the *very peculiar* reverence, which, in thoſe days of primitive ſimplicity, was paid to *any* aged perſon, much more to an aged parent.

Credebant hoc grande nefas, et morte piandum,
Si juvenis vetulo non aſſurrexerat, et ſi
Barbato cuicunque puer. Juven. Satyr. XIII.

We may ſee, from that awful threatening, Prov. xxx. 17. with what extreme deteſtation the moſt holy GOD reſents ſuch an unnatural behaviour. *The eye that MOCKETH AT HIS FATHER, and deſpiſeth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley ſhall pick it out, and the young eagle ſhall eat it.* Nay, it ſhould ſeem from this text, as though all nature was ready to teſtify its abhorrence of ſuch a crime; and, rather than it ſhould eſcape condign puniſhment, the moſt inſenſible animals would riſe up to execute vengeance.

* Page 111.

† Though it would have been very unpolite, to quote *Hebrew* in writing to a *Lady*: it may be judged proper, perhaps be thought neceſſary, now the letter is made public, to produce the original expreſſion; that where an argument is derived from the *preciſe* ſignification of the phraſe, the *learned* reader may examine and determine for himſelf.—בני הקטן Gen. ix. 24. The word קטן is uſed of *Benjamin*, *Jacob*'s youngeſt ſon, and tranſlated *a little one*, Gen. xliv. 20.

‡ Gen. xxix. 5. 1 Chron. i. 17. ‖ Page 111.

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Since my Lord has no more communication with us or our affairs, I appeal to any, to every *parental* heart. Let nature,—fond, compassionate, yearning nature speak,—whether the infliction of such a penalty on the son, (perhaps a favourite son, like *Joseph*), the son's sons, and the latest posterity?—whether *this* be not *properly* a punishment of the father? whether the father must not feel by anticipation, what his wretched progeny must endure in reality?—Nature once spoke to such a query, and this was her language; *O my son* Absalom! *my son, my son* Absalom! *would GOD I had died for thee!* O Absalom, *my son, my son* *!! Did history ever record, or poetry ever invent, so melancholy a moan? It breathes the very soul of woe; and *exemplifies* the sentiment, which his Lordship would *explode*.

David, it is plain, was punished in the calamitous exit of this young prince; in the disasters sustained, and the disorders committed, by his other children †. *Adam* thought himself punished in the ruin which he brought upon the human race; and laments it, in the most pathetic terms, as the severest distress attending his apostasy ‡.—One wiser than *Adam*, one greater than *David*, whose judgment is always according to truth, is evidently of the same opinion; and, for that reason, has formed the sanction of a most sacred commandment, upon this very principle; *He will visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him.*—What GOD has so expressly threatened, he has actually done; not on this only, but on various other emergencies. Thus *Esau* suffered in his descendents ‖; *Jehu* in his family §; and *Hezekiah* in his children ¶; who all, like the *Canaanites*, were children of their fathers disobedience +; inheritors of their sin, as well as of their name.—But this would anticipate the reply to another objection.

Where is the equity of cursing a people, that are yet unborn? Does not this "contradict all our notions of "order and of justice?"—It may be contrary to *our* notions, or at least it would be unjustifiable in *our* practice; but is quite otherwise with regard to the all-seeing GOD. Is it not agreeable to the strictest rules of justice, for a magistrate, when he has heard the witnesses, summed up the evidence, and found the prisoner guilty;—is it not agreeable to the strictest rules of justice, to pass sentence upon *such* a criminal? The question can admit of no doubt. Yet it is equally certain, that *this* was the very case with reference to the supreme Judge, and those sinners the *Canaanites*.——They practised the grossest and most inhuman idolatries; they abandoned themselves to the most horrid immoralities; such as violated nature; confounded all order; and such as it would be shocking even to mention +.——Now all these provoking crimes were *present* to the view of HIM, by whose inspiration *Noah* spake. He saw them with the same circumstantial exactness, as if they had been already perpetrated,——Let us take these very important particulars into consideration, the *excessive wickedness* of those nations, and the *all-foreseeing discernment* of JEHOVAH; and then who will dare to *insinuate*, that the everlasting Sovereign acted unjustly? that he launched the lightnings of his indignation, in an arbitrary manner, or upon an innocent people?—Who will be so precipitate, as to affirm with my Lord, that "no other "writer but a *Jew*, could impute to the œconomy of "divine Providence the accomplishment of such a pre-"diction; nor make the Supreme Being the executor "of such a curse *?"

The former of those circumstances will appear in a proper light, what his Lordship calls, "cruelties com-"mitted by *Joshua* in the conquest of the *Canaanites*." It will make them appear to be acts of *righteous vengeance*; a much-needed and most desirable extirpation of a *pestilent* people; altogether as serviceable to the public, as it was formerly, to destroy the *wolves* from our island; or as it is, at present, to deliver over some *flagitious* malefactors to the sentence of the law.—Yet the execution of this vengeance was delayed, year after year, century after century. The seed of *Abraham*, for several ages, were not permitted to enter upon the possession of their destined inheritance; because *the iniquity of the Amorites*, which was the cause of their extirmination, *was not yet full* †.—Does it then bespeak the man of *integrity*, to represent those proceedings of *Joshua*, under the *abhorred* image of cruelties; which were acts of a justice, exemplary, salutary, and greatly to be *revered*? Is it becoming an *honest* inquirer after truth, to suggest, without the least shadow of proof, a *selfish* and *malignant* reason, for the destruction of the *Canaanites*; when a reason, the most *equitable* in its nature, the most *beneficial* in its consequences, is expressly and repeatedly assigned by the sacred historian ‡?——This I refer to your Ladyship's decision; who, I am sure, will not err on the uncharitable extreme; yet, I believe, will find it difficult, with all your *good-nature*, to acquit the author of these letters from the charge of *disingenuity*.

May I not add,—this way of *foretelling*, yet *respiting* the punishment, is gracious both in itself, and in its consequences?——*In itself*; because a reprieve is always reckoned an alleviation of the sentence, even though it be not the forerunner of a pardon.——*In its consequences*; because it afforded large space for recollection, and should have awakened the offenders to a sense of their guilt. It should have incited them to use all possible diligence to avert the doom, both by a personal reformation, and by educating their families religiously. Why did they not act as king *Ahab* acted ‖, and argue as the men of *Nineveh* argued §, in a following age, but on a like occasion?——Instead of this, instead of betaking themselves to consideration and prayer, to repentance and amendment, they ran to the *same*, to *greater* excess of ungodliness.

So that these people, being evidently inheritors of their father's sinful nature, and obstinately persisting in their father's sinful ways, were *most deservedly* partakers of his curse. And though GOD is that uncontrollable Sovereign, *who giveth not*, is under no obligation to give, *account of any of his matters* ¶; though he often has reasons for his dispensations absolutely unsearchable by any mortal; yet here he is clearly vindicated

* 2 Sam. xviii. 33. † 2 Sam. xii. 10.

‡ See the whole of *Adam*'s disconsolate complaint; part of which are the following lines:

——Yet well, if here would end
The misery, I deserv'd it, and would bear
My own deservings: but this will not serve.
All that I eat, or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice! once heard
Delightfully, Increase and multiply;
Now death to hear! Parad. Lost, book X. 725.

‖ Compare *Gen.* xxvii. 40. with 2 Sam. viii. 14. *Thou shalt serve thy brother*; here is the sentence. *All they of* Edom *became* David's *servants*; here its execution.

§ Hos. i. 4. ¶ Is. xxxix. 6. 7.

\+ *Morum quoque filii,* Juv. Sat. XIII.

+ Lev. xviii. 24.

* Pag. 110. † Gen. xv. 16.

‡ Gen. xv. 16. Deut. ix. 5. *FOR THE WICKEDNESS of those nations, the LORD thy GOD doth drive them out from before thee.*—See also Lev. xviii. 25. Where the sacred writer describes their execrable and unparallelled vileness, by one of the strongest and boldest figures imaginable. So vile they were, that the very country loathed them; was weary to bear them; and acted like a disgusted nauseating stomach, when oppressed with foul and offensive food: *The land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.*—Let no *squeamish* critic betray his *false* taste, and *worse* temper, by carping at the expression. But let all be astonished at the outrageous impiety of the *Canaanites*; and adore the vindictive arm of JEHOVAH; and acknowledge, that such horrible miscreants were (not for some reasons of state, as my Lord is pleased to insinuate, deemed only, but were) *really*, and on the most *substantial* principles of justice, an *accursed race*. Pag. 112.

‖ 1 Kings xxi. 27. 29. § Jonah iii. 9. ¶ Job xxxiv. 13.

even before men,—even before the ſinners themſelves. They themſelves muſt confeſs the juſtice of their doom; and own, that *GOD hath done righteouſly, but they have done wickedly*: that GOD has ſhewed all long-ſuffering, and given full warning before the blow fell. Whereas they, notwithſtanding this forbearance and this admonition, have continued incorrigible; and without any other change, but that of becoming more conſummately vile.

Agreeably to all this, and conformably to the moſt acknowledged rules of equity, it is declared by the ſacred hiſtorian, that the *Amorites*, the deſcendents of *Canaan*, ſuffered not till they had filled up the meaſure of *their* iniquities *; *their own*, as well as their father's. ——All which, I ſhould imagine, is ſufficient, not only to *juſtify* the counſels, but to *glorify* the judgments, of the great JEHOVAH; ſufficient alſo to *ſatisfy* any inquirer, who is (as my Lord very handſomely expreſſes himſelf) "candid but not implicit, willing to be informed yet curious to examine."

My Lord's *curioſity to examine*, ſhall I ſay? or his reſolution to be diſſatisfied? proceeds ſtill farther. Accordingly he adds, "Who does not ſee, that the curſe and "the puniſhment, in this caſe, fell on *Canaan* and his "poſterity, excluſively of the reſt of the poſterity of "*Ham*†?"—The particle *of*, ſo frequently repeated in a ſingle ſentence, can hardly be admired as an *elegance* ‡ of ſpeech. But, taking *no more* notice of ſuch little blemiſhes, I ſhall conſider the weight, not the poliſh, of his Lordſhip's arguments.—As for *this* argument, I verily think, when laid in the balance of impartiality and candour, it will *be found wanting*. For, admitting the objection in its full ſcope, what follows? Why, that the righteous GOD pardoned *ſome* criminals, when he might juſtly puniſh *all*. And if it ſhould have pleaſed the ſupreme judge to *repeal* the ſentence, and *remit* the penalty, with regard to ſome offenders, who ſhall arraign his conduct? who ſhall cenſure his providence? To exerciſe mercy is his great prerogative; an act not of debt, but of royal bounty, which he exerciſes, *when* and to *whom* it ſeemeth good in his ſight: *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy* ‖, is his high and holy reſolve.

I might therefore anſwer his Lordſhip's queſtion, by aſking another; which I might propoſe, in the *plain* but *ſolemn* words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST: "If *theſe* "are ſpared, while *thoſe* are puniſhed, *what is that to* "*thee? Is thine eye evil, becauſe GOD is good?*"—But I ſhall rather reply to the objection, by denying the fact. The puniſhment was not confined to *Canaan* and his poſterity. It reached the other deſcendents of *Ham*; *Miſraim* himſelf, the father of the *Egyptians*, (as will be ſhewn in a proper place), not excepted. *Canaan*, 'tis true, is *particularly mentioned*.—Becauſe he was (as from this very circumſtance is extremely probable) an *accompliſe* § with *Ham*, in the breach of filial duty.—Becauſe this branch of the family was more than ordinarily corrupt, nay, *beyond meaſure* vitious.—Becauſe the *Canaanites* were, in the *firſt* place, and in the *fulleſt* manner, to feel the effects of the curſe.—And *Moſes*, being charged with a commiſſion to execute the vengeance on this people *only*, had no occaſion to concern himſelf with any *other*. Juſt as the ſheriff of a county, demanding the body of a condemned malefactor, produces the dead-warrant for *his* execution; without intermeddling, or thinking himſelf under any neceſſity to intermeddle, with the other priſoners in the jail.—This leads me to a new, and, if I judge right, by far the moſt important inquiry; namely, whether the curſe was *executed*, as well as *pronounced*?

As I haſten to the proof of this particular, my Lord embarraſſes and retards me with a freſh obſtacle. He himſelf has thought proper to inform us, "why the "poſterity of *Canaan* was to be *deemed* an accurſed race." But he lets the world know, "it is not ſo eaſy to ac-"count, why the poſterity of the righteous *Shem*, that "great example of filial reverence, became ſlaves to "another branch of the family of *Ham*, during more "than fourſcore years *."——I am by no means convinced, that the point propoſed enters into the *merits* of our cauſe. Should the reaſons for this diſpenſation remain an impenetrable ſecret; yet, if we clear up the *propriety*, and demonſtrate the *equity*, of the curſe denounced, we compaſs our main end, and confute the grand cenſure. However, as the queſtion is preſented, it ſhall be conſidered: and though his Lordſhip ſhould affect to *ſneer*, I chuſe rather, in imitation of thoſe noble writers, whoſe dignity I would aſſert, to be *ſerious*.

Why were the *Iſraelites* ſojourners in *Egypt*?—A reaſon occurs, that is worthy of a *gracious* GOD, and greatly for the *public* good: That they might carry thither the knowledge of the everlaſting JEHOVAH, and of the promiſed MESSIAH; of the only *acceptable* method of worſhip, and the only *effectual* way of ſalvation.——As *Egypt* was the parent of literature, and the fountain-head of ſcience; as men of letters and curioſity came, from all parts of the world, to complete their ſtudies at *Egypt*; if theſe heavenly doctrines were received THERE, they would be more likely, ſome ſtreams of them at leaſt, to be tranſfuſed into *all* climes, and improve every nation. So that the people of the LORD, the only depoſitaries of *divine* philoſophy, were ſettled in this land of general reſort, with much the ſame wiſe and beneficent views, as the ableſt profeſſors of learning are placed at our famous univerſities.——

But why were they *ſlaves* in *Egypt*?—This might be to *try* them, and to *humble* them; to ſhew them what was in their heart, and to *purge* out their droſs. We are taught in ſcripture, that the Almighty chaſtens whom he loves, and ſcourges the men whom he receiveth to himſelf. Even the *Heathen* claſſics, my Lord's favourite authors, have frequently remarked, That adverſity is a ſchool, in which both private perſons and public ſocieties have learned the moſt heroic virtues.——Beſides, this might be intended to animate and inſpirit the *Iſraelites* for their invaſion of *Canaan*. They were, in the general, a ſupine and grovelling † ſet of people. Had they been ſettled in a ſtate tolerably eaſy, or in territories that were but moderately commodious, they might never have aſpired after the land flowing with milk and honey; never have made any reſolute efforts to poſſeſs their deſtined inheritance. But, being *driven* by the *laſh*, and *inſtigated* by the *goad*, of pungent galling ſlavery, they were even conſtrained to burſt the chains, and puſh their way to

* Gen. xv. 16. † Pag. 110. 112.

‡ This, and one or two preceding remarks of the ſame nature, are ſcarcely worth our notice. Neither ſhould I have mentioned them, had they not *fell in my way*; and were it not to put a *query* upon the popular notion, that his Lordſhip's ſtyle is ſo correct, elegant, and noble, as to be a *ſtandard* for *fine writing*. It cannot, in my apprehenſion, juſtly claim this honour. If others think differently, I leave them to enjoy their opinion; and ſhall not (though it would be eaſy enough to multiply proofs) add a word more upon the ſubject.

‖ Rom. ix. 16.

§ This is rendered ſtill more credible, by that *particularity* of ſtyle, which the ſcripture uſes in ſpeaking of *Ham*. *Ham the father of Canaan*, Gen. ix. 18. 22. Why of *Canaan* ſo eſpecially? Had he no other children, no other ſons?—Several other.—But this diſtinction ſeems to be a brand of *infamy* ſet upon the offender; and intimates, that he who was father of *Canaan* by blood, was his partner, was his brother in iniquity.

* Pag. 112.

† Let none imagine, that the *wiſdom* of GOD is impeached, by ſelecting to himſelf a people of this character. His *clemency*, his *forbearance*, and all thoſe *benign* perfections, which are ſo neceſſary for the ſalvation of ſinners, are hereby diſplayed with peculiar advantage, and to our unſpeakable conſolation.

liberty

liberty and *Canaan*. Their insupportable slavery was somewhat like *bending* the bow, and *straining* the string, in order to *launch* the arrow.——Farther, GOD almighty assures *Abraham*, that his seed, though enslaved for a while, should *come out* of their bondage *with great substance* *; with the silver, the gold, the jewels, and the choicest treasures of *Egypt*. So that, when labouring for their *taskmasters*, they were, in fact, labouring for *themselves*. The wealth of the oppressors was laid up for the oppressed. And the season of their affliction in the enemies country, was like the rigorous *cold* of winter; which, far from obstructing, only makes preparation for the *blossoms* of spring, and the *fruits* of autumn. ——These considerations might have solved the difficulty to his Lordship, as a *politician*.

Other reasons are suggested by our *divines*; which, if my Lord had thought it worth his while to regard, might have given better satisfaction, and yielded more edification. They would have reminded the *Right Honourable* querist,——that such a gloomy aspect of the *Jewish* affairs, made way for the brightest manifestation of GOD's glorious attributes; of his power, in rescuing them from their tyrannical rulers; of his *faithfulness*, in fulfilling his promise made to their fathers; of his *goodness*, in supporting and conducting them; *keeping them*, amidst the most formidable dangers, *as the apple of an eye*; and *bearing them*, even through the most insuperable difficulties, *as on eagle's wings* †. This also opened a most *conspicuous* theatre, for that amazing *train of miracles*, which have been, in all ages, as serviceable to the faith of *Christians*, as they were formerly conducive to the welfare of the *Jews*.——They would farther have informed his Lordship, and have confirmed their opinion by apostolical authority, that the whole of this most wonderful transaction was *typical* of *spiritual* things; was a series of *living* lessons, delivered, according to the eastern method of conveying knowledge, in figures and emblems. The *Egyptian* bondage was a resemblance of our *natural* condition; which is a state of the most abject slavery to sin.——The arbitrary and injurious impositions of the *taskmasters* shadow forth, though but faintly, the tyranny of *unruly* appetites, and *imperious* passions.——That barbarous edict for the destruction of all the infant males, fitly enough represents the genuine tendency of *carnal* and *corrupt* affections; which destroy our true comfort, subvert our noblest interests, are as death to the joys and to the hopes of our souls. —Their *deliverance* from that miserable state, was an expressive sign of our redemption from the guilt and the dominion of sin ‡. Both which the LORD JESUS accomplishes; the one by *price*, the other by *power*: not by slaying the first-born, but by shedding his own blood; not by softening rocks into a stream, but taking away the heart of stone; not by turning the current of *Jordan* backward, but by turning all our desires into a new channel.——The many troubles and oppositions they met with in the wilderness, exhibit a lively picture of the *molestations* that attend, and the *temptations* that assault, the Christian. Trials await us. Snares are around us. Through many conflicts, and *much tribulation, we must enter into the kingdom of heaven*. Only let us beware, lest, like the ungrateful *Israelites*, we forget the GOD of our salvation, and *fall after the same example of unbelief*.—The *cloud*, that was spread over them by day, to intercept the glare, and screen them from the heat of the sun; the fire, that shone before them in the night, to chear the nocturnal darkness, and lead them through the trackless desert; were not these very amiable and exact emblems of our Saviour's merits, and of his holy *word*? The former of which are *refreshing* to the guilty conscience, as the veil of a thick interposing cloud is welcome to a traveller in sultry climes. The latter is a light to our feet, and a *lantern* to our paths to guide us in the way everlasting.——Their *passage* through *Jordan*, the priests that bare the ark of the covenant going before them *, and standing in the midst of the river, till all the congregation were passed over; this very emphatically prefigured our great High Priest, *bearing* our *sins*, *fulfilling* the *law* in our stead, *abolishing death*, and making it a *safe* as well as short transition to life eternal.

You will excuse me, Madam, for *expatiating* upon these topics. They are so inviting, so pleasing, so comfortable, that I can hardly persuade myself to leave them. ——If any other parts of the epistle, through a kind of unhappy necessity almost inseparable from controversy, should resemble the *asperity* of the *thorn*; this, I hope, will bear some affinity to the *fragrance* of the *rose*. For which cause it is, that I chuse only to touch, and but lightly touch, the one; while I would open the other into a full expansion, and a rich effusion.——Let me add one more observation on this head, and I have done. It is apprehended by very judicious persons, that the punishment of the *Egyptians*, and their total overthrow, may be a presage of the *misery* and *ruin*, which will sooner or later fall upon individuals and nations, that *reject* the glorious gospel, and *vilify* its sacred repository, THE BIBLE.

If the reasons I have offered, are neither tiresome, nor unsatisfactory to your Ladyship, I shall proceed the more chearfully to shew, that the curse was *executed*, as well as pronounced.——Had it been the *senseless* extravagance of a man intoxicated with liquor, or the *rash* imprecation of a man heated with resentment, or the *designing* interpolation of some crafty statesman, would the *holy*, the *gracious*, the *true* GOD have set the broad seal of heaven to it? would HE, who over-rules all events, have *suffered* it to succeed,—have *commanded* it to succeed,—nay, have *brought it himself to pass*, by a mighty hand, and stretched-out arm? Impossible to conceive! ——If therefore it was really brought to pass, and with a surprising punctuality, and not by any competency of human means, but by the most evident display of divine power, this will be such a proof of its *credibility*, its *reasonableness*, and *equity*, as no one, who thinks reverently of the Deity, can deny.

Canaan was to be a servant to *Shem*.——This was accomplished, when the *Israelites*, the descendents of *Shem*, conquered the land of *Canaan*, slew thirty of its kings †, and took possession of their cities; when the *Gibeonites* particularly, who composed one of their principal states ‡, became *hewers of wood, and drawers of water, to the congregation* ‖; or, in other words, the most menial servants to the lowest of the people.

By what instruments was this extraordinary revolu-

* Gen. xv. 14.

† See Deut. xxxii. 10, 11. These, I think, are most delightful and *inimitably-delicate* representations. Let the pious critic try, if he can conceive those *tender* offices, that *unintermitted* vigilance, and assiduity of *protecting*, *cherishing* cares, which are expressed in these fine images. For my part, I own myself incapable of describing them; but most earnestly wish, that every reader as well as myself may learn them in that best of schools, the school of *experience*.

‡ The divine writer to the *Hebrews*, makes the land of *Canaan*, typical of *a better country, even of an heavenly*, Heb. xi. 16. xii. 22. According to the same author, the *peaceful settlement* of the *Israelites* in *Canaan*, suggested to their thoughts, and pointed out to their faith, that everlasting *rest* which remaineth for the people of GOD, Heb. iii. 4, 5, &c. Since the *terminus ad quem* (as the schoolmen speak) is evidently mystical and allegorical; may we not conclude, that the *terminus a quo* is mystical and allegorical likewise? Then it will follow, upon the clearest principles of analogy, that the *intermediate* steps and advances are of the same nature; significative of *refined* and *spiritual* things, under *earthly* and *sensible* images. —This, if I mistake not, is put beyond all doubt, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, &c.

* See Josh. iii. 13, 14, &c.

† Josh. xii. 1, 24. ‡ Josh. x. 2. ‖ Josh. ix. 27.

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tion wrought?—by one of the fineſt armies in the eaſt or weſt? marſhalled by the braveſt officers, and headed by the moſt experienced general? No; but by a raw, undiſciplined, enſlaved people; who were deſtitute of military ſkill, and without any perſonal qualifications, or warlike apparatus for ſo difficult, ſo dangerous an enterprize.

Through what obſtacles was it begun, carried on, and completed?——In ſpite of the attempts of one potent monarch to detain them in ſervitude; in ſpite of the reſolution of ſeveral combined kings, to diſpute with them every inch of ground to the laſt drop of their blood. A deep river, and an arm of the ſea muſt be croſſed, by ſix hundred thouſand men, with their wives, their children, their cattle; and without any veſſel to tranſport them, or any bridge to tranſmit them.——They muſt dwell, forty years, in a deſolate, inhoſpitable, barren wilderneſs! which was infeſted by ravenous beaſts, and fiery flying ſerpents; in which there was neither water, nor corn, nor any ſort of accommodation for abode, or ſuſtenance for life.

How were all theſe difficulties *ſurmounted?*——Not by the arm of fleſh; this was utterly impracticable; but by the moſt aſtoniſhing interpoſition of Omnipotence. ——The *Egyptian* tyrant is humbled, and brought to their terms, by the infliction of ten tremendous plagues. ——The waters of the river are dried, and the waves of the great deep are divided, ſo as to yield them a ſafe, unobſtructed * paſſage.——A ſtream guſhes even from the hard rock; and *gives them drink, as it had been out of the great depths.*——Prodigious quantities of *manna* † deſcend, with every morning-dew; and ſupply them, not from the garner, but from heaven, with their daily bread.——Vaſt flights of *quails* arrive, with every ſetting ſun; and drop, like a bird ſhot through the wing ‡, *in the midſt of their camp, and round about their habitations.*——The walls of an impregnable city fall to the ground, at the blaſt of rams horns ‖. The ſun ſtands ſtill in the midſt of heaven, at the voice of a man §. All the hoſts of the nations, with all their weapons of war, are *driven aſunder as the foam upon the waters*, and *cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.*

And is it probable, can it be poſſible, that every element, and all nature, ſhould not only *concur*, but *alter* their *eſtabliſhed* courſe, *depart* from the *fundamental* laws of their creator, on purpoſe to ratify, what was bolted out by the patriarch in a *drunken revel*, or ſoiſted into the text by ſome *Hebrew Machiavelian?*

Canaan was to be ſervant alſo to *Japheth!*——Purſuant to this prediction, did not the *Grecks* and *Romans*, who derive their lineage from *Japheth*, make themſelves maſters of the reſidue of *Canaan? Tyre* built by the *Sidonians*, and *Thebes* * by *Cadmus*, were both deſtroyed by *Alexander* the *Grecian. Carthage*, founded by *Dido*, was, after a long ſucceſſion of loſſes, and a vaſt effuſion of blood, demoliſhed by *Scipio* the *Roman.* Which loſſes made *Hannibal*, a child of *Canaan*, cry out, with a mixture of aſtoniſhment and deſpondency, *Agnoſco fortunam Carthaginis!* i. e. † "I ſee plainly the hand of "deſtiny working, I ſee *that oracular doom* haſting to its "accompliſhment, in theſe dreadful calamities ſuſtain-"ed by *Carthage!*"

If theſe facts are true, which have the unanimous conſent of hiſtorians for their ſupport, what can we ſay of his Lordſhip's aſſertion, "that *Canaan* was "ſervant to "*Shem*, though not to *Japheth* ‡?" This, I am apprehenſive, will be found as *falſe*, as the following objection is *weak*. In which he urges, that "*Canaan* was "ſervant to one of his uncles, not to his brethren ‖." ——Such a cavil (for certainly it deſerves no better name) diſcovers an *utter ignorance* of the *Hebrew* phraſeology; or elſe, a *ſtrange inattention* to it; I would not ſay, an *egregious miſrepreſentation* of it. I thought *every one* had known, till Lord *Bolingbroke* undeceived me, that nothing is more common in the oriental idiom, than to expreſs any *relatives* of the male line, by the denomination of *brethren* §.

* *He led them through the deep*, encumbered as they were with their kneading-troughs, and ſurrounded with frightful billows, *as an horſe in the wilderneſs*: with as much *eaſe* and *ſpirit*, as ſome courageous courſer makes his way through (מדבר) a plain, open, champaign country. Iſ. lxiii. 13.

† We are not to think, that the *manna* took its *name* from any reſemblance to the *medicinal drug*, which, among us, is ſo commonly known, and ſo frequently uſed. It is rather derived from the *abrupt* expreſſion of the *Iſraelites*, on their firſt beholding this wonderful food. They cried out with amazement, מן הוא *Man Hu? What is this?* Which exclamation, denoting their own ſurpriſe, and the unexpected as well as unparallelled nature of the gift, became both a *memorial* of the one, and a *denomination* of the other.

‡ This is deſcribed with the utmoſt vigour and beauty, in that ſublime piece of ſacred poetry, Pſal. lxxviii. 27, 28. *He rained fleſh upon them as duſt, and winged (here* lies a peculiar emphaſis, and *thus* ſhould the original עוף כנף be tranſlated, *winged) fowl like as the ſand of the ſea.* Yet, though they were furniſhed with wings, and therefore might eaſily eſcape, they neglected to make uſe of their natural powers. They fell round the *Iſraelitiſh* tents, like the rain from heaven, *which returneth not*; and like the ſand of the ſhore, *which cannot be numbered.*

This whole pſalm is a manifeſt proof of the obſervation, which was made in a preceding paragraph,—That the *hiſtorical* and *doctrinal* paſſages of ſcripture are like the deed and its counter-part, in their ſubſtance *exactly correſponding*; and, like the links of the ſame chain, in their connection *abſolutely inſeparable.*

‖ Joſh. vi. § Joſh. x. 12, 13.

* "*Alexander* laid ſiege to this city, took it by ſtorm, and en-"tirely deſtroyed it; ſlaying ninety thouſand of the inhabitants, "and ſelling the reſt, to the number of thirty thouſand more, in-"to ſlavery." *Prideaux's Connect.* vol. I. p. 479.

† Vid. *Liv.* lib. xxvii. *ad finem.*——A writer of the firſt repute, for elegant taſte, and penetrating judgment, thinks it *more than probable*, that *Hannibal*, in this diſpirited and hopeleſs acknowledgment, refers to the prophecy under conſideration: which will juſtify my *free*, though, I hope, not erroneous tranſlation of the paſſage.——What the ſame author adds, is ſo very ingenious, and ſo appoſite to my purpoſe, that I will beg leave to tranſcribe it.

"That the *Romans* were no ſtrangers to the ſame divine oracle, "appears from *Virgil*:"

Progeniem ſed enim Trojano a ſanguine duci
Audierat, Tyrias olim quæ verteret arces.
Hinc populum late regem, belloque ſuperbum,
Venturum excidio Lybiæ. Sic volvere Parcas.

"In tranſlating which, if we only name the *anceſtors*, inſtead "of the *deſcendents*, the original prophecy glares upon us."

From Japheth's *loins deriv'd, a race ſhe knew*
Deſign'd the ſtrength of Canaan *to ſubdue:*
Wide-ſpread their empire, deſtin'd to ſucceed
And waſte the ſons of Ham: So fate decreed!

See Mr *Ridley*'s ſermons at Lady *Moyer*'s lecture, p. 252.

‡ The words at large are, "*Canaan* became ſervant of ſervants "to *Shem*, though not to *Japheth*, *when the Iſraelites conquered* "*Paleſtine.*" Page 111.—I muſt beg leave to inquire, *why* the laſt clauſe is added? Is it to prove, that when the *Iſraelites* ſubdued the *Canaanites*, the deſcendents of *Ham* were not, by *this* victory, made ſervants to *Japheth*'s offſpring? If ſo, my Lord encounters a phantom of his own raiſing, and confutes what no man aſſerts.—Is it to inſinuate, that, becauſe the race of *Canaan* were not, at *this time*, made vaſſals to the poſterity of *Japheth*, therefore they *never* were; and, of conſequence, the prophecy was *eluded*? This ſeems to be the deſign of the ſentence. Abſtracted from this deſign, I ſee not what end it can anſwer. But this is to draw, from premiſes that are true, a concluſion that is falſe; and is juſt as good logic, as the libertine's argument is ſound divinity, "Ven-"geance *is not yet*, therefore it *never will be*, executed." See 2 Pet. iii. 4.

‖ Page 111.

§ See Gen. xiii. 8. where *Abraham* and *Lot*, though uncle and nephew, are called *brethren.*—Gen. xxiv. 48. where *Bethuel*, another of *Abraham*'s nephews, is ſtyled his *brother.*——Gen. xvi. 12. xxiv. 27.

I hope, your Ladyſhip will not think *this*, or any of my other remarks, *indecently* free. In the preſence of the moſt high GOD, all men are upon a level. When the honour of his divine word or glorious attributes is concerned, we are to *know no man after the fleſh* *; pay no deferential regard to the diſtinctions of birth, or elevations of character. In *theſe* liſts the privileges of peerage ceaſe. And I ſhould reckon myſelf the moſt abject of creatures, if, through reſpect of perſons, I could *palliate* or *ſecrete* the truth, when the ever-venerable oracles of inſpiration are treated with contempt. A violation of decency this! by whatever hand it is offered, or from whatever quarter it comes, incomparably more flagrant than *ſcandalum magnatum*.

Pardon, Madam, this digreſſion, and permit me farther to obſerve,—That the progeny of *Ham*, in another line, are, to this very day, the ſlaves of the whole trading world. The *negrees* I mean; whoſe deſcent is from that unhappy man. And what is their country, but the *market* of *ſlavery*? Are not their perſons bought † and ſold as the meaneſt commodities? are they not debaſed to the moſt *ſordid*, and haraſſed with the moſt *toilſome* drudgery? made, in the ſtrictly-literal ſenſe of the phraſe, *ſervants of ſervants*?

I have not forgotten what I promiſed to make appear, with relation to the *Egyptians*; neither ſhall I overlook what his Lordſhip has remonſtrated from the ſame quarter. "The deſcendents of *Miſraim*," he ſays, "another of the ſons of *Ham*, were the *Egyptians*: and "they were ſo far from being ſervants of ſervants to "their couſins the *Shemites*, that theſe were ſervants of "ſervants to them ‡."——For a ſeaſon they were. But this ſervitude was calculated for the good of their community, and redounded to the glory of their GOD. It terminated in ſuch a ſignal deliverance, as brought honour and opulence to themſelves, confuſion and ruin to their enemies. Does it then follow, from this temporary ſuperiority of the *Egyptians*, which ended in ſo *diſaſtrous* a manner, that they were *excepted* in the denunciation of the curſe, or favoured with an act of *indemnity*?

What ſays the ſupreme Arbitrator? *The nation whom they ſerve will I judge* ‖: I myſelf will puniſh; not by any human inſtruments, but by my own immediate hand. Accordingly, they were viſited with the moſt dreadful and deſtructive plagues. In the laſt of which, the firſt-born, the flower of their kingdom, were cut off; and at length, their king, and his whole army, periſhed in the *Red ſea*. Does my Lord make no account of theſe moſt terrible and unexampled judgments?

Beſides, what was the condition of this people in the following ages? If we conſult *Ezekiel*, he will declare it, as clearly by the ſpirit of prophecy §, as if he had lived on the ſpot, and ſeen the face of affairs. *And it came to paſs, in the eleventh year, in the firſt month, in the ſeventh day of the month, that the word of the* LORD *came unto me, ſaying, Son of man, I have broken the arm of* Pharaoh *king of* Egypt; *and lo, it ſhall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it, to make it ſtrong to hold the ſword.*——*I will ſcatter the* Egyptians *among the nations, and will diſperſe them through the countries.*—Egypt *ſhall be the baſeſt of kingdoms, neither ſhall it exalt itſelf any more among the nations.*—*And there ſhall be no more a prince of the land of* Egypt.—Is not all this confirmed by *ancient* hiſtory, and by the *preſent* ſtate of *Africa*? From the one we learn, that the *Egyptians* were ſubject, firſt to the *Perſians*, next to the *Grecians*, then to the *Romans*; afterwards to the *Arabs*. And from the other it appears, that they *now* wear the *Turkiſh* yoke; are governed not by a prince of their own, but by the *Grand Seignor* and his *baſhaws*.

Nay, let any perſon look around upon *all* the countries peopled by the progeny of *Ham*; and I am much miſtaken, if he does not find them, what the pſalmiſt deſcribes, *dark places of the earth, and full of the habitations of cruelty* *; the dens of *rapine*, and the dungeons of *ignorance*; where *ſlavery* drags the chain, and *tyranny* lifts the ſcourge.—Inſomuch, that we need not ſcruple to ſay, in the emphatical words of *Joſhua*, *Not one thing has failed of all the good*, or the evil *things*, *which the* LORD *ſpake* by the mouth of *Noah*, *concerning* each of his ſons reſpectively. *All are come to paſs, not one thing has failed* †.

This calls upon me to clear up another part of the prediction;—the bleſſing pronounced upon *Shem*, and the enlargement promiſed to *Japheth*: which will afford a new argument, to maintain the authenticity of the paſſage, and aſſert its divine inſpiration.

I ſaid, the bleſſing *pronounced upon*. Becauſe I would not tranſlate the words, *Bleſſed be the* LORD GOD *of* Shem; but, *Bleſſed of the* LORD GOD *is* Shem. This will put a *ſtriking contraſt* between the doom of the irreligious ſcoffer, and the reward of filial piety: this is what we *naturally expect* from a GOD, who is not unrighteous to forget his people, and their labours of love: this ſenſe the original language will very commodiouſly *bear* ‡, and the event ſeems to *require*. For how manifeſtly, how eminently, was this benedictive ſentence fulfilled! ſince, in the poſterity of *Shem*, the *church* of GOD was eſtabliſhed, and his true worſhip propagated. From him, the *Redeemer* of mankind, that *bleſſing of bleſſings*, according to the fleſh ſprung.

The great *enlargement* of *Japheth*'s territories, is no leſs certain, and no leſs remarkable. He had, for his poſſeſſion, the iſles of the ſea weſtward, and the fine extenſive countries near them; *Spain*, *Italy*, *Greece*, *Aſia the leſs*, all *Europe*, and the vaſt regions towards the north; which anciently the *Scythians*, now the *Tartars* inhabit; from whom the *Americans*, the people of the new world, ſeem to be derived.——By *Japheth*'s *dwelling in the tents of* Shem, is meant the converſion of the *European* Gentiles to the goſpel of CHRIST: who, through a long progreſſion of years, were *aliens from the commonwealth of* Iſrael, *ſtrangers to the covenants of promiſe*, *having no hope* of eternal life, *and without* any ſaving knowledge of GOD *in the world* ‖: but were, in due time, perſuaded to embrace the true faith; were made (as the apoſtle elegantly ſpeaks, and in a ſtrain perfectly correſponding with the language of our prophecy) *fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſehold of* GOD §. An event, altogether as undeniable, as it is important, delightful, and glorious.

Upon the whole, I cannot but think that his Lordſhip has planted his battery, and played his artillery, if not like an unſkilful, at leaſt like an unſucceſsful engineer. He has *planted his battery* againſt a place, too well fortified to admit of any impreſſion, and that muſt infallibly triumph over every aſſault. He has ſo *played his artillery*, that it recoils upon himſelf, and cruſhes his own deſign.—And this, I apprehend, will always be the iſſue, when men even of the *fineſt genius* and moſt *improved capacities* preſume to attack the ſcriptures of eternal truth.

* 2 Cor. v. 16.

† No leſs than *thirty thouſand*, I have been informed, are, every year, bought for ſlaves by the *Engliſh only*.

‡ Pag. 112. ‖ Gen. xv. 14.

§ Ezek. xxx. 20. 21. 23. xxix. 15. xxx. 13.

* Pſal. lxxiv. 20. † Joſh. xxiii. 14.

‡ Gen. ix. 26. ברך יהוה אלהי שם—words of the very ſame import, in the very ſame conſtruction, are *thus* rendered by our tranſlators, Deut. xxxiii. 13. and will hardly admit of any other interpretation; יהוה ארצו מבורכת *Bleſſed OF the* LORD, &c.

‖ Eph. ii. 12. § Eph. ii. 19.

This very passage, instead of *disproving*, unspeakably *ennobles*, the divine writings. It shews, that they bear the stamp of that *all-over-ruling* power, which purposes, and none shall disannul it;—or that *all-comprehending* knowledge, which discerns events, long, long before they come into existence.—And let any unprejudiced reader judge, what degree of esteem those books may fairly challenge, whose least considerable, or, in his Lordship's opinion, *most obnoxious* parts, have such a *depth*, and such a *dignity* of wisdom! such as will be admired and revered, so long as *historic* truth has any credit, or *commercial* intelligence any being.

Shall I trespass upon your Ladyship's patience a little farther?——The penmen of the *Old Testament* carry all the marks of the most *disinterested* and *undesigning* sincerity. They record the *failings* of their favourite and most illustrious heroes, without concealing the *punishment* inflicted on such miscarriages.——The uniform *tendency* of their narratives and observations is, to promote a religion the most *pure*, the most *benevolent*, the most *elevated* imaginable; as remote from all selfish aims, and every low art of collusion, as the heavens are higher than the earth.——They were men singularly *qualified* for their work; being either *eye-witnesses* of the facts they relate, or else *contemporaries* with the persons they describe, or still more remarkably distinguished, by their ability to work *miracles*, and their insight into *futurity*.——As to the facts related, some of them had an *anniversary memorial*, on which they were commemorated: some of them had *significant ceremonies*, by which they were represented. They were *publickly read* in the synagogues, and *universally known* through the nation. It was a duty of religion, to *talk* of them by day, to *meditate* on them by night, and diligently to *instruct* the children in them. And were not these circumstances a security, an *invincible* security against any attempt to corrupt, or innovate, or alter?—So that their writings appear with every character, both *internal* and *external*, of genuine truth; and with the most unquestionable *credentials*, from the GOD of power, and GOD of wisdom †. Consequently, they have a credibility of *their own*, sufficient both to claim and support, the faith of an ancient *Jew*; such as must *command* the assent of every *rational* and *honest* inquirer, even before the Christian dispensation took place.

If my Lord had duly adverted to these considerations, surely he would have expunged that *bold* and *rash* assertion, "Without Christianity we have no obligation to believe the *Old Testament* ‡."—Surely he would never have left behind him, that *unwarrantable* and *injurious* insinuation, that the *Hebrew* original deserves no better credit, than the fabulous story ‡ of the *Septuagint* translation;—nor have found any reason to "protest, that he knew of no rule to go by ||," (in settling the degree of assent due to the several parts of the *Old Testament*), but the *fanciful distinction* which has already been examined.—He would rather have found reason to adopt and subscribe *Agur*'s confession of faith; a man, who was famous in his own, who will be famous in every generation, and for this among other most judicious maxims,

EVERY word of GOD is pure *. 'Tis *all* gold, *fine* gold, without *any* the *least* alloy!

For my own part, I freely acknowledge to your Ladyship, that I value the sacred history (even exclusive of its connection with the transcendent glories of CHRIST and the unspeakable benefits of redemption) on the very same principles, which incline our connoisseurs to value those celebrated *antiquities* they call medals *singular*; because it is supposed, there is but *one* of the sort extant.—Considering the *private* interests, and *personal* attachments, which are so apt to bias the human mind; considering the *imperfect* information, and *ignorance* of causes, to which all other writers are unavoidably subject; I cannot but conclude, that the sacred history is, in point of strict, precise, universal veracity, SINGULAR. There is none other beside this, no, not one in the whole world, that is free from *all* the false colourings of prejudice; clouded with *no* mixture of uncertainty; most *minutely* true; and to be depended on, in *every* particular. The sacred history is not only seated on the *throne* of *truth*, but, in *these* respects, possesses it *without a rival*.

Lord *Bolingbroke* is fond of *Davila* †; because *Davila* discovers the *hidden springs* of action, and traces up almost every enterprize to its source ‡.—Is this so valuable a qualification in the *Italian*? How then shall we admire the *inspired* historians? who disclose to us, not the secret measures of a court, but the *unsearchable counsels* of heaven; not the little motives that actuate the politician, but the *deep designs* of the universal Sovereign: and all this, not from precarious surmise, but with the *fullest assurance*. An excellency to which no other narrative on earth can lay any claim.

The scriptures throw light upon the most memorable transactions, that have passed in the *Heathen* world, and are recorded by the *classic authors*.—When the *Assyrian* monarch subdues kingdoms, and ravages nations; we are apt to think, he is only gratifying his insatiable ambition. But the scripture assures us, that he was *the staff in JEHOVAH's hand, and the rod of his indignation* §, an instrument made use of by the King of kings, to execute his righteous vengeance.—When *Cyrus* is habituated to all the noble exercises, educated in all the fine accomplishments, that form the gallant prince, and constitute the complete general; *Xenophon* sees nothing more than the exertion of human policy. But *Isaiah* beholds the all-superintending arm of the LORD, girding § this hero, and preparing him for the deliverance of his people.—So that the scripture-history is *itself* the grandest and most useful; while its *intercurrent* observations are a key to open the most celebrated affairs, which give weight and estimation to other annals.

The grandest and most useful.—This will appear to be more than a bare assertion, if we recollect, that here is a display of that great *Messiah*, who is *the hope of Israel* ¶, and *the desire of all nations* ‡; a display of him in his mysterious incarnation, his wonderful person, and all the gracious, the benign majesty of his media-

* Another very extraordinary peculiarity in these writings, and, to me at least, an undoubted proof, that their authors were divinely inspired, is, their *perfect agreement* and *entire consistency* throughout.—Though they were composed by *different* men, placed in very *different* stations of life, and flourishing in very *distant* ages of the world; yet they are as consonant and harmonious, as if they had all been penned by the *same* hand.—Any thing equal to this, I never saw, never heard of; and I believe, the most inveterate or most sagacious adversaries of the *Old Testament* will not attempt to produce a parallel.

† Pag. 94.

‡ The *story* is told, pag. 86.—The *insinuation* is made, in a prolix, confused, and obscure paragraph, pag. 87.

|| Pag. 100.

* Prov. xxx. 5. St *Peter* bears much the same testimony to the *whole* order of scriptural writings. With regard to their *use*, he calls them *milk*; because nothing is so well adapted to *nourish* our faith and our holiness. With regard to their *quality*, he styles them ἀδολον, *sincere*, unadulterated, pure; without any mixture of falsehood, or any tincture of folly. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

† He wrote a history of the civil wars of *France*, in fifteen books, containing all that was remarkable, from the death of *Henry II.* in 1559, to the peace of *Vervins* in 1598. It was originally written in *Italian*, and translated into *French* by *J. Bodin*. *Collier's Hist. Dict.*

‡ Pag. 167. || Is. xlv. 5.

§ Is. xlv. 5. *I have girded thee, though thou hast not known me.* *Xenophon*'s Κυρου Παιδεια, though written with quite a different view, is a very fine, and perhaps the very best *comment* on *Isaiah*'s beautiful and expressive phrase, חגרתיך.

¶ Acts xxviii. 20. ‡ Hag. ii. 7.

ral offices. From the original promise (made to our first parents) through all its progressive revolutions, till it centres in the *New Testament*, as *the only-begotten of the Father* *, with a lustre and dignity suitable to so divine a personage ——Which is an event, of such incommunicable *condescension*, *magnificence*, and *grace*, that all the prophets bear witness to it †, and the *very angels desire to look into it* ‡.

How then must your Ladyship be surprised, to see Lord *Bolingbroke* undertaking to assign the *principal* scope of the *Mosaic* ‖ history, (the former part of it at least,) and not *enlarging*, not *dwelling upon*, no, nor so much as *mentioning*, the *Redeemer*: That all-glorious, all-important REDEEMER, who is the sum and substance of the whole scriptures: the *Alpha* and *Omega* in all the revelations of GOD: —of whom *Moses* §, wrote, and whose day *Abraham* saw ¶: —whose righteousness was preached by *Noah* ††, and his final advent foretold by *Enoch* ‡‡: —whose merits apprehended by faith, were the recommendation of *Abel*'s sacrifice =, and the consolation of *Adam* ==, under the loss of immortality, an expulsion from paradise: —from whom many, if not all, the *antediluvian* patriarchs borrow their honours, and stand upon everlasting record, chiefly as being in the number of *his* progenitors. —— This *capital* omission is (to use his Lordship's own language) "a manifest abuse of "*sacred* history, and quite inexcusable in a writer, who "knew, or should have known —," that, in its *most early* as well as in its *later* periods, it invariably testifies of CHRIST —.

Thus to undertake, and *thus* to execute, is as if some *pretender* to *anatomy* should engage to explain the nature of animal motion, and say not a word concerning the nerves, the muscles, the heart; or, as if some *smatterer* in *geography* should offer to exhibit a complete map of our country, and leave entirely out of his plan, the cities, the towns, and the rivers. —— Yet this is not the *only* incident, on which my Lord, however critical in profane literature, discovers himself to have been very *remiss* in the study, at least very *superficial* in the knowledge, of his Bible.

From which hint I would take occasion to entreat, and with the most affectionate earnestness, all that are inclined to dispute against this divine book, first to make themselves *thoroughly acquainted* with it. —— And would they once set about the momentous work, with a candid, upright, and impartial mind; free from the *jaundice* of prejudices; not *blinded* with the fumes of self-conceit; not *intoxicated* with the cup of vitious pleasure: if they would *thus* examine the inspired volumes, they would soon perceive such a *lovely constellation* of truth, of wisdom, and of grace, shining forth from every page, as must turn their *disesteem* into *admiration*, and their *aversion* into *delight*.

But if they bring with them a fondness for fame, a haughty self-sufficiency of spirit, or an ignoble attachment to sensual gratifications; if they are determined to cherish, and will on no consideration divorce, these *seducers* of the *heart*, and *perverters* of the *judgment*; we cannot wonder, that the scriptures should appear to *them*, with much the same aspect, as the miraculous cloud appeared to the *Egyptians*; which threw darkness on their paths, and shed horror on their souls, even while it gave light to the steps, and alacrity to the hopes, of the *Israelites* **. —— In this case, we may assign a *reason* for their *opposition*, from the unhappy circumstances recorded of *Ishmael* *: Their hand, their tongue, their pen, is against the word of GOD; *because* the word of GOD is against them, their tempers, and their ways.

In the sacred narrations, we behold *the arm of the* LORD *revealed*. —— Other historians only *guess* at the interposition of an *avenging*, or *propitious* GOD. And though conjectures of this kind occur but very rarely in their works; they are frequently censured, as a *presumptuous* intrusion upon the *arcana* of heaven. —— But the penmen of scripture, with *unerring* certainty declare, *This is the* LORD's *doing*; a stroke from the sword of his justice †, or a reward from the riches of his goodness ‡.

Here we perceive, as in the brightest mirror, what practices he *favours*, and what methods he *opposes*; what courses are attended with his *blessing*, and what behaviour provokes his *displeasure*. —— These records set before us the most *striking exemplifications*, both of the divine threatenings, and of the divine promises; demonstrating, from repeated experience, that the former are more than vain menaces; the latter are far from alluring fallacies. By which means, they are admirably well adapted, to inculcate those fundamental lessons of practical religion; —a continual *advertence* to GOD; —a believing *dependence* on GOD; —and an habitual expectation of *success* in our schemes, not *merely* from any address or industry of our own, but from the all-powerful *benediction* of GOD; —which are, of all other precepts, perhaps, the most salutary and beneficial to mankind.

My remarks would be immoderately prolix, were they to enumerate *all* the perfections of sacred history. —I shall content myself with wishing, that your Ladyship may esteem, may reverence, may love the *whole* book of GOD, —*only* in proportion to its worth. —— Then, I am persuaded, it will have your *highest* esteem, your *profoundest* reverence, and most *devoted* love.

Before I conclude, give me leave, Madam, to make *one request*: which I make, under a sense of my various obligations to your Ladyship, with all the engaging acts of your condescension and generosity full in my view. It ought therefore to be, and it really is, *expressive* of the most *unfeigned* thankfulness for your favours, and of the *truest* zeal for your happiness. It is this, —That you would carry on a *daily* intercourse, and cultivate a holy, an *intimate* familiarity, with the inspired writers, and their inestimable volumes. —— Read them. Recollect them. Weigh them. —— Contemplate them in their magnificent *whole*, in their beautiful *parts*, and their harmonious connections.

I should be afraid to recommend, in this zealous manner, and to this assiduous perusal, the *most correct*

* John i. 14. † Acts x. 43. ‡ 1 Pet. i. 12.
‖ Page 109. § John v. 46. ¶ John viii. 56.
†† 2 Pet. ii. 5. It can hardly be doubted, but *Noah* preached the very same righteousness, of which he himself was an heir: and *that*, we are assured, was the righteousness of faith, Heb. xi. 7.
‡‡ Jude 14. = Heb. xi. 4. == Gen. iii. 15.
~ Page 178. ~ John v. 39.

* Gen. xvi. 12. *His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him.*

** Exod. xiv. 20. *It was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these.*

† See 2 Chron. x. 15. —xv. 6. —xxv. 20. —xxviii. 5, 6. —xxix. 8, 9.

‡ See 2 Chron. xii. 7. —xiii. 15, 16, 18. —xiv. 6, 12. —xxvi. 5. —xxvii. 6. —I refer to the *Chronicles*, rather than to the other parts of sacred history, in order to create a *higher esteem* for these excellent memoirs. Many people, I believe, are *contentedly* ignorant of the *Chronicles*; because some of the first chapters consist of *Hebrew* names, which are *forbidding*, and of genealogical tables, which are *useless* to the generality of readers. —But, notwithstanding their unpromising introduction, they contain the most *memorable* and *momentous* occurrences. They are interspersed with the most *weighty* and *edifying* remarks. They are worthy of our *repeated* perusal, and will amply repay the most *careful* attention. —I would compare them to some noble *mine*, whose surface is barren, and seems to include nothing valuable. But, as you penetrate the soil, the treasure opens. The deeper you go, the more riches you find. And, instead of regretting the little toil of application, you are only grieved, that you undertook the gainful search no sooner.

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compositions, that ever proceeded from a *human* pen. But here I am under no apprehension of your exhausting the mine, and complaining of *emptiness*; under no apprehension, left the entertainment should *flatten* upon your taste, and create *disgust*. The more we search those storehouses of wisdom, the better we understand those oracles of truth, the more they will *approve* themselves to our *judgment*, and become *dearer*, still *dearer* to our *affections*.——The pages of scripture, like the productions of nature, will not only endure the test, but improve upon the trial. The application of the microscope to the one, and a repeated meditation on the other, are sure to display *new* beauties, and present us with *higher* attractives.——Nay, the very attempts of an adversary to *blacken* the scriptures, serve only to *increase* their *lustre*. For my part, I never should have seen the prediction of *Noah rising*, with such perspicuity, propriety, and glory, to observation, had not Lord *Bolingbroke* made an effort to *overwhelm* it with objections, and *sink* * it into discredit.

Above all, may we bring to this best of studies, an *humble mind*: a mind deeply sensible of its own *ignorance* and *weakness*; yet frequently and chearfully lifted up to GOD, for his enlightening and animating Spirit: that, by his sacred influences, our *understandings may be opened to understand the scriptures* †, and our *hearts opened to receive them* ‡; to understand them, in all the *fulness* of their heavenly meaning; to receive them, in all the *force* of their transforming power.——That, reading the *threatenings*, we may tremble ‖ at the awful word, and acknowledge ourselves justly liable to those terrible judgments; but at the same time believe, that CHRIST *has delivered us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us* §.——That, reading the *promises*, we may confess ourselves unworthy of an interest in such unspeakable blessings; yet rest assured, that *all the promises of GOD are yea and amen in* CHRIST JESUS ¶; are our unquestionable portion, through his merits and atonement; and will certainly be fulfilled, through his intercession and faithfulness.——Reading the *precepts*, let us rejoice in the belief, that our Saviour, *obedient* unto death, has fulfilled them *perfectly* for our justification; that our Saviour, *exalted* unto heaven, has engaged to *put his Spirit within us* for our sanctification; *causing us to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them* †.——Contemplating the various *examples*, may we use some of them, as *admonitory* sea-marks, to avoid the rocks of sin; use others, as a *conducting* clue, to guide our feet into the way of peace; use all, as so many *incitements*, to awaken our circumspection, or quicken our diligence, in *making our calling and election sure*.

Then we shall have *another proof*, that the original of these holy books is not from man, but from the LORD JEHOVAH: a proof, which some people may explode, as imaginary or enthusiastical, but is really of the *utmost solidity*, and of the *last importance*; which, though by no means independent on, much less exclusive of, other evidences, is, nevertheless, to each individual person, incomparably more valuable than any, or every other attestation. We shall HAVE THE WITNESS IN OURSELVES *. We shall experience, on our own souls, the happy energy of the *scriptures*. They will be the *instrument* of working such a *lively faith* in CHRIST, such an *ardent love* of GOD, such a *cordial benevolence* for our fellow-creatures †, as cannot fail to *exalt* our desires, *refine* our affections, and *dignify* our tempers;—such as will administer *comfort* under affliction, and impart an *additional* relish to prosperity;—such as will teach us to order our conversation right, amidst all the snares, all the labyrinths of *time*: and gradually train us up for the pure bliss, and consummate enjoyments of *eternity*.

May THIS proof, Madam, be written on your *heart*, ——written in *bright* and *indelible* characters,——written by the finger of the *living* GOD!——*Then*, I am assured, every attempt to stagger your belief, or withdraw your veneration from THE BIBLE, will be like an attempt to shatter the rock in pieces with a bubble, or to pierce the adamant with a feather.——This is not only the *sincere wish*, but, so long as religion and gratitude have any place in my breast, it will also be the *earnest prayer* of

Your LADYSHIP's

much obliged,

and most obedient

humble servant,

April 22. 1752.

JAMES HERVEY.

POSTSCRIPT.

I have taken no notice of his Lordship's animadversions, relating to the genuineness of the *gospel-history*: because this would be entering upon a new field, which I leave *open* and *untouched*, for some more able defender of that invaluable depositum.——Not that I apprehend, there is any thing very formidable in the attack. But I think it would be serviceable, as I am persuaded it is easy, to shew the *weakness* and *unreasonableness* of those arguments, which men of superior abilities are obliged to take up with, when they list themselves under the banner of scepticism or infidelity.——It would also be a piece of public justice, to inquire into the *sincerity*, *probity*, and *consistency* of those writers; who, in some places, lay a mighty *stress* upon the authority of the *New Testament*, (page 94.) in others, endeavour to *sap* the very foundation of its credibility, (page 177.)

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* An allusion to the *motto*, in the title-page,

Morsu profundo, pulchrior evenit,

and expressive of its meaning.

† Luke xxiv. 45.

‡ Acts xvi. 14.—Such is the *darkness*, such the *depravity* of our minds, that they will not, they cannot, be made *wise unto salvation*, even from the scriptures themselves, without the *powerful agency* of the blessed Spirit. Unless *his* influences *enlighten* our understandings; and *apply* the doctrines, when understood, to our hearts; we shall be, even with the word of *light* and *life* in our hands, somewhat like *blind Bartimeus*, sitting amidst the beams of day; or like the *withered arm*, with invaluable treasures before it. This, I think, experience must *acknowledge*; this, I am very certain, the texts referred to, in concert with many others, *evince*.

‖ See Ezra x. 3.—2 Chron. xxxiv. 27. where it might not be amiss, to compare the temper of true *believers*, and the behaviour of an illustrious *king*, with the spirit that runs thro' his *Lordship*'s performance.

§ Gal. iii. 13. ¶ 2 Cor. i. 20. † Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

* 1 John v. 10.

† This is what his Lordship means, or ought to mean, when he speaks of "the proper force of religion; that force which subdues "the mind, and awes the conscience by conviction," page 182. And I am well assured, whatever he may surmise to the contrary, that *this voucher* to the real inspiration of the scriptures, and divine original of Christianity, "*is not* wanting." Nay, I durst venture to engage, that it *never will be* wanting to any person, who seeks it with due attention, and becoming diligence; and neither forgets nor neglects those necessary preparatives, prescribed by the great Master of the Christian school:—The one comprehended in this maxim, *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of GOD.* John vii. 17. The other delivered in the following direction, *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of GOD, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.* Jam. i. 5.

CONSIDERATIONS on the prevailing Cuſtom of viſiting on SUNDAYS.

THE ſentiments here offered againſt the prevailing cuſtom of profaning the Sabbath, will probably ſatisfaction to every ſerious reader, and be productive of much good; eſpecially as it is in every body's power to reform one, and as then his own conduct will be a tacit reproof to his acquaintance, who may probably, through his example, be induced to weigh theſe proceedings attentively, and no longer follow a multitude to do evil.—It is certainly a matter of importance to inquire whether Sunday-viſits are juſtifiable upon the principles of ſcripture and of reaſon? as the conſcientious obſervation of the Sabbath has of late years been ſo much diſregarded; and as it is now become the principal day of viſiting among perſons of all ranks. The chief advocates for the continuance of ſuch a practice ſhould, methinks, defend it publicly, that their arguments may be properly examined, if (in their opinion) ſuch a cuſtom can admit of any rational defence. And thoſe who are ſufficiently convinced by what is here advanced, ſhould reſolve to diſcontinue Sunday-viſits themſelves, and diſcountenance them in others, as far as they can conſiſtent with decency and prudence.——That the number of ſuch well-diſpoſed perſons may be daily increaſing, is undoubtedly the hearty wiſh of every one who is ſincerely deſirous of promoting the glory of GOD, and the good of mankind.

Qu. *Whether it be right for* TRULY-SERIOUS *perſons to viſit on Sundays?*

THE perſons here mentioned, are the *truly-ſerious*. As to *many* people, it matters not whether they are at home or abroad: *GOD* is not in all their thoughts; they have no concern for their eternal welfare; they therefore are, in every place, altogether and alike unprofitable.

But when we begin to diſcern the things that are excellent; when we ſincerely deſire to "obtain ſal-"vation, with eternal glory, by JESUS CHRIST;" *then*, whether it be proper to fall into the prevailing cuſtom of viſiting on *Sundays?* is the queſtion.

Were our companions religious, and was our converſation edifying, I ſhould make no ſcruple to give my voice in the affirmative. Every parlour would then be a little ſanctuary; would echo back the exhortations, and ſecond the deſigns of the pulpit; and we might truly ſay, *It is good for us to be here.*

But, alas! where do we find ſuch company? when do we hear ſuch converſation? The general converſation is all impertinence; not ſo much as ſeaſoned with a ſpice of religion. *They talk of vanity every one with his neighbour*, Pſal. xii. 2. For which reaſon, I cannot think it ſafe or expedient, allowable or innocent, HABITUALLY to viſit on *Sundays*.

It is inconſiſtent with the beſt example. *I was in the Spirit on the LORD's day*, ſays St John. I was filled with the communications of the HOLY SPIRIT, giving me clear views of CHRIST, bright hopes of glory, and ſhedding abroad the love of GOD in my heart. But is this compatible with the idle, trifling, inſignificant chat, which ingroſſes our ordinary viſits?

OBJECTION I. Will it be ſaid, the apoſtle's was a *peculiar* caſe? I anſwer, it was a *peculiarly-happy* caſe. And will a prudent Chriſtian relinquiſh the proſpect of ſuch unſpeakable happineſs, for the moſt empty and deluſive amuſement? But, I believe, it was *not peculiar* to the apoſtle; rather the common privilege of all believers; written as a pattern for their practice, and to be the plan of their expectations.

It is contrary to the divine prohibition. The negative law, relating to the Sabbath, is, *not doing thy own ways, not finding thy own pleaſure, not ſpeaking thy own words*, Iſ. lviii. 13.——*Not doing thy own ways*; abſtaining from ſecular buſineſs, and all worldly purſuits.——*Not finding thy own pleaſure*; renouncing all thoſe recreations and amuſements, which may tend to gratify thy taſte, not to glorify thy almighty LORD.——*Not ſpeaking thy own words*; converſing on ſpiritual, ſublime, and heavenly ſubjects; not on low, earthly, temporal matters, which, having no reference to the Creator's honour, are therefore called *thy own*. However ſome people may act, or whatever they may think, this is the expreſs and unalterable law eſtabliſhed by the *GOD* of heaven. Whether it be poſſible to mingle in modiſh company, and obey this law, let thoſe judge who are acquainted with the world.

It breaks the divine command. The poſitive law relating to the Sabbath is, *Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy*. REMEMBER, take *particular* notice of THIS injunction. It is a duty greatly to be regarded, and moſt conſcientiouſly to be obſerved. Upon the due obſervance of this, our diſpoſition and ability to obſerve the other precepts, in good meaſure, depends. *Keep it holy*; devote it to holy purpoſes; ſpend it in holy exerciſes; and not barely an hour or two; not barely the intervals of private and public devotion; but the day, the Sabbath-day, the whole day. Neither will the whole day be too long, if we make conſcience of diſcharging the ſeveral duties of religion, reading and meditation; prayer and praiſe; teaching our children, and inſtructing our domeſtics; examining our hearts, and taking heed to our ways. All theſe offices, if properly performed, will leave very little, rather no time for unneceſſary elopements. And ſhall we huddle over all theſe important offices, or totally neglect ſome of them, only to indulge ourſelves in the moſt unprofitable levities? at once doing an injury to our ſpiritual intereſts, and violating the divine precept.

I fear, it will be a kind of *crucifying afreſh our bleſſed Maſter*, Heb. vi. 6. This expreſſion we have often read, but think ourſelves free from the guilt implied in it, and indeed from the very likelihood of contracting it. But let us be reminded, that *we crucify our LORD afreſh*, when we give others occaſion to conclude, that we have very little eſteem for him, or gratitude to him; conſequently, that he has little or no excellency, for which we or others ſhould deſire him. Now, what elſe can the world conclude, when they ſee us giving into the vanities of a licentious mode, on that very day, which is ſacred to the commemoration of his reſurrection? "Surely," might the children of this world ſay, "if "theſe Chriſtians had any real reverence for their "LORD, they would ſhew it on *his own* day. They "would either be retired to contemplate and adore him, "or elſe come abroad to exalt and glorify him. But "they come abroad to be as frothy in their talk, and as "trifling in their temper, as forgetful of their *SAVIOUR*; "and as regardleſs of his honour, as the moſt arrant "worldling among us all." To afford a handle for ſuch reflections, is to wound the *REDEEMER* in the houſe of his friends.

It will *grieve the HOLY SPIRIT*, Eph. iv. 30. Chriſtians believe, that he is infinitely wiſe, all-gracious, and ever bleſſed; that he dwells in their hearts, and is the ſource of all their holineſs and all their happineſs. Therefore we pray daily in our liturgy, *that the HOLY SPIRIT may not be taken from us*. On *Sunday*, we commemorate the deſcent of this di-

vine gueſt; and are, in a particular manner, to implore his preſence, and cultivate his influences. But can this be done, by neglecting his expreſs prohibition, and breaking his poſitive command; by diſregarding the examples which he has ſet before us; and diſhonouring that SAVIOUR whom he delights to magnify? Beſides, dare any mortal preſume to ſay in his heart amidſt a circle of our polite viſitants, "I am now acting in a "manner becoming my relation to the eternal *SPIRIT*. "Theſe ſentiments and this diſcourſe are ſuitable to his "dignity, wiſdom, and glory; a proper method of ce-"lebrating and honouring the day of his miraculous "miſſion!"

Should any one aſk, "what is meant by *grieving the "HOLY SPIRIT*?" It means offending his exalted Majeſty, and cauſing him to act as men commonly act, when they are grieved and diſpleaſed with any one; they withdraw from his company, and viſit him no more. When *Samuel* was grieved for *Saul*'s miſbehaviour, it is written, "He came no more to ſee *Saul*." If the almighty COMFORTER be provoked to deal thus with our ſouls, alas! what a loſs muſt we ſuſtain! a loſs, unſpeakable, irreparable, eternal!

So that if this practice were not ſinful, it muſt be *exceedingly detrimental*; and that, not in one only, but in various reſpects. Have we received ſpiritual good from the public ordinances? The admonition of heaven is, *We ought to give the more earneſt heed to the things which we have heard, leſt at any time we ſhould let them ſlip*, Heb. ii. 1. By this practice, we not only ſuffer them to ſlip, but open as it were a leak for their immediate diſcharge. Have we been under edifying impreſſions from our private exercises? The unerring direction is, *Quench not the Spirit*. Stifle not the ſerious deſires which he has awakened. Allow them their full ſcope, till they are formed into gracious habits. By the practice under conſideration, we pour water inſtead of oil upon the feeble flame. We extinguiſh what we ſhould cheriſh. Is the heavenly ſeed ſown in our breaſts? Theſe diſſipating interviews are the ravenous birds, which follow the ſeedſman, and devour the grain: ſo that nothing takes root. No fruit of faith, of joy, or love is produced.

Let me only add, that, on a dying-bed, the miſimprovement of all our time will be moſt bitterly regretted. How much more the miſimprovement of *thoſe* hours, which GOD himſelf has hallowed, has ſet apart for the nobleſt purpoſes, and is wont to bleſs in an eſpecial manner! "While others were ſeeking the pearl "of great price, and gathering thoſe treaſures of wiſ-"dom and grace, which endure to everlaſting life; I, "alas! was ſquandering away the precious opportuni-"ties in very vanity." To ſee the curtain of time dropping, to ſee a vaſt eternity opening before, and to have ſuch reflections haunting our conſcience; this will cauſe miſery not to be expreſſed, create anguiſh not to be conceived.

OBJECTION II. Will it be ſaid, in anſwer to theſe conſiderations, "That company, even trifling com-"pany, is a relaxation. We return to the inſtruction "of our families, and to our evening devotion with "freſh alacrity, being ſick of theſe triflers?" a ſtrange argument! It ſhould rather be reverſed. The objectors might truly ſay, Being ſick of religion and its ſervice, we want ſuch triflers to afford us ſome relief. The ſincere ſervant of *CHRIST* would find no recreation, but feel grief of heart, in ſuch interviews. It muſt be a real affliction to obſerve his divine LORD abſolutely diſregarded; diſregarded on the day peculiarly devoted to his honour; every vanity now preferred before him, as *Barabbas* the robber was formerly. The true refreſhment for our ſouls conſiſts in having our faith increaſed, our hope elevated, and our views of heaven enlarged; in contemplating the infinite perfection and glory of our Redeemer; the infinite grandeur, and fulneſs of his propitiation; and our complete, I might have ſaid, our infinite ſecurity from wrath and vengeance, by being intereſted in his merits.

OBJECTION III. "*Sunday* is the beſt part of our "time for this purpoſe; buſineſs is ſuſpended; every "body is ready dreſſed; all circumſtances invite." Is it the beſt part of our time? Then let it be devoted to the beſt of beings. Who is more worthy of our choice thoughts, affections, hours, than that divinely-compaſſionate Saviour, who offered himſelf, in the very prime of his life, a bleeding victim for our ſins, that his ſacrifice might have every recommending circumſtance which could render it acceptable to GOD, and available for man?

OBJECTION IV. "It is the univerſal cuſtom. "To diſcontinue it, would render us unfaſhionable." And cannot you bear to be a little unfaſhionable for his ſake, who was deſpiſed and rejected, who humbled himſelf to death, even the death of the croſs, for your ſake? Is it the univerſal cuſtom? Then cuſtom is the idol, which we are called to renounce. I muſt ſay of cuſtom, in this caſe, as *Elijah* ſaid of *Baal*; If cuſtom be *GOD*, follow its dictates; but if *JEHOVAH* be GOD obſerve his precepts. It is written in the ſcriptures, Rom. xii. 2. *Be not conformed to this world.* To what does this prohibition relate? To ſuch ungodly cuſtoms no doubt. No battery of cannon was ever pointed more directly againſt a citadel to be demoliſhed, than this text againſt ſuch cuſtoms. In indifferent matters, let the Chriſtian avoid ſingularity; let him dreſs ſomewhat like his neighbours; let him make an appearance ſuitable to his ſtation: but let him *not follow a multitude to* profane the Sabbath, or to *do* any *evil*. HERE religious perſons ſhould, by all means, be *ſingular*; ſhould diſtinguiſh themſelves by a *becoming* zeal for their GOD; ſhould ſet an example, and ſhine as lights, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation: otherwiſe, they may do, not themſelves only, but others alſo, incredible harm.

OBJECTION V. Some perhaps may ſtart, and reply, "If theſe things are ſo, to what a degree of ſinful "negligence is even the Chriſtian world arrived!"—With regard to the world *called* Chriſtian, this is too true. And no meaſure of ſorrow can be ſufficient to bewail the deplorable degeneracy. Negligence, or rather obſtinacy, in this *capital* inſtance, is a melancholy indication of no leſs diſobedience in *other* reſpects.

OBJECTION VI. "This will be irkſome, will ren-"der our religion a burden." I hope, no one that pretends to ſeriouſneſs will offer to make this objection. The ſinners in *Zion* made it. For which reaſon they are branded, and by the divine *SPIRIT* himſelf, with infamy that will never be blotted out: *O! what a wearineſs is it! when will the Sabbath*, and its irkſome ſolemnities, *be gone? Mal.* i. 13. and *Amos* viii. 5. This diſcovers a heart alienated from GOD, that has not taſted the good word of grace, and favours not the things which be of *CHRIST*. Otherwiſe, ſuch would be the language, "One day, thus employed, is better than a "thouſand," *Pſal.* lxxxiv. 10. Is it tedious and burdenſome to paſs a *ſingle* day in devout exercises? How then ſhall we paſs, how ſhall we endure *the ages* of eternity? ſince we are aſſured, that thoſe happy beings who ſtand around the throne, clothed with white robes, ſerve their GOD day and night, for ever and ever, in his temple. In the regions of immortality they find a heaven; becauſe there they have a never-ceaſing and eternal communion with GOD; becauſe there they have an uninterrupted and everlaſting Sabbath.

A TREATISE on the religious Education of DAUGHTERS.

Train up a child in the way she should go: and when she is old, she will not depart from it. Prov. xxii. 6.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS this little treatise was intended for the press, by Mr HERVEY, he had transcribed it from his short-hand copy.—The candid reader will, however, make the proper allowances for a posthumous piece, which would undoubtedly have appeared less defective had it been revised by the ingenious AUTHOR.

IT has long been a prevailing report, that, among persons of education and distinction, true religion is very rare. This, I would hope, is an invidious rumour rather than a true representation of the case. May it not be an artifice of the grand enemy? calculated to bring the best and noblest of causes into disrepute; as though politeness and piety were inconsistent; as though grace and good-breeding were irreconcileable. —Is then the faith of CHRIST quite fatal to refined manners? as the rod of *Moses* was to the counterfeit miracles of the magicians. No: it is rather like the influence of the sanctuary on the rod of *Aaron;* which, while it remained at a distance from the tabernacle, was a dry, sapless, and barren stick; but, when deposited before the ark, was quickened into vegetable light, was adorned with a milk-white bloom, and enriched with full-grown fruit; or, as the sacred historian expresses this surprising fact, "It brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds." *Numb.* xvii. 8.

I find upon the list of saints, the most renowned kings, and victorious generals; the ablest politicians, and the greatest philosophers: men, that have bid the sun stand still, and prolong the departing day; have laid an embargo upon darkness, and protracted the shades of night; have commanded the ground to cleave asunder, and transmit their presumptuous foes to a strange and inevitable destruction; have divided the impetuous waves, and led their followers to safety and to conquest, through the depths of the sea: men, who have walked in the burning fiery furnace, as under the shelter of an embowering arbour; and sat in the lion's den, amidst a herd of hungry monsters, with as much serenity, and as much security, as amidst a circle of bosom-friends.

I myself have known various persons, admired for their accomplished behaviour, and revered for their exalted station, who have thought it their highest honour to be servants of JESUS CHRIST. My excellent friend *Camillus*, at whose house I now reside, is one of the number. I cannot refrain from giving a portrait of *Camillus*; or rather, of a few of his most distinguishing features: for to paint him in full proportion, as he daily appears, in all the mild, the benign majesty of—domestic authority,—parental government,—and Christian zeal;—to do this, would require a much abler hand than mine.

Camillus, not long ago, entertained in his house a young clergyman, who was always treated with a respect, suitable to the dignity of his office, and the piety of his behaviour. Having lately presented the worthy ecclesiastic to a living, and always requiring residence on the benefice, he is now destitute of a chaplain. Remembering, however, that all Christians are spiritual priests; he thinks it no dishonour to have an immediate and personal audience with the King of heaven; nor acting at all out of character, to represent the wants of his household, with his own mouth, at the throne of grace.

Before supper is introduced, the evening-incense ascends. This, rather than a later hour, is pitched upon, that the little congregation may join in the sacred service, with a lively devotion. After a plentiful meal, when the limbs are weary, people, even though kneeling, and in the presence of God, are more inclined to nod than to pour out their souls; are very, very apt to mistake the cushion for a pillow.——No servant is allowed to be absent; one only excepted, whose presence in the kitchen is absolutely necessary. Acquainted with their master's resolution, they are careful, so to manage their affairs, and dispatch their business, that no avoidable obstacle may intervene, to detain them from the stated worship.

When all are assembled, without either tumultuous disorder in their approach, or a slovenly negligence in their apparel, a chapter is read. *Camillus* makes the choice. He imagines, it is not so useful for his family, whose memories are weak, and their capacities scanty, to read the lesson for the day. He has, therefore, selected some of the most instructive and animating portions of scripture; and judges it advisable to peruse these again and again, rather than to go regularly through the whole inspired writings.——The servants take it by turns to read; which improves them in the practice, and keeps them awake. If any of them discovers a disposition to sleep, to him the office is sure to be assigned.

When the chapter is finished, *Camillus* singles out some one verse, of very weighty and edifying import; which, for the space of five or six minutes, he explains, applies, and affectionately urges upon their consciences. ——This done, with great seriousness, and profound reverence, he offers up evening-prayers. His prayers consist of short sentences, and the whole is performed in a little time. Every part is pronounced with that deliberate slowness, and solemn accent, which command attention, and create awe. He makes a very perceivable pause, at the close of each petition; that every one may have leisure to add, in silence, a hearty Amen; and to recollect the merits of that blessed Redeemer, which render every thanksgiving acceptable, and every supplication successful.

In the morning, before breakfast, the worship of the living God is renewed. At this juncture, *Camillus* omits the chapter; but requires one of his domestics to repeat the verse on which he enlarged the preceding night. None knows which shall be called to this task; therefore every one is obliged to be properly prepared. He throws the substance of his exhortation into a few searching and interesting questions, which he addresses to one of his children or servants; for, in this respect, no difference is made.——All are equally enjoined to remember: all are equally accountable for what they hear.——Sometimes he encourages those, whose answers shew, that they have given diligent heed to his instructions. Sometimes he puts on an air of severity, mixed with tenderness, and reproves the notoriously negligent. Always he inculcates the principal points; charging them to retain the doctrines in their memory, and revolve them in their thoughts, while they are pursuing their respective business.——These doctrines are

are the ſeed of faith; the root of godlineſs. Unleſs THESE be lodged in the mind, and operate on the heart, he never expects to have his domeſtics commence true believers, or real Chriſtians. No more than the huſbandman can reaſonably expect a crop in harveſt, without ſowing his field; or the floriſt promiſe himſelf a blow of tulips, without planting his parterre.

I have given a glimple of *Camillus*, at the head of his family; let me now ſhew my favourite in another attitude.——*Camillus* is convinced, that no truſt is of ſuperior, or of equal importance, to the tuitionary cultivation * of an immortal ſoul. As Providence has bleſſed him with two fine daughters, their preſent and future happineſs is the reigning object of his care. He has no intereſt ſo much at heart, as to give them a truly-refined education; ſuch as may render them an ornament and a bleſſing to ſociety, while they paſs the time of their ſojourning here below; and may train them up for a ſtate of everlaſting bliſs, when the world and its tranſitory ſcenes ſhall be no more.

Camillus never could perſuade himſelf to admire the maxims of prudence, ſaid to be gathered from the extravagant rant of our tragedies; and leſs is his eſteem for thoſe modeſt diſpoſitions, which people pretend to imbibe from the luſcious gallantries of comedy. For which reaſon, he has no impatient deſire to ſecure, for Miſs *Miniſſa* and Miſs *Serena*, a place in the front-box.—However, as we are apt immoderately to covet what is abſolutely forbidden, he has himſelf attended them, once or twice, to the theatrical entertainments, and public diverſions; thinking it much the ſafeſt method, that their curioſity ſhould be gratified under his own inſpection; and hoping to make them ſenſible how much they endanger their virtue, who too often frequent them; how ſhamefully they debaſe their affections, who are paſſionately fond of them; and what mere phantoms they follow, who ſeek for ſatisfaction in ſuch deluſory delights.

They learn to dance, in order to acquire a genteel air, and a graceful demeanor; not to ſhine at a ball, or win the worthleſs admiration of fops.——He is content to have them unacquainted with the wild and romantic fables of Heathen poetry; nor is under any painful apprehenſions of damping the ſprightlineſs of their temper, though they have no taſte for the chimerical adventures of our romances, and are ſtrangers to the looſe intrigues of our novels; being fully perſuaded, that there is as much ſound ſenſe, as ſmartneſs of thought, in that celebrated ſaying,

Retire, and read your BIBLE, to be gay;
There truths abound of ſovereign aid to peace †!

He has introduced them to the knowledge of hiſtory, and its inſtructive facts. They have a tolerable idea of the four univerſal monarchies, ſo eminent for their great events, and ſo circumſtantially foretold in ſcripture. They have been led through the moſt remarkable tranſactions of our own country, and are pretty well acquainted with the preſent ſtate of *Europe*. They have, all along, been taught to obſerve the wonderful revolutions of empires, and the adorable procedure of providence: that they may diſcern how *the faſhion of this world paſſeth away* ‡; and how *happy are the people*, how happy the perſons, *who have the* LORD *for their* GOD.——They have been taught to obſerve the honourable ſucceſs, that has uſually attended the practice of integrity, guided by prudence; together with the ſcandal and ruin which have always purſued Folly in her ſenſeleſs rambles, and dogged Vice to her horrid haunts: that they may ſee the rocks on which ſome have ſplit, and avoid the deſtructive track; ſee the road, which has conducted others to the haven of happineſs, and ſteer the ſame auſpicious courſe.

They have been initiated in geography, and underſtand the ſeveral diviſions of the globe: the extent of its principal kingdoms; and the manners of their various inhabitants. They will tell you the peculiar commodities which each climate produces: whence comes the tea, that furniſhes their breakfaſt; and whence the ſugar that renders it palatable: what mountains ſupply them with wines, and what iſland ſend them their ſpices: in what groves the ſilk-worms ſpin the materials for their cloaths; and what mines * ſupply them with the diamonds that ſparkle in their ear-rings.——A ſcreen, covered with a ſet of coloured maps, and a cuſtom of referring from the public papers to thoſe beautiful draughts, has rendered the acquiſition of this knowledge a diverſion rather than a taſk; has enticed them into a valuable branch of ſcience, under the inviting diſguiſe of amuſement.——This ſerves to enlarge their apprehenſions of things; gives them magnificent thoughts of the great Creator; and may help to ſuppreſs that ſilly ſelf-admiration, which prompts ſo many pretty idols, to fancy themſelves the only conſiderable creatures under heaven.

They ſpell to perfection; and have obtained this art, by a ſort of play, rather than by laborious application. Whenever they aſked any little gratification, it has been their papa's cuſtom to make them ſpell the word, which if they performed aright, they ſeldom failed to ſucceed in their requeſt.——They are miſtreſſes of the needle; and the youngeſt, whoſe genius inclines that way, is expert in uſing the pencil. Muſic is their recreation, not their buſineſs. The eldeſt, to a ſkilful finger, adds a melodious and well-regulated voice. She often entertains me with ſinging an anthem to her harpſichord. Entertains, did I ſay? ſhe really edifies me. Theſe truly-excellent performances exalt the deſires, and compoſe the affections. They inſpire ſuch a ſerenity of delight, as leaves neither a ſting in the conſcience, nor a ſtain on the imagination. Methinks, they bring us a little antepaſt of heaven, and tune our ſouls for its harmonious joys.

Thoroughly verſed in the moſt practical parts of arithmetic, they have each her week, wherein to be entruſted with the management of a ſum of money.——This they diſburſe, as circumſtances require, for the ſmaller neceſſaries of the family. Of this they keep an exact account, and make a regular entry of each particular in their day-book.—Not long ago, a tenant of inferior rank came to *Camillus* with his rent. Inſtead of receiving it himſelf, he referred him to Miſs *Serena*. You would have been delighted to obſerve the behaviour of our little landlady, on this occaſion; the engaging condeſcenſion, with which ſhe addreſſed the honeſt ruſtic; the tender good-nature, with which ſhe inquired after my dame and the family at home; the ready dexterity with which ſhe wrote and ſubſcribed a proper receipt; and, above all, her amiable generoſity, in returning half a crown, to buy a copy-book for his

* *Senſerit, quid mens rite, quid indoles*
Nutrita fauſtis ſub penetralibus
Poſſet. HOR.

The meaning of which in *Engliſh* is:

"What could be done we know, were we but led
"By bright example, and by virtue bred."

† Dr *Young*'s eighth night-thought.

‡ 1 *Cor.* vii. 31. Not only the little projects and puny achievements of private perſons; but the power of diſtinguiſhed families; the policies of mighty ſtates; the magnificence of the greateſt kingdoms; all, all are in a ſtate of perpetual fluctuation. They *fade away* (as the apoſtle moſt ſignificantly deſcribes the caſe) like the graceful and gloſſy aſpect of ſome delicate flower, when the ſun ariſes with a ſcorching heat, *Jam.* i. 11. They *paſs away* (as the prophet ſtill more emphatically ſpeaks) like the chaff of the ſummer threſhing-flours, which the wind carries off on its wings, and the place thereof is known no more, *Dan.* ii. 34.

* The beſt of the diamond mines are in the kingdom of *Golconda*, near to MADRAS (or *Fort St George*, as it is frequently called, becauſe the *Eaſt-India* company have ſo named the fort they have built, for the ſecurity of their important factory at *Madras*.)

his eldeſt ſon; "who," he ſaid, "was juſt going into "jointing-hand; but, he feared, would never come to "ſpell or write half ſo well as her Ladyſhip."

Though *Camillus* is careful to ground them betimes in the rules of œconomy, he is equally careful to cultivate a ſpirit of diſcreet beneficence.——A few days ago, when my friend and his lady were abroad, Miſs *Mitiſſa* was informed of a poor woman in the pariſh, juſt brought to bed, after a long and hard labour; who, being unhappily married to a ſot of a fellow, was, at a time when the choiceſt comforts are ſcarcely ſufficient, deſtitute of the meaneſt conveniencies. Upon hearing the calamitous caſe, ſhe immediately diſpatched a ſervant, with a crown from her weekly ſtock: part, to buy for the afflicted creature ſome preſent accommodations; and part, to defray the expences, at ſuch a juncture, unavoidable: but gave a ſtrict charge, that the whole ſhould be employed for the relief of the diſtreſſed mother, and her helpleſs infant; none of it fingered or enjoyed by the worthleſs drone her huſband. When *Camillus* returned, he was ſo pleaſed with this ſeaſonable and well-judged charity, that, beſides his commendation and careſſes, he farther rewarded our conſiderate matron-like benefactreſs, by making her a preſent of *Clariſſa* *: For he always contrives to make what tends to their improvement, the matter of their reward. If they have committed a fault, they are forbid the privilege of uſing their maps. If they have behaved in a becoming manner, their recompence is, not a piece of money, or a paper of ſweet-meats, but ſome new inſtruction on the globe, ſome new leſſon on the harpſichord, which may at once delight and improve them.

To prevent a haughty carriage, and to worm out all inordinate ſelf-love, he teaches them to conſider their neighbours, as members of the ſame univerſal family, and children of the ſame almighty Father. However poor in their circumſtances, or mean in their aſpect, they are the objects of GOD's infinitely-tender regards; of that GOD who has given his own Son to ſuffer death for their pardon, and has prepared a heaven of endleſs bliſs for their final reception. For which reaſon they ſhould deſpiſe none, but honour all; ſhould be as ready to do them good, as the hand is ready to ſoothe the eye when it ſmarts, or eaſe the head when it aches.—One afternoon, when he was going to treat them with an orange, he bid each of them bring a fine toy, lately received for a preſent. It was made in the ſhape of a knife; the handle of ivory, and inlaid with the gayeſt colours; the blade of glaſs, moſt dazzlingly bright, but without an edge. Cut the orange in two, ſaid their pappa. When they both tried with their pretty knives, and, to their no ſmall mortification, both failed; he furniſhed them with another, of more ordinary appearance, but tolerably ſharp. With this they eaſily pierced the rind, and came at the delicious juice. "Who now," ſaid *Camillus*, "would not prefer one ſuch ſerviceable, "though plain utenſil, to a hundred of thoſe glittering, "but worthleſs trifles? And you, my dear children, if "you have no other recommendations, than a ſhewy "perſon, and the trappings of dreſs; you will be as "contemptible in your generation, as that inſignificant "bauble. But if it is the deſire of your hearts, and the "endeavour of your lives, to be extenſively uſeful; "you will gain, and, what is better, you will deſerve "reſpect; your names will be precious, and your me"mories bleſſed."

With equal watchfulneſs, he diſcountenances all thoſe acts of petulant barbarity, which children are ſo apt to exerciſe on the reptile creation. He will allow no court of inquiſition to be erected within his houſe; no, not upon the moſt deſpicable, or even the noxious animals. The very nuiſances that are endued with life, he thinks ſhould be diſpatched, not with a lingering butchery, but with a merciful expedition.—To rend in pieces a poor fly, and feaſt their eyes with the mangled limbs, ſhivering and convulſed in the pangs of death; to impale a wretched inſect on the needle or the bodkin; and, what is ſtill more ſhocking, to take pleaſure in hearing its paſſionate moan, and ſeeing its agonizing ſtruggles; ſuch practices he abſolutely forbids, as inſufferable violations of nature's law; ſuch as tend to extinguiſh the ſoft emotions of pity, and inure the mind to a habit of inhumanity.—He often informs his lovely pupils, that every living creature is ſenſible of pain; that none can be abuſed in this cruel manner, without ſuffering very exquiſite miſery. To turn their torments into paſtime, and make ſport with their anguiſh, is a rigour more than tyrannical, worſe than brutal; is the very reverſe of that benign Providence, whoſe *tender mercies are over ALL his works.*

He propoſes to give them a taſte of *natural philoſophy*, and to accommodate them with the beſt microſcopes; that the uſe of *theſe* inſtruments, and a ſpice of *that* knowledge, may inſpire them with an early admiration of nature's works, and with the deepeſt veneration of nature's almighty Author.——*Camillus* has no deſign to finiſh a couple of female philoſophers; or to divert their attention from thoſe domeſtic arts, which are the trueſt accompliſhments of the ſex *: yet neither would he have his daughters debarred from that rational and exalted delight, which is to be found in the contemplating the curioſity of the great Creator's cabinet. Why may they not, without departing from their *own*, or encroaching on the *maſculine* character; why may they not be acquainted with the accurately-nice ſtructure of an animal, or with the proceſs and effects of vegetation? Why may they not learn the admirable operations of the air, or the wonderful properties of the water? have ſome general notion of the immenſe magnitudes, the prodigious diſtances, and the ſtill more amazing revolutions of the heavenly orbs? He apprehends it very practicable, to conduct an entertainment with dignity, and order a family with propriety; even while they retain ſome tolerable idea of thoſe magnificent laws, which regulate the ſyſtem of the univerſe.

The microſcope, whenever they were inclined to amuſe themſelves, will ſhew them a profuſion of ſplendid ornaments, in ſome of the moſt common and contemptible objects. It will ſhew them gold and embroidery, diamonds, and pearl, azure, green, and vermilion, where unaſſiſted eyes behold nothing but provocatives of their abhorrence. This inſtrument will ſhew them the brighteſt varniſh, and the moſt curious carving, even in the minuteſt ſcraps of exiſtence. Far more ſurpriſing than the magic feats of the moſt dextrous juggler, it will treat their ſight, not with deluſive, but with real wonders. A huge elephant † ſhall ſtalk, where a puny mite was wont to crawl. Blood ſhall bound from the beating heart, and eyes ſparkle with a lively luſtre; limbs ſhall play the moſt ſprightly motions, or ſtand compoſed in the moſt graceful attitudes; where nothing ordinarily appeared, but a confuſed ſpeck of animated matter.—A tincture of philoſophy will be the *coſmetic* of nature; will render all her ſcenes lovely, and all her apartments a theatre of diverſion; diverſions infinitely ſuperior to thoſe dangerous delights, which are ſo apt to inveigle the affections, and debauch the minds of young people.—When Philoſophy lends her optics, an uncloud-

* A book admirably calculated to inſtruct and entertain; wrote by the celebrated Mr RICHARDSON, in eight volumes.

* ——For nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to ſtudy houſehold good. MILT.

† What is alluſively ſaid of the detracting tongue, may, I think, without a figure, be affirmed of this wonderful inſtrument *Trabem in feſtuca, elephantem in culice, Alpes et Pyrenæos ſaltus in verruca oſtendit.*

ed morning, beautiful with the rising sun; a clear night, brilliant with innumerable stars; will be a more pleasing spectacle, than the gaudiest illuminations of the assembly-room. The melody of birds, and the murmur of fountains; the humming insect, and the sighing gale; will be a higher gratification, than the finest airs of an opera. A field covered with corn, or a meadow besprinkled with daisies; a marsh planted with osiers, or a mountain shaded with oaks; will yield a far more agreeable prospect, than the most pompous scenes that decorate the stage. Should clouds overcast the heavens, or winter disrobe the flowers; an inquiry into the causes of these grand vicissitudes, will more than compensate the transitory loss. A discovery of the divine wisdom and divine goodness, in these seemingly-disastrous changes, will impart gaiety to the most gloomy sky, and make the most un-ornamented seasons smile.

It is for want of such truly elegant and satisfactory amusements, that so many ladies of the first distinction, and finest genius, have no proper employ for their delicate capacities; but lose their happiness in flights of caprice, or fits of the vapour; lose their time in the most insipid chat, or the most whimsical vagaries: while thought is a burden, and reflection is a drudgery, solitude fills them with horror, and a serious discourse makes them melancholy.

Above all, *Camillus* is most earnestly desirous to have his tender charge grounded in the principles, and actuated with the spirit of Christianity. No scheme, he is thoroughly persuaded, was ever so wisely calculated to sweeten their tempers, to exalt their affections, and form them to felicity, either in this world or another. It is therefore his daily endeavour, by the most easy and endearing methods of instruction, to fill their minds with the knowledge of those heavenly doctrines; and win their hearts to the love of that invaluable book, in which they are delineated.——He longs to have a sense of GOD Almighty's goodness imprested on their souls. From this source, under the influences of the sanctifying Spirit, he would derive all the graces, and all the duties of godliness *. With this view, he speaks of the Divine Majesty, not only as supereminently great, but as most transcendently possessed of every delightful, every charming excellence. He represents all the comforts they enjoy, and every blessing they receive, as the gifts of his bountiful hand, and as an earnest of unspeakably richer favours. He often, often reminds them, that whatever their heavenly Father *commands*, *forbids*, *inflicts*, proceeds from his overflowing kindness, and is intended for their eternal good, if, by these expedients, he may awaken in their minds, an habitual gratitude to their everlasting Benefactor. The actings of which noble principle, are not only fruitful in every good work, but productive of the truest satisfaction: somewhat like the fragrant steams of consecrated incense; which, while they honoured the great object of worship, regaled with their pleasing perfumes of devout worship.

Nothing is more displeasing to *Camillus*, than the fond flatteries, which their injudicious admirers bestow on their shape and their complexion, the gracefulness of their carriage, and the vivacity of their wit. He would fain make them sensible, that these embellishments are of the lowest value, and most fading nature *;—that if they render their possessors vain and self-conceited, they are far greater blemishes, than a hump on the back, a wen in the neck, or stuttering in the speech.——He would have them thoroughly convinced, that, notwithstanding all their silks, diamonds, and other marks of their superior circumstances, they are ignorant, guilty, impotent creatures; blind to truths of the last importance; deserving the vengeance of eternal fire, and unable of themselves to think a good thought: that, from such convictions, they may perceive their absolute need of a Saviour; a Saviour in all his offices;—as a Prophet, to teach them heavenly wisdom;—as a Priest, to atone for all their many, many sins; as a King, to subdue their iniquities, write his laws in their hearts, and make them, in all their conversation, holy.

In short, the point he chiefly labours, is, to work in their hearts a deep, an abiding sense, that GOD is their supreme, their only good; that the blessed JESUS is the rock of their hopes, and the fountain of their salvation; that all their dependence, for acquiring the beauties of holiness, and tasting the joys of the sublimest virtue, is to be placed on the HOLY GHOST the Comforter.——Amidst all these efforts of his own, he never forgets, never fails to plead, that precious promise of the unchangeable JEHOVAH; *I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring; and they shall grow up*, in knowledge and in grace, *as willows by the water-courses* †.

A lady of brilliant parts, but no very extraordinary piety, told *Camillus*, that he would spoil the pretty dear; would extinguish that decent pride, and fondness for pleasure, which are shining qualifications in an accomplished young lady; which give her an elevation of sentiment, and a delicacy of taste, greatly superior to the ignoble vulgar.——To whom he replied, "Far from "extirpating their passions, I only attempt to turn them "into a right channel, and direct them to the worthiest "objects. Willing I am, that they should have a decent ambition; an ambition, not to catch the giddy "coxcomb's eye, or be the hackneyed toast of rakes; "but to please their parents; to make a husband happy; and to promote the glory of GOD.—They may "entertain a fondness for pleasure; but such pleasure as "will ennoble their souls, afford them substantial satisfaction, and prepare them for the fruition of immortal "bliss.——Let them be covetous also, if you please, "Madam; but covetous of redeeming their time, and "of gaining intellectual improvement; covetous of "those riches, which no moth can corrupt, nor thief "steal; which neither time nor death destroy."

In all these instances of parental solicitude, his beloved *Emilia* takes her constant, her willing share; contributes her advice, in every plan that is concerted; and her hearty concurrence in every expedient that is executed; every expedient, for polishing the

* This method is perfectly conformable to the practice of the psalmist; *Thy loving-kindness is ever before mine eyes, and*, animated by this sweet inducement, *I will walk in thy truth*, Psal. xxvi. 3.—To the injunction of our divine Master; *If you love me*, let this be the proof, this the fruit of your affection, *keep my commandments*, John xiv. 15.—And to the experience of the chief of the apostles; *The love of Christ*, though not exclusive of, yet superior to every other motive, *constraineth us*, 2 Cor. v. 14.

* Here is the amiable and noble reverse of that modish picture represented by *Milton*:

For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
Woman's domestic honour and chief praise;
Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetence, to sing, to dance,
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye. B. XI. 614.

† *Is.* xliv. 3. 4. A promise of inestimable worth; never to be forgotten by believing parents; better, to their children, than the largest patrimony, or the richest flowery.—It is exceedingly beautiful, and equally comfortable. Not, I will *drop*, I will *distill*, but I will *pour*: denoting a large and copious supply. They shall grow, not as a *root* out of a *dry* ground; but as a *tree*, planted in a most *kindly* soil, where it is plentifully *watered*, and *flourishes* in the most ample manner.

human

human jewel *, and making their manners as faultless as their forms.——May the GOD of infinite goodness, the sacred source of all perfection, prosper their endeavours! that, as the young ladies are adorned, in their persons, with native beauty, they may be enriched, in their understandings, with refined knowledge; and dignified, in their souls, with the spirit of the blessed JESUS.——Then, surely, more amiable objects, the eye of man cannot behold; more desirable partners, the heart of man cannot wish.

* Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot,
And pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind.
THOMSON'S Spring.

PREFACE to BURNHAM'S Pious Memorials *.

RELIGION, or an affectionate and firm connection of the soul with God, is the highest improvement of the human mind, and the brightest ornament of the rational nature. It is the most indissoluble bond of civil society, and the only foundation of happiness to every individual person.

The *gospel*, by which we have access to the King immortal, invisible, through the merits of *Jesus Christ*; by which we are conformed to his amiable and holy image, through the operations of the blessed Spirit;—the gospel is, of all other religions, most exquisitely adapted to compass those desirable ends.

This point hath often been demonstrated with all the strength of *argument*, and illustrated by every decoration of *eloquence*.——In the following sheets, we are presented with a *new* proof of the same important truth; deduced from a topic *level* to every capacity, and from a scene in which all must, sooner or later, be *personally* concerned.

Nothing strikes the mind of a wise and attentive observer so forcibly as *fact*; nothing hath so strong a tendency to convince the judgment, and influence the conduct. In the Collection before us, we have a series of indubitable and interesting facts.——Here are *some* of the most *renowned*, *many* of the most *worthy* persons, after a life of exemplary devotion and exalted virtue, bearing their dying testimony to the *excellency* of the gospel, and the *pleasures* of religion:—Persons from different countries, of different denominations, and flourishing in distant periods of time:—Persons in the most awful moments of their existence; when hypocrisy drops the mask; when worldly motives lose their weight; and there remains no more temptation to deceive:—all these, uniting in the same sentiments; all reposing their confidence on the same GREAT MEDIATOR; all proclaiming the *dignity*, *efficacy*, and *glory* of the evangelical system, in a manner superior to language;—proclaiming it by a peace of conscience, which the whole world cannot give; and a joy of heart, which transcends all description.

Such a collection of Memoirs is, I think, a valuable addition to the evidences for Christianity; a considerable aid to the interests of piety; and worthy, both of *frequent perusal*, and *universal acceptance*.

A work of this nature hath often appeared to me among the *desiderata* of the closet. I have sometimes wondered, that no ingenious pen hath attempted it; and always thought, that, when duly executed, it would bid fair for *extensive usefulness*. But I am glad to find myself anticipated in this opinion by a writer †, whose words I shall beg leave to transcribe, and whose judgment cannot be questioned:—"There is nothing in "history which is so improving to the reader, as those "accounts which we meet with of the deaths of emi"nent persons, and of their behaviour in that dreadful "season ‡."——*Here* is a large field, in which the reader may not barely glean a few *ears*, but gather his *sheaves*, or reap a *harvest* of that sacred improvement, which our admired critic mentions. *Here* is a multitude of those most *distinguished* and *animating* parts of history, traced through various ages of the church; from the heroic martyrdom of venerable *Ignatius*, to the peaceful exit of the pious and ingenious Dr *Watts*.

These histories are not only unquestionably true, but of the most *unexceptionable* kind.——They are delivered in the very words of the author from whose writings they are extracted: so that we may depend upon a strict *exactness* in point of authenticity, and shall be entertained with an agreeable *diversity* in reference to style. None of these accounts personate the romantic insensibility of the *Stoic*, or the brutal hardiness of the *Sceptic*. None of them exhibit the indecent levity of a *Petronius*, or the pitiable fluctuation of a *Socrates*. But all display *true* fortitude, *rational* tranquillity, and *well-grounded* hope; built upon the divine promises, supported by the divine Spirit, rendered stedfast and immoveable by a divine propitiation and righteousness.

Here the minister of the gospel may furnish himself with noble materials, to *enrich* and *enliven* his compositions for the pulpit. And I dare venture to foretell, that no part of his public addresses will be heard with a closer attention or collected with a sweeter relish, than his pertinent application of the last sayings of truly-religious men.

Here the *strong* Christian may view, not without a glow of gratitude, perhaps with a rapture of delight, the *inviolable faithfulness* of his divine Master; who never leaves nor forsakes his servants; no, not at that trying season, which may most emphatically be styled, *the time of need*. He may view the *never-failing tenderness* and grace of that good Spirit, who opens the rich promises of scripture; applies the precious atonement of a Saviour; and *makes* the soldier of JESUS *always to triumph*.

Here the *feeble*, *trembling* believer may see imperfect creatures, men of like passions and of like infirmities with himself, looking death in the face with *intrepidity*. He may hear them addressing that ghastly monarch, in the triumphant language of the apostle, *O Death, where is thy sting?*—To hear and see this, will be a more effectual expedient to establish his heart, more sovereign to deliver him from the *bondage of fear*, than the most spirited exhortations, or the most sage directions.

Should the *unbeliever* be so impartial, as to mark these disciples of JESUS, and consider the end of their conversation; he must surely acknowledge, both the *divine* origin, and *unequalled* energy of the glorious gospel; since it administers such *strong* consolation, amidst the pains of a mortal distemper, and the ruins of dissolving nature.——Vain, inexpressibly vain and insignificant, must every other scheme of salvation appear, which is destitute of an all-sufficient Redeemer, and void of an almighty Comforter.

Should the *libertine*, in a serious interval, approach these death-beds of the just; he may behold the *genuine* fruits of faith unfeigned, and the *blessed* consequences of vital holiness.—And *where* can he behold

* Referred to in Mr HERVEY'S Life, p. ii.

† Mr *Addison*. ‡ *Spectator*, vol. IV. No. 289.

A ſcene, ſo ſtrong to ſtrike, ſo ſweet to charm,
So great to raiſe, ſo heavenly to inſpire,
So ſolid to ſupport fair Virtue's throne * !

Or *how* can he behold all this, without feeling ſome pangs of *ſalutary* regret; without entering into himſelf, and forming ſome uſeful reflections?—" Will my vi-
" tious gratifications create ſuch ſweet *compoſure*, ſuch
" humble *joy*, ſuch heavenly *hope*, at the laſt awful hour?
" Alas! will they not rather ſharpen the fatal arrow;
" add poiſon to the point, and anguiſh, inconceivable
" anguiſh, to the wound?"

There may be, and there doubtleſs is, a variety of treatiſes, written upon a variety of ſubjects, in which many people are no way intereſted. But the ſubject of *this* book appertains to *all*. It is appointed, and by an irrevocable decree, that *all* muſt die. *There is no diſcharge in this warfare*; no, not for the votaries of gaiety and indolence.——This conſideration, methinks, ſhould incline even the *gay* and *indolent* to obſerve what is tranſacted in the antechamber to thoſe apartments, where they themſelves muſt ſhortly lodge. And would they, from the enſuing narratives, make their obſervation, they might be led to entertain more *favourable* apprehenſions of our holy religion.—They would find, that, far from *embittering* life, it *ſweetens* death. Inſtead of damping the enjoyments of health, it ſoftens the bed of ſickneſs, and ſooths even the agonies of diſſolution.—Why then ſhould they be afraid of pure and undefiled religion? why ſtand aloof, why withdraw themſelves, from its benign invitations? Can *that* throw a gloom upon the delectable hills, which is able to gild and gladden the valley of darkneſs?

Some, perhaps, may be prompted by *curioſity* to caſt an eye upon this ſolemn and auguſt ſpectacle;—a multitude of rational beings, arrived on the very borders of the inviſible ſtate,—bidding a final adieu to time,—and juſt launching out into the abyſſes of eternity.——And, bleſſed be the divine goodneſs, the ſpectacle is as *delightful* as it is *auguſt*. Their GOD, their GOD ſuſtains them in the greateſt extremity.——*They overcome* the laſt enemy *through the blood of the* LAMB.——Their diſcourſes ſavour of heaven;—their hopes are full of immortality.——And is not *this* a privilege devoutly to be wiſhed †? Who, that has the leaſt ſerioufneſs, or feels any concern for his true happineſs, can forbear crying out, on ſuch an occaſion, LET ME DIE THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS *!

Life, take thy chance. But oh! for ſuch an end †!

Upon the whole, I would perſuade myſelf, that THE PIOUS MEMORIALS may be *a word in ſeaſon*, a welcome and well-adapted addreſs to readers of *every* character:—may be a means, in the hand of Providence, to awaken the *thoughtleſs*, and fix their attention upon important and everlaſting things;—may tend to reclaim the *diſſolute* from ruinous practices, and engage them in the purſuit of thoſe ſubſtantial acquiſitions, which will " bring them peace at the laſt,"——may animate the *Chriſtian* to freſh zeal and renewed activity, in the ſervice of our adorable IMMANUEL.——That each, while he is running his race, may be *inſpirited* to ſay, with the holy apoſtle, *To me to live is* CHRIST; and each, when he hath finiſhed his courſe, may be emboldened to add, *To me to die is gain.*

With *this* aim the narratives were collected; with *this* aim they are publiſhed. May the LORD of all power and might make them effectual to accompliſh what is ſo laudably deſigned! *Then* it will not be deemed a piece of officious impertinence, or preſuming boldneſs, for me to recommend them: it will rather be looked upon as an act of *friendſhip* to the deceaſed author, and his diſtreſſed widow;—as an effort of true, of Chriſtian *benevolence* to my fellow-creatures;—and a proper expreſſion of my *gratitude* to the Public, for that remarkable candour and indulgence ſhewn to

Their obliged, and

Very humble ſervant,

Weſton-Favell,
July 18, 1753.

JAMES HERVEY.

I wiſh I could do juſtice to *Virgil*'s beautiful lines: but, though I dare not attempt a tranſlation, I will aſſure the unlearned reader, that no book in our language, none, at leaſt, that I am acquainted with, contains ſo copious an *exemplification* of their meaning, as the following pages afford. Here he may ſee what the *charming poet* ſo delicately deſcribes, but what the *poor Heathen* never knew where to find.

* Night-Thoughts, night II.

† Even a *Pagan* writer could not but diſcern the excellency of ſuch a bleſſing; and made it one of the *principal* ingredients which conſtitute happineſs.

Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas,
Atque metus omnes, *et* inexorabile fatum,
Subjecit pedibus, ſtrepitumque Acherontis *avari.*

VIRG. Georg. lib. II.

* Numb. xxiii. 10. † Night-Thoughts, night II.

A LETTER to Mr JOHN TRAILL, late Bookſeller in Edinburgh, now Miniſter of a Congregation of Proteſtant Diſſenters at Chelſea, near London.

SIR,

I Received your very valuable and no leſs acceptable preſent *, ſome weeks ago. I ſhould have acknowledged the favour ſooner; but I choſe to ſtay till I had taſted the diſh you ſet before me. And indeed I find it to be ſavoury meat, the true manna; food for the ſoul.

Your worthy relative † was a workman that need not be aſhamed. He knew how, clearly to ſtate and ſolidly to eſtabliſh the faith of GOD's elect, and the doctrine according to godlineſs.——O! that my heart, and the heart of every reader, may be opened by the eternal SPIRIT, to receive the precious truths!

The letter at the end of the firſt volume *, is a judicious performance. It rightly divides the word of truth, and lays the line, with a maſterly hand, between

* Mr Traill had ſent Mr Hervey a copy of his new edition of the firſt two volumes of the works of the Rev. Mr Robert Trail late miniſter in London. The third volume was not republiſhed till after Mr Hervey's death.

† Mr Robert Traill was uncle to Mr John Traill.

* This letter is entitled, *A vindication of the Proteſtant doctrine concerning juſtification, and of its preachers and profeſſors, from the unjuſt charge of Antinomianiſm.*

the

the presumptuous legalist, and the licentious Antinomian,——I am particularly pleased with the honourable testimony bore, to those two excellent books, Dr *Owen*'s treatise on justification, and Mr *Marshall*'s gospel-mystery of sanctification *: Books fit to be recommended by so good a judge!

If the LORD pleases to give THERON and ASPASIO any acceptance in *Scotland*, I shall be sincerely glad; but if he vouchsafes to make them, not only welcome, but useful visitants, I shall exceedingly rejoice.—In case you should think them calculated to promote the honour and further the gospel of JESUS CHRIST, I hope you will favour them with your recommendation, and accompany them with your prayers; which will be a fresh instance of kindness to,

SIR,

Your obliged friend,

Weston, July 8. And obedient servant,

1755. JAMES HERVEY.

* "I think," says Mr Traill, "that Dr *Owen*'s excellent book "of justification, and Mr *Marshall*'s book of the mystery of sanctification by faith in Jesus Christ, are such vindications and "confirmations of the Protestant doctrine, against which I fear "no effectual opposition.—Mr *Marshall* was a holy and retired "person, and is only known to the most of us by his book lately "published. The book is a deep, practical, well-jointed discourse, and requires a more than ordinary attention in reading "of it with profit. And, if it be singly used, I look upon it as "one of the most useful books the world hath seen for many "years. Its excellence is, that it leads the serious reader directly "to Jesus Christ, and cuts the sinews and overturns the foundation of the new divinity, by the same argument of gospel-holiness, by which many attempt to overturn the old. And, as it "hath already had the seal of high approbation by many judicious "ministers and Christians that have read it; so I fear not but it "will stand firm as a rock against all opposition, and will prove "good seed, and food, and light to many hereafter."—*See above, p.* 342. *and p.* 471.

PROMISES, to be pasted at the Beginning and End of a Bible.

PROMISES.

To be pasted at the beginning of a Bible.

GOD hath given us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4.

DIVINE TEACHING.

Is. xxix. 18. The eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity.
Jer. xxxi. 34. They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.
John xiv. 26. The Holy Ghost shall teach you all things.
Is. lviii. 11. The LORD shall guide thee continually.

PARDON.

Is. xliii. 25. I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions.
Is. i. 18.—Sins as scarlet—shall be as white as snow.
1 Pet. ii. 24. Who his own self bare our sins, in his own body, on the tree.
1 John i. 7. The blood of JESUS CHRIST cleanseth from all sin.

JUSTIFICATION.

Rom. viii. 33. 34.—It is GOD that justifieth.
Rom. iii. 21. 22. 23. 24.—Justified freely by his grace.
Is. xlv. 24. 25. In the LORD have I righteousness.
2 Cor. v. 21. We are made the righteousness of GOD in him.

SANCTIFICATION.

Ezek. xi. 19. 20. I will put a new spirit within you.
Tit. ii. 14. CHRIST gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.
Heb. viii. 10. 11. 12. I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.
1 Thess. v. 23. The GOD of peace sanctify your whole spirit, and soul, and body.

PROMISES.

To be pasted at the end of a Bible.

TEMPORAL BLESSINGS.

1 Tim. iv. 8. Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is.
Psal. xxxvii. 3. Verily thou shalt be fed.
Matth. vi. 33. Seek first the kingdom of GOD, and all things shall be added.
1 Tim. vi. 17. Who giveth us all things richly to enjoy.

TEMPTATION.

1 Cor. x. 13. GOD will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.
2 Cor. xii. 9. My GRACE is sufficient for thee.
Rom. 6. 14. Sin shall not have dominion over you.
Luke xxii. 31. I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.

AFFLICTION.

Job v. 17. Happy is the man whom GOD correcteth.
Lam. iii. 32. Tho' he cause grief, yet will he have compassion.
Psal. l. 15. Call upon me in trouble; I will deliver thee.
Rev. iii. 19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.

DEATH.

1 Cor. xv. 55. 56. 57. GOD giveth us the victory, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.
2 Cor. v. 1. If our earthly house is dissolved, we have a building of GOD.
John iii. 16. Whosoever believeth, shall have everlasting life.
Psal. xxiii. 4. Though I pass through death, I will fear no evil.

CONCLUSION.

GOD, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath. Heb vi. 17.

A LETTER to RICHARD NASH, Esq.

Late Master of the Ceremonies at *Bath* *.

Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Is. lv. 6.

SIR,

THIS comes from your ſincere friend, and one that has your beſt intereſt deeply at heart: it comes on a deſign altogether important, and of no leſs conſequence than your everlaſting happineſs; ſo that it may juſtly challenge your careful regard. It is not to upbraid or reproach, much leſs to triumph and inſult over your miſconduct: no; it is pure benevolence, it is diſintereſted good-will prompts me to write; ſo that I hope I ſhall not raiſe your reſentment: however, be the iſſue what it will, I cannot bear to ſee you walk in the paths that lead to death, without warning you of your danger; without ſounding in your ears the awful admonition, "Return and live:—for "why will you die?" I beg of you to conſider whether you do not, in ſome meaſure, reſemble thoſe accurſed children of *Eli*; whom, though they were famous in their generation, and men of renown, yet vengeance ſuffered not to live. For my part, I may ſafely uſe the expoſtulation of the old prieſt:—"Why do you ſuch "things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this "people: nay, my brother, for it is no good report I "hear; you make the Lord's people to tranſgreſs." I have long obſerved and pitied you; and a moſt melancholy ſpectacle I lately beheld, made me reſolve to caution you, leſt you alſo come into the ſame condemnation.

I was not long ſince called to viſit a poor gentleman, ere while of the moſt robuſt body, and gayeſt temper I ever knew: but when I viſited him, Oh! how was the glory departed from him! I found him no more that ſprightly and vivacious ſon of joy which he uſed to be; but languiſhing, pining away, and withering under the chaſtiſing hand of God! his limbs feeble and trembling; his countenance forlorn and ghaſtly! and the little breath he had left, ſobb'd out in ſorrowful ſighs! his body haſtening apace to the duſt, to lodge in the ſilent grave, the land of darkneſs and deſolation: his ſoul juſt going to God who gave it; preparing itſelf to wing away to its long home; to enter upon an unchangeable and eternal ſtate. When I was come up into his chamber, and had ſeated myſelf on his bed, he firſt caſt a moſt wiſhful look upon me; and then began, as well as he was able, to ſpeak.—"Oh! that I had been "wiſe; that I had known this? that I had conſidered "my latter end! Ah! Mr *H——y*, death is knocking "at my doors; in a few hours more I ſhall draw my "laſt gaſp; and then judgment, the tremendous judg"ment! How ſhall I appear, unprepared as I am, be"fore the all-knowing and omnipotent God? how "ſhall I endure the day of his coming?" When I mentioned among many other things, that *ſtrict holineſs* which he had formerly ſo ſlightly eſteemed; he replied, with a haſty eagerneſs; "Oh! that *holineſs* is the only "thing I now long for: I have not words to tell you "how highly I value it: I would gladly part with all "my eſtate, large as it is, or a world, to obtain it: now "my benighted eyes are enlightened; I clearly diſcern "the things that are excellent: what is there in the "place whither I am going but God? or, what is there "to be deſired on earth but religion?"—But if this God ſhould reſtore you to health, ſaid I, think you that you would alter your former courſe? "I call heaven and "earth to witneſs," ſaid he, "I would labour for holi"neſs, as I ſhall ſoon labour for life: as for riches and "pleaſures, and the applauſes of men, I account them "as droſs and dung; no more to my happineſs than the "feathers that lie on the floor. Oh! if the righteous "Judge would try me once more; if he would but re"prieve and ſpare me a little longer;—in what a ſpirit "would I ſpend the remainder of my days? I would "know no other buſineſs; aim at no other end than "perfecting myſelf in holineſs: whatever contributed to "that; every means of grace; every opportunity of "ſpiritual improvement, ſhould be dearer to me than "thouſands of gold and ſilver.——But alas! why do I "amuſe myſelf with fond imaginations? The beſt re"ſolutions are now inſignificant, becauſe they are too "late: the day, in which I ſhould have worked, is over "and gone! and I ſee a ſad, horrible night approach"ing, bringing with it the blackneſs of darkneſs for "ever. Heretofore, (woe is me!) when God called, "I refuſed; when he invited, I was one of them that "made excuſe: now, therefore, I receive the reward "of my deeds; fearfulneſs and trembling are come "upon me; I ſmart; I am in ſore anguiſh already; "and yet this is but the beginning of ſorrows! It doth "not yet appear what I ſhall be;—but ſure I ſhall be "ruined, undone, and deſtroyed with an everlaſting "deſtruction."

This ſad ſcene I ſaw with my eyes; theſe words, and many more equally affecting, I heard with my ears; and ſoon after attended the unhappy gentleman to his tomb. The poor breathleſs ſkeleton ſpoke in ſuch an accent, and with ſo much earneſtneſs, that I could not eaſily forget him, or his words: and as I was muſing upon this ſorrowful ſubject, I remembered Mr *Naſh*'s —I remembered you, Sir;—for I diſcerned too near an agreement and correſpondence between yourſelf and the deceaſed. They are alike, ſaid I, in their ways, and what ſhall hinder them from being alike in their end? The courſe of their actions was equally full of ſin and folly; and why ſhould not the period of them be equally full of horror and diſtreſs? I am grievouſly afraid for the ſurvivor, leſt, as he lives the life, ſo he ſhould die the death of this wretched man, and his latter end ſhould be like his.

For this cauſe, therefore, I take my pen, to adviſe —to admoniſh—nay—to requeſt of you to repent, while you have opportunity; if haply you may find grace and forgiveneſs: yet a moment, and you *may* die; yet a little while, and you *muſt* die: and will you go down with infamy and deſpair to the grave, rather than depart in peace, and with hopes full of immortality?

But I muſt tell you plainly, Sir, with the utmoſt freedom, that your preſent behaviour is not the way to reconcile yourſelf to God: you are ſo far from making

* Mr *Hervey* is ſuppoſed to have wrote this letter, when he was at *Bath*, in the year 1743. It was found among Mr *Naſh*'s papers after his death; and an extract of it was inſerted in an account of his death, publiſhed ſeveral years ago.—For ought appears, this man of pleaſure deſpiſed the awful warning given him by the benevolent Mr *Hervey*, and died as he had lived.

king atonement to offended juſtice, that you are aggravating the former account, and heaping up an increaſe of wrath againſt the day of wrath. For what ſay the ſcriptures? thoſe books, which, at the conſummation of all things, the Ancient of days ſhall open,—and judge you by every jot and tittle therein; what ſay theſe ſacred volumes? Why, they teſtify and declare to every ſoul of man, *That whoſoever liveth in pleaſure, is dead while he liveth*: ſo that, ſo long as you roll on in a continued circle of ſenſual delights, and vain entertainments, you are dead to all the purpoſes of piety and virtue: you are as odious to God as a corrupt carcaſe that lies putrefying in the church-yard: you are as far from doing your duty, or working out your ſalvation, or reſtoring yourſelf to the divine favour, as a heap of dry bones naked up in a coffin is from vigour and activity.——Think, Sir, I conjure you, think upon this, if you have any inclination to eſcape the fire that never will be quenched. Would you be reſcued from the fury and fierce anger of almighty God? would you be delivered from weeping, and wailing, and inceſſant gnaſhing of teeth? Sure you would!——Then I exhort you as a friend; I beſeech you as a brother; I charge you as a meſſenger from the great God, in his own moſt ſolemn words: "Caſt away from you your tranſgreſſions; make you "a new heart, and a new ſpirit; ſo iniquity ſhall not "be your ruin."

Perhaps you may be diſpoſed to contemn this, and its ſerious purport; or to recommend it to your companions as a fit ſubject for raillery:—but let me tell you beforehand, that for this, as well as for other things, God will bring you into judgment: he ſees me now write; he will obſerve you while you read; he notes down my words in his book; he will note down your conſequent procedure: ſo that not upon me, but upon your own ſelf, will the neglecting or deſpiſing my ſayings turn. "If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for "thyſelf; if thou ſcorneſt, thou alone ſhalt bear it."

Be not concerned, Sir, to know my name; it is enough that you will know this hereafter: tarry but a little, till the Lord, even the moſt mighty God, ſhall call the heaven from above, and the earth, that he may judge his people;—and then you will ſee me face to face: there ſhall I be ready, at the dreadful tribunal, to joy and rejoice with you, if you regard my admonitions, and live; or to be—what God prevent,—by inclining your heart to receive this friendly admonition.

RULES and ORDERS of the Aſſembly for Chriſtian Improvement *.

God is greatly to be feared in the aſſemblies of his ſaints; and to be had in reverence by all that are round about him.
Pſal. lxxxix. 7.

I.

THAT this aſſembly conſiſt of no more than ten or twelve at the utmoſt, leſt an increaſed number ſhould produce confuſion or diſſentions; and that each member, in order to prevent any ſiniſter reflections from the inconſiderate, or vitious, be cautious of mentioning to any others that he belongs to ſuch † an aſſembly.—And that each member before he ſets out, and on his return, do uſe the forms of prayer, which are ſpecified in the MINUTES, and particularly adapted to this occaſion.

II.

That no one ſhall be admitted a member, who has not been propoſed by the chairman at the preceding aſſembly,—or who ſhall be diſapproved of by any two members on a ballot, which ſhall always be taken on ſuch occaſions, how unanimous ſoever the members may ſeem to be beforehand.

III.

That the members ſhall be regiſtered alphabetically in the MINUTES of the aſſembly's proceedings, and that the chairman of the day be appointed regularly, according to that liſt: ſo that no miſunderſtanding may ariſe about precedence; and that a treaſurer be elected annually, the firſt *Tueſday* in *January*.

IV.

That the aſſembly meet on the firſt *Tueſday* in every month during the ſummer-ſeaſon, punctually at twelve o'clock; and on the moon-light *Tueſday*, during the winter-ſeaſon, exactly at ten, at ſuch inn as ſhall from time to time be agreed on by the majority; and that dinner be ready preciſely at two in the ſummer, and one in the winter.

V.

That as ſoon as the aſſembly is met, the names of the preſent members ſhall be entered in the MINUTES, and the forfeits (if there be any due) depoſited in the charity-purſe.——After which the chairman ſhall inquire, if the prayers, as agreed upon by the aſſembly, and entered in their MINUTES, have been properly uſed by each member at his own home. Then the chairman ſhall, in a ſhort charge, or exhortation, remind his aſſociates of the importance of ſuch a meeting, and enumerate the good effects, which the ſelected chapters, if rightly improved, may produce.

VI.

The chairman ſhall then read the chapter in the Old Teſtament in *Engliſh*, and ſhall pauſe at the end of every verſe, that any one who pleaſes may make ſuch inquiries and reflections, as may occaſionally ariſe; but that no two perſons ſpeak at a time; and if two accidentally begin, the chairman ſhall direct which is to go on.——And that every member ſhall, againſt the next meeting, ſend to the chairman whatever obſervation of his on the chapter of the day the members then preſent had deſired to have entered in their MINUTES; by which method, many uſeful obſervations may be preſerved: And in caſe any verſe ſhall not be cleared of its difficulties to the ſatisfaction of the preſent members, the ſaid verſe ſhall be reconſidered at the next meeting.

VII.

At three o'clock preciſely, during the ſummer-ſeaſon, (no more than an hour being allowed for dining,) the

* Referred to in Mr Hervey's Life, above, page v.

† As this aſſembly met at different inns, public prayer would have alarmed the attendants, and cauſed groſs miſrepreſentations.—Beſides, the real deſign of this meeting was known only to a few; and the injunction of ſecrecy was given to each member, in order to avoid the appearance of religious oſtentation, and in compliance with the apoſtle's precaution, *viz.* *Let not your good be evil ſpoken of*, Rom. xiv. 16.

the chairman shall proceed in reading a chapter in *Greek* out of the New Testament, to be commented on in like manner as that out of the Old. But in the winter-season, when the assembly meet at ten, the chapter both in the Old as well as the New Testament shall be read before dinner; and after dinner no other business, than that specified in the ninth article, shall be entered on.

VIII.

That the two chapters to be considered by the assembly at their next meeting, be previously appointed before the adjournment of every assembly, either by the succeeding chairman, if present, or in case of his absence, by the majority of which chapters the absent members shall have timely notice sent them in writing.

IX.

That at every meeting (as time permits) each member, in an alphabetical order, shall be desired to give an account of some religious author (which he has read in the preceding month) in as concise and succinct a manner as possible.

X.

That at every meeting, half a crown shall be given by each member for charitable uses; and that, at the end of the year, the money shall be expended in clothing or educating such poor persons, or relieving such incurables, as the members in their alphabetical order shall recommend to the assembly.

XI.

That every member who is absent, though occasioned by the most urgent business, or even indisposition, (unless such indisposition shall continue longer than a month,) shall pay half a crown towards the charity-purse, and one shilling and sixpence towards the dinner, in the same manner as if he had been present.

XII.

That the assembly break up by seven in the summer, and by four in the winter; and that each member, on his return home, use the form of prayer which is specified in our Minutes, and peculiarly adapted to this occasion.

We whose names are underwritten, have this day (being the seventh day of *July*, 1747) subscribed our assent to these rules and orders, as witness our hands.

The FORM of PRAYER composed by Mr *Hervey*, to be used by each Member before setting out for the ASSEMBLY.

Lord, thou hast said, Where two or three are gathered together in thy name, there am I in the midst of them. Matth. xviii. 20.

ALMIGHTY and immortal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through him the God of all mercies, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to look down upon us thy sinful servants, who are preparing to meet together in thy name, and with all humble desire to build up one another in our most holy religion. Pardon all our iniquities through the blood of the everlasting covenant, and make us and our services accepted through the Beloved. O heavenly Father, unite us to one another by mutual love, and to thy blessed self by faith unfeigned. Enlighten our minds with the knowledge of thy truth, and sanctify our hearts by the power of thy grace. Direct our counsels, and prosper all our endeavours to the glory of thy divine Majesty, and the salvation of our own, and the souls of others. Grant this, most gracious God, through the precious death, and never-ceasing intercession of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen!*

The FORM of PRAYER composed by Mr *Hervey*, to be used by each Member when returned from the ASSEMBLY.

Lord, thou hast said, If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that ye shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. Matth. xviii. 19.

O Lord God of our salvation, thou Giver of every good and perfect gift, we adore thy glorious name and beneficence, for the redemption of our souls by Jesus Christ, and for all thy other unnumbered and undeserved mercies. In a particular manner, we praise thy unspeakable goodness, for the valuable opportunity we have this day enjoyed, of provoking one another to love, and to good works. Pity our infirmities, holy merciful Father, and pardon whatever thou hast seen amiss in the tenor of our conversation, or in the spirit of our minds. Sanctify, we humbly beseech thee, thy holy word, which we have heard. Command it to sink deep into our souls, and to be a lively and lasting principle of godliness in our hearts. O! let us, by every such conference, grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: that, through thy infinitely-precious favour, we may become stedfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity; and so much the more, as we see the day approaching.—And forasmuch as we are now separated into a world, where wickedness abounds, preserve us, O God our defence, from the least infection, and from every appearance of evil. Inspire us with wisdom, so to order our conversation, that we may give no just occasion of offence in any thing. Endue us with holiness, that we may adorn the gospel of God our Saviour in all things; and animate us with such a steady and well-tempered zeal, that neither the slothfulness of our nature, nor the fear of the world may with-hold us from pursuing such courses, as may be conducive to the glory of thy blessed name, the advancement of true religion, and the salvation of our immortal souls.—This, and whatsoever else is needful for us, and for carrying on the work which thou hast given us to do, we humbly beg, for the sake of Jesus Christ our only Mediator, and all-sufficient Redeemer. *Amen.*

* Some of the members lived five or six miles from the place of meeting, which was always at public houses, and as near the centre of each member's residence as could be conveniently contrived.

Rules and orders of a religious society, consisting of two classes,* viz.

Of men into which no woman can be admitted: And,

Of married men, their wives, and other women; into which no unmarried man can be admitted.

Each class meets every other week alternately.

RULE.

As the sole design of this society is to promote real holiness in heart and life, every member of it is to have this continually in view, trusting in the divine power, and gracious conduct of his Holy

* As the plan and proceedings of this society, so much commended by Mr *Hervey*, may probably be extensively useful; it is here printed from a private copy, by the particular desire of several of Mr *Hervey*'s friends; and it is hoped the worthy

Spirit, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to excite, advance, and perfect all good in us.

RULE II.

That in order to the being of one heart, and one mind, and to prevent all things which gender strifes; as well as to remove all occasion of offence from being taken against this society, no person is to be admitted a member or allowed to continue such, who is a member of any other meeting, or follows any other preaching than that of the established ministry of the church of *England*.——That none be members but such as attend the sacrament every month, and that no person be at any time introduced except by request of the director.

RULE III.

That no person be admitted a member but upon the recommendation of the director, with the consent of the majority of members then present.——And that the director be the Rev. Mr *Walker*.

RULE IV.

That the members of this society meet together one evening in a week at a convenient place, and that they go home at nine o'clock.——And that all matters of business be done before the sentences begin.

RULE V.

That every member give constant attendance, and be present at the hour of meeting precisely.——And that whoever absents himself four meetings together, without giving a satisfactory account to the director, which shall by him be communicated to the society, shall be looked upon as disaffected to the society.

RULE VI.

That, to prevent confusion, no person be removed from this society but by the director, who shall be present on such occasions.—That any member do before-hand apply to the director, in case he judges such removal necessary.—That a disorderly † carriage, or a proud, contentious, disputing temper, (the greatest adversary to Christian love and peace) be sufficient ground for such complaint and removal.

RULE VII.

That all the members, considering the sad consequences of vanity and amusements over the nation, do in charity to the souls of others, as well as to avoid the danger of such things themselves, look upon themselves as obliged to use peculiar caution, with respect to many of the usual amusements, however innocent they may be, or be thought in themselves; such as cards, dancings, clubs for entertainment, playhouses, sports at festivals and parish-feasts, and, as much as may be, parish-feasts themselves;—lest by joining herein they should be a hindrance to themselves, or their neighbours.

RULE VIII.

That, with the consent of the director, the major part of the society have power to make a new order when need requires, but that the proposal for this purpose be made by the director.——And that any member may consult the director hereupon before the day of meeting.

RULE IX.

That persons disposed to become members of this society, must first be proposed by the director, in order that the members of the society may observe their conduct for the space of three months before admittance.

RULE X.

That every member do consider himself as peculiarly obliged to live in an inoffensive and orderly manner, to the glory of God and the edifying his neighbours.—— That he study to advance in himself and others, humility, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, love to God, gospel repentance, and new obedience; wherein Christian edification consists.—And that, in all his conversation hereupon, he stick close to the plain and obvious sense of the holy scriptures, carefully avoiding all niceties and refinements upon them.

RULE XI.

That these orders shall be read over at least four times in the year by the director; and that with such deliberation, that each member may have time to examine himself by them.

RULE XII.

That the members of this society do meekly and humbly join together in the following offices of devotion.

The office of devotion used weekly at the meeting of the society.

The director shall read these sentences, himself and every one standing.

GOD is greatly to be feared in the assemblies of his saints, and to be had in reverence by all that are round about him. *Psal.* lxxxix. 7.

God is a righteous judge, strong and patient, and God is provoked every day. *Psal.* vii. 12.

God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. *Eccles.* xii. 14.

He that hideth his sins shall not prosper; but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy. *Prov.* xxviii. 13.

If any man sinneth, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. 1 *John* ii. 1, 2.

O come let us worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker. *Psal.* xcv. 5. 6.

Then shall be said these three collects, all kneeling.

"Prevent us, O Lord," &c.

"Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy scriptures," &c.

"God, for as much as without thee," &c.

All seating themselves, a portion of scripture shall be read.

Then kneeling down, they shall join in this confession of sin.

"Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Maker of all things, Judge of all men," &c.

"Our Father, which art," &c.

After which the director alone shall say:

"Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing "that thou hast made," &c.

O most holy and blessed God! the Creator, Governor, and Judge of all; who hatest falsehood and hypocrisy, and wilt not accept the prayer of feigned lips; but hast promised to shew mercy to such as turn unto thee by true faith and repentance; vouchsafe, we pray thee, to create in us clean and upright hearts,

O through

worthy director and members of the society at *Truro*, will excuse the liberty here taken without their knowledge, when they consider the good effects which may probably arise from this publication. See *Mr Hervey's letters*, *let.* 132.

* This society is very happy in having so accomplished a person at their head.—But where such a one cannot be had, perhaps it would be prudent to elect a director annually, whose office might be continued more or less number of years, as seemed best for the general good.

† By a disorderly carriage we mean, not only the gross commission of scandalous sins, but also what are esteemed matters of little moment in the eyes of the world; such as a light use of the words *Lord, God, Jesus*, &c. in ordinary conversation; which we cannot but interpret as an evidence of want of God's presence in the heart.—The doing needless business on the Lord's day.—The frequenting alehouses or taverns without necessary business.

through an unfeigned faith in thy Son our Saviour. To us indeed belongeth shame and confusion of face; we are not worthy to lift up our eyes or our voice towards heaven; our natures are depraved, and our ways have been perverse before thee. O let not thy wrath rise against us, lest we be consumed in a moment; but let thy merciful bowels yearn over us, and vouchsafe to purify and pardon us, through thine all-sufficient grace and mercy in our Lord Jesus Christ: since it hath pleased thee to offer him up as a sacrifice for sinners, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to cleanse us from all iniquity through his blood. We believe, that he is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto thee by him, and we do earnestly desire to embrace him as our Prince and Saviour; O give us repentance and remission of sin through his name. All we like sheep have gone astray, every one in his own way; good Lord, reduce us into thy fold through this great Shepherd of souls, and be pleased to lay on him the iniquity of us all. And as we have much to be forgiven, be pleased to incline our hearts to love thee much, who forgivest iniquity, transgression, and sin. Give us that faith, that worketh by love; and such love as will constrain us to have regard to all thy commandments. And make us to look carefully to all our ways, that we may never again do any thing, whereby thy holy name may be blasphemed, or thine authority despised.

Give us the deepest humility, without which we can never be accepted of thee; our infinitely-condescending God, make us continually to tread in the steps of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; being of a meek and quiet spirit, always influenced by the highest love of thee our God, and by the most charitable disposition towards all men.

Vouchsafe to endue us with the saving knowledge of spiritual things, that we may receive all thy truths in the love of them, in all patience, purity, justice, temperance, godliness, and brotherly kindness; that we may adorn our holy profession, and resemble the divine goodness of thee our heavenly Father.——And since we are not only weak and frail, but corrupt and sinful, vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us by the power of thy Holy Spirit, that we fall not from our avowed stedfastness, in all Christian duty. Preserve us from all the sin and vanity to which our age, condition, and nature are prone, and to which the devil and this world may at any time tempt us.

Glorify, good God, thy strength in our weakness, thy grace in our pollution, and thy mercy in our salvation. May our holy religion be grounded and settled in our hearts, that, out of the good treasure of a gracious heart, our speech may be savoury, and our conversation exemplary; that we may be fruitful in all good works, even to our old age, and to our last day.

Fit us, we pray thee, for every state of life, into which thy Providence shall cast us; prosper our lawful undertakings; preserve us night and day, and prepare us for an hopeful death and a blessed eternity.

Be pleased, we beseech thee, to bless all those societies, who in truth apply their hearts to thy service and glory; we pray thee be pleased to strengthen, establish, and settle both them and us, in thy holy faith, fear, and love. Let nothing in this world discourage us from the pursuit of those holy purposes, which thy Spirit hath at any time put into our hearts and minds. But make us all faithful to thee our avowed God and desired portion, even unto death; that we, at least, (with thy whole church), may be partakers of that eternal life and perfect bliss which thou hast promised thro' Jesus Christ, thy only begotten Son, our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

" Almighty and ever-living God, who, by thy holy " apostle, hast taught us to make prayers," &c.

Then all standing up, a psalm shall be sung, and * *a sermon read, or a charge given by the director. After which some suitable prayer shall be used as he shall judge fit.*

Then all standing up, this exhortation to humility shall be read.

My brethren, since the great God has often assured us in his holy word, " that he will resist the proud, and " give grace unto the humble," *Jam.* iv. 6. 1 *Pet.* v. 5. let us consider that all our undertakings, though never so good, will fail and come to nought, unless we be truly and deeply humble, *Luke* xiv. 11. Indeed it cannot be otherwise; because the proud person quits his reliance on God to rest in himself; which is to exchange a rock for a reed.

Alas, what are we, poor empty nothings! *Gen.* xxxii. 10. Yea, what is worse, we are condemned, perishing sinners! We have, perhaps, understanding now; but God can soon turn it into madness, *Dan.* iv. 42. We may have some attainments in grace; but spiritual pride will wither all, and soon reduce us to a very profligate and wretched estate, *Is.* lxvi. 2. such as we have seen others fall into who have begun in the Spirit, and ended in the flesh! What have we, that we have not received? 1 *Cor.* iv. 7. And even that, he who gave it may as soon take away.

Ye that are young in years and younger in grace, 1 *Tim.* iii. 6. are in danger of self-conceit, and of being puffed up; which is a quick-sand, in which thousands have been swallowed up and perished. It is not in vain that the apostle requires, " that young men be exhorted " to be sober-minded," *Tit.* ii. 6. *Prov.* xvi. 18. which he elsewhere explains, when he says, " Let no " man think of himself more highly than he ought to " think; but to think soberly," *Rom.* xii. 3. *Is.* lxvi. 12. 13.

By pride the angels fell from heaven, 1 *Tim.* iii. 6. and if ever we climb up to those blessed seats from which they are fallen, it must be by the gracious steps of humility and lowliness of mind, *Luke* xviii. 14. " Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take " heed lest he fall," 1 *Cor.* x. 12. " Let us walk " humbly with our God," and ever have lowly thoughts of our vile selves, *Rom.* xi. 20. and of our poor attainments, and of our defective performances; and with St *Paul* (who was nothing behind the very chiefest apostles) let us always say, I am nothing, 2 *Cor.* xii. 11.

Let us therefore now sing to the praise and glory of God, to whom alone praise is due.

A psalm being sung, the director shall say,

" It is very meet and right," &c.

All shall join.

" Therefore with angels and archangels," &c.

The director alone.

" May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," &c. Amen.

Considerations laid before the members of the society; being the substance of the first charge, or exhortation, spoke at the opening by the director.

BRETHREN,

YOU expect that I lay before you the design of this society, and give you some cautions concerning it. The design is threefold; 1. To glorify God. 2. To be quickened and confirmed ourselves. 3. To render us more useful among our neighbours.

I.

As a society, we shall be better able to glorify God; for hereby we bear a more evident testimony to the cause of Christ, and make a more avowed confession

* The director, when abroad or indisposed, is to appoint who sermon shall be read, and by whom.

of him and his words, in these evil days, than we could do when separate.

Every one of you desires that the kingdom of Jesus Christ were more established, and more honourable in the world than it is, and you join your hand, with others, to promote so desirable an end.

Take these cautions for this purpose.

1. Look upon yourself as one associated with others in vindication of your Master's honour.

2. Never be ashamed of him, or his doctrine, or of this society.

3. Demean yourself to every one as his disciple, by walking in humility, meekness, heavenly-mindedness, charity after Christ's example.

4. Keep yourself heedfully from all things which may disgrace your master, and this society; such as pride in a conceit of your knowledge or attainments, or that you are a member of this society.——Valuing yourself upon any distinction in station or wealth.——Sinking into a worldly frame,—or declining into sloth and idleness.——Practising the least dishonesty, or conniving at the dishonesty of others.——Making compliances to avoid shame, or promote worldly interest.——Falling into lukewarmness, and forgetting your first love.——Slighting public ordinances.

5. Often (especially before and after great trials) reflect, that you belong to a religious society for promoting the glory of Christ.

II.

The second design of this society is, to be quickened and confirmed ourselves. For hereby we shall be better able to maintain the war against our enemies, (especially the world,) and to grow in grace; seeing, by this association, we have the Spirit to bless our exercises;—shall have the benefit of mutual advice * and reproof;—shall be more hardy to oppose the temptations besetting us in this wicked world;—shall walk under a peculiar restraint, as being members of a religious society;—and shall be assisted by the prayers, as of one another, so of all good men in the whole Christian church. To this end,

1. Watch over one another in love.

2. Be willing to hear of your faults, and of the fears and suspicions of these your friends concerning you.

3. Be watchful against any disgust to one another; and if any arises in you, without delay tell the party, and if that avail not, tell the director.

4. Desire the prayers one of another, and pray for one another.

5. Be sure you rest not on your being a member of this society;—seeking continually to cast off all self-dependence.

6. Watch the least decay of love to Christ, or zeal for his honour and the good of souls.

7. Confirm continually upon your heart the obligations you lie under as a member of a religious society.

III.

The third design of this society is, to render us more useful among our neighbours.——Hereby we are more observable.——People will not be so easily quiet in their sins.——Good examples carry a brighter and more convincing light, confounding the works of darkness. To this end,

1. Be careful to set a Christian example before the world.

2. Think not to gain any by making compliances.

3. Discountenance all such things as you see prejudicial to others, such as taverns, alehouses, gamings, and many sports which are destructive to souls.

4. Shew all love to mens souls and bodies.

5. Avoid all disputings which proceed from pride, and nurse contention and variance.

6. Don't be angry with those who blame this society, but meekly and silently bear with them.

7. Don't in your heart despise others, because they are not members of this society;

8. Nor shew any valuing of yourselves because you are.—Never speak of yourself as a member, unless with a view of doing good to others.

MOTIVES.

1. Real disciples do more than nominal professors.
2. The Spirit will strengthen and comfort you.
3. You will have the blessing of a quiet conscience.
4. You are engaged in the most honourable service.
5. You will promote the interest of your Master.
6. He will acknowledge your labours in the day of his appearing.

Amen. So be it.

N. B. Whereas too many people are apt to misrepresent every religious society as a methodistical meeting; it was judged necessary to insert the following extract from the celebrated Mr *Dodd*'s late sermon. "The cry "of *Methodism* is frequently raised by such as are totally "ignorant of the nature of the accusation; and many "are stigmatized with the name, who are perfectly innocent of the thing. The observations I have made "may possibly serve to settle the point in some degree, "or at least to stop the tongues of those who very unjustly cast the aspersion, where there is not the least "cause; and it deserves, perhaps, to be considered by "all serious and sincere Protestants, whether the affixing the charge of *Methodism*, &c. &c. indiscriminately upon men of unblameable lives, and irreproachable "conversation, may not tend greatly to prejudice our "holy faith in general, and to bring a reproach upon "Christianity itself, through the pretended offence of "*Methodism*; this may be a triumph to the *Deist* and "*Papist* equally pleasing.——And, if so, can we be "too accurate in our distinctions, or too cautious in "our imputations?—remembering, that while we confound Christianity and Methodism, we are doing discredit to Christianity in the same proportion as we are "giving weight and dignity to Methodism." See Mr *Dodd*'s excellent sermon, entitled, *Unity recommended*, preached before the religious societies in and about *London*, at their annual meeting in the parish-church of *St Mary-le-Bow*, on Easter *Monday* 1759; to which is added, an Appendix, giving an account of the original design, general rules, and present state of the religious societies.——A farther account of which may be seen in a little piece wrote in Queen *Anne*'s time, by the Rev. Dr *Josiah Woodward*, entitled, *An account of the rise and progress of the religious societies in and about London, and of their endeavours for the reformation of manners.*——The sixth edition. In this little tract the most considerable objections against religious societies are fully answered.

* There is a most useful little piece for these purposes, entitled, *Regulations and helps for promoting religious conversation among Christians.*

HINTS *concerning the means of promoting* RELIGION *in ourselves or others* *.

I.

BE always chearful as well as serious, that you may win men to Christianity. And in every conversation introduce some religious hints, if it can be done with propriety.

II.

Avoid all controversies; no good can come from disputing; but contend earnestly for the essentials of Christianity.

* Referred to in Mr Hervey's life, p. vi.

III.

III.

Heal all diviſions among ſects and parties to the utmoſt of your power.—And prevail with thoſe who are moſt fiery, to read *Henry*'s excellent treatiſe on *meekneſs*.

IV.

Talk *familiarly* to children about religion, as a delightful employment. Put eaſy queſtions to them,—encouraging them occaſionally by ſome little preſents,—and thus teaching them an amiable, chearful, generous piety.

V.

Make it a conſtant rule to pray for all who affront or injure you.———Chriſt enjoins us to pray for all who deſpitefully uſe us. See *Matth.* v. 44. Diſregard all opprobrious names.———Chriſt himſelf (as will every one who ſtrives againſt the corrupt prejudices and vices of mankind) was abuſed as a wine-bibber, and even a blaſphemer, &c.

VI.

Be accuſtomed to a regular, daily, but moderate courſe of devout retirement: and recommend interceſſion for others, both in the family and in private; as likewiſe frequent attendance on the ſacrament.

VII.

Frequent public worſhip every day in the week, if your buſineſs permit, and if you live in a place where it is performed.

VIII.

Secret ejaculations too may be uſed as you are walking, or riding, or in whatever company you may happen to be;—and, on *ſome particular* hour, remember (as for inſtance, at morning, noon, afternoon, or evening, when your TOWN-CLOCK ſtrikes, which will be a loud and never-failing memorandum) to ſet yourſelf as in the preſence of God * for a few minutes.

IX.

Uſe frequent meditation; than which nothing can be more profitable: Nor can any thing ſo much awaken and diſpoſe us for that, and for all that is good, as a ſtrong faith in providence, and a conſtant chearfulneſs † of ſpirit.

X.

Entertain the higheſt regard for the word of God, and furniſh yourſelf with a few of the beſt writers, but particularly with *Henry* on *meekneſs*, and *Worthington* on *reſignation*.———Study them thoroughly, and endeavour to make their ſentiments your own. Meekneſs and reſignation are the two principal duties of a Chriſtian.—Diſperſe good books occaſionally, if your circumſtances will permit;—and be very careful in the choice of them, and in adapting them to the circumſtances of the perſon to whom they are given.

XI.

Encourage by your influence, and purſe too (if able,) ſocieties for promoting the goſpel, both at home and in foreign parts; and, in order to be well acquainted with theſe, read the celebrated Dr *Woodward*'s *riſe and progreſs of the religious ſocieties in* London *and* Weſtminſter.

XII.

Whenever you reprove, let it be tenderly, privately, and with all due humility.

XIII.

For the reformation of ſwearing *, lying, ſlandering, Sabbath-breaking, paſſionate †, or unchaſte ‡ perſons, you may write out (or keep by you ſome printed

* This method is thus recommended by the late Biſhop of *Durham* (Dr *Butler*, in his *charge* to the clergy, 1751.) "Secret "prayer, as expreſsly as it is commanded by our Saviour, and as "evidently as it is implied in the notion of piety, will yet I fear "be grievouſly forgotten by the generality, till they can be brought "to fix for themſelves certain times of the day for it. Secret "prayer comprehends not only devotions before men begin, and "after they have ended the buſineſs of the day, but ſuch alſo as "may be performed while they are employed in it, or even in "company.

"And truly, if, beſides our more ſet devotions morning and "evening, all of us would fix upon certain times of the day, ſo "that the return of the hour ſhould remind us, to ſay ſhort pray-"ers, or exerciſe our thoughts in a way equivalent to this, per-"haps there are few perſons in ſo high and habitual a ſtate of "piety, as not to find the benefit of it.———If it took up no more "than a minute or two, or even leſs time than that, it would "ſerve the end I am propoſing:—it would be a recollection "THAT WE ARE IN THE DIVINE PRESENCE, and contribute to "our *being in the fear of the Lord all the day long*.

"A duty of the like kind, and ſerving to the ſame purpoſe, is "the particular acknowledgment of God, when we are partaking "of his bounty at our meals.———The neglect of this is ſaid to "have been ſcandalous to a proverb, in the Heathen * world; "but it is frequently and without ſhame laid aſide at the tables of "the higheſt, and the loweſt ranks among us."

† In order to obtain a proper confidence in providence, and a ſettled chearfulneſs of mind, the reader (eſpecially the gloomy and diſpirited) would be much aſſiſted by Biſhop *Patrick*'s *advice to a friend*, which is a moſt ineſtimable little piece.———It was firſt wrote (as the preface tells us) to preſerve a pious friend in peace and chearfulneſs; but if the advice be good, the more public it is made the better. It was contracted into a little room, that it might be as eaſy to carry in the mind, as in the pocket;—and is a moſt excellent guide to peace, chearfulneſs, and whatſoever is

* *See* Caſaubon in Athenæum, lib. i. cap. ii. page 22.

graceful, amiable, and deſirable in a Chriſtian.—They who are offended at the uncomfortableneſs of a religious life, never yet knew the true way of religion, into which this author will lead them.———*Her ways* (ſays *Solomon*) *are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace.*—See likewiſe *Henry's Pleaſantneſs of a religious life.*

* *Hints* for the reformation of, or converſation with a ſwearer.

1. None ſo ignorant as not to know 'tis a breach of the third commandment.—2. He who lives in the fear of God, is ſo far from being capable of it, that it ſhocks him to hear others offending this way.—3. We are taught by Chriſt daily to pray, "Hallowed be thy name." Angels praiſe it, and devils tremble at it.—4. Chriſt enjoins us to ſwear not at all. See *Matth.* v. 34. and alſo *James* v. 12.—5. Give to a ſwearer Dr *Woodward's kind caution to profane ſwearers*, or the late Biſhop of *London's* (Dr *Gibſon*) *admonition againſt profane and common ſwearing.*

† *Hints* for the reformation of a paſſionate man.

1. Cauſeleſs and immoderate anger, proceeds from a proud and haughty temper, and is contrary to goſpel-meekneſs—that meekneſs and quietneſs of ſpirit, which, as St *Peter* aſſures us, 1 *Pet.* iii. 4. is of great price in the ſight of God.—2. Chriſt bids us learn of him, who was lowly and meek, *Matth.* xi. 9.—3. Every paſſionate tongue is ſet on fire by hell, ſee *James* iii. 6.—4. He who ſays the Lord's prayer with an unforgiving temper, curſes himſelf.—5. No one has offended us ſo often as we have offended God, therefore our anger ſhould be againſt our own ſins.—6. Let all bitterneſs (ſays the apoſtle,) and wrath, and anger be put away.—In patience poſſeſs ye your ſouls, *Luke* xxi. 19.—No paſſion in heaven, therefore no paſſion in a heavenly mind.—Give to a paſſionate man *Henry* on *meekneſs*.

‡ *Hints* for the reformation of an unchaſte perſon.

1. Contrary to the ſeventh commandment of the great God.—2. A ſin which defiles the ſoul, and brings it under the dominion of the fleſhly appetites. No ſpiritual life in ſuch a one, ſee *Rom.* xiii. 6.—3. A partaker of other people's ſins,—making them partakers of yours,—thus doubly guilty.—4. All adulterers, fornicators, and unclean perſons, are declared to have no inheritance in the kingdom of God, ſee *Gal.* vi. 9.—5. You are a ſervant of ſin, and in bondage to the deepeſt corruption.—6. If you ſin in any of theſe ways, you ſin againſt your own body, and pollute the temple of the Holy Ghoſt.—Being joined to an harlot, the Holy Spirit dwells not there.—7. We muſt glorify God both in body and ſpirit, preſenting ourſelves a living ſacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, ſee *Rom.* xii. 1.—8. Purity and chaſtity required in the goſpel;—even impure and luſtful deſires are *there* condemned, ſee *Matth.* v. 28.—Give to an unchaſte perſon *Jerom's glorious victory of chaſtity*, or Dr *Woodward's exhortation to chaſtity.*

☞ Theſe *hints* may be very much improved, and are extracted (merely as ſpecimens) from Mr *Richards's hints for religious converſation*; where likewiſe may be found ſuch hints for converſation on moſt other vices, as will aſſiſt perſons of weak memories who are deſirous of converſing religiouſly with the vicious, or reproving them, either by letter or perſonally, as opportunity may offer.

hints on slips of paper, against either of these vices, and place them in the way of such persons, either by putting them into their books, windows, or other places, provided you don't care to give them to the person yourself;—or they may be sent by the post * from or to the metropolis.

XIV.

Make it a rule to have *at least one* religious sentence in the letters you write to your relations or friends, when it can be *conveniently* introduced; as such a sentence *properly* interwoven, often strikes a person; and is productive of more real good, perhaps, than a laboured

* The following letter was sent by the post to a Deist, and had a very good effect.

SIR,

Though you disbelieve Christianity, I cannot suppose that you disbelieve a future state of rewards and punishments: please therefore to take it into serious consideration, whether you think your actions are such, as will, upon your own principles, stand the test at the great day of account.

As it highly becomes us to do what good we can while we live in this world; and as I am truly concerned for you, I take the liberty of giving this friendly hint; and hope you will receive it as a proof that the writer, though unknown, is

Your very sincere well-wisher!

A. Z.

discourse from the pulpit, or formal advice at home.

XV.

Guard people, as much as in you lies, against enthusiasm, and excessive rigours, either as to abstinence, retirement, or conversation; and advise them to take all the comfort that the situation in which God has placed them will conveniently admit of; reminding them, at the same time, to acknowledge him in all their ways, and to be *discreetly* * zealous for the honour of Christ. —Reposing an entire confidence in the wisdom, power, and goodness of God; and assuring themselves of the extent of his Providence (of which we know not either the value or power) to all his creatures, and to all their actions.

XVI.

But, above all, write down the reasons which at any time make you afraid to die, and then endeavour, by faith, by prayer, and by conversation with experienced Christians, to remove the causes;—and thus by properly preparing for death: And, if your time and capacity will admit, keep a DIARY; particularly note your sins of omission,—and, by this method, you will see your progress or declension in religion.

* A certain zealot being warned against injuring the cause of Christ by his imprudencies, despised the caution, and alledged, that PRUDENCE was "at best but a *rascally* virtue."

MANY *made righteous by the Obedience of* ONE.

TWO SERMONS, preached at BIDDEFORD, DEVON, in the year 1743.

With a PREFACE, by AUGUSTUS TOPLADY, A. B. VICAR of *Broad Hembury, Devon.*

To the READER.

THE following sermons have been judged too excellent to be suppressed. They were preached according to the best information, at *Biddeford*, in the year 1743.

As to their *authenticity*, they carry in themselves the strongest internal evidences of their being genuine. Whoever reads them, will know who wrote them. "Celebrated writers," as this excellent author observes elsewhere, "have a style peculiar to themselves." This was eminently true of himself. His performances (some of his *letters* excepted, written in the younger part of life) are indeed *as apples of gold in pictures of silver*: transmitting the most precious truths, through the channel of the most elegant, correct expression; and adorning the doctrines of GOD our SAVIOUR, with all the heightening graces of exquisite composition. When Hervey's pencil gives the drapery, TRUTH is sure never to suffer, by appearing in an ill dress. His prose is, in general, more lovely and harmonious, more chastely refined, and more delicately beautiful, than half the real poems in the world.——With *Hervey* in their hands, his delighted readers will nigh find themselves at a loss, which they shall most admire; the sublimity and sweetness of the blessed truths he conveys, or the charming felicity of their conveyance.——There is, if the term may be allowed, a sort of *family likeness*, discernable in all this author's pieces. You discover the lively signatures of the parent, in every one of his offspring. They not only carry the superscription of his name, but likewise bear the image of his genius, and are himself at second-hand.——Among others, the ensuing performance may be considered as a transparent medium, a screen of crystal, through which the original writer is distinctly seen, and known from every other: A circumstance, which, with me, has more convincing weight, than the extrinsic attestation of a thousand witnesses.

The copy, from which these sermons are printed, was lately transmitted to me, for publication, by a most valued friend, of *Exeter*. I deem it a particular happiness, that so choice a treasure should pass, through *my* unworthy hands, to the church of GOD. And I rejoice the rather, as I have, by this means, an opportunity of doing myself the honour to bear the most open and public testimony to that grand, fundamental, inestimable doctrine of a sinner's FULL, FREE, AND FINAL JUSTIFICAION, BY THE ALONE OBEDIENCE AND SACRIFICE of JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS.

I shall not detain the evangelical reader from this feast any longer, than just to assure him, that neither my excellent friend, who communicated the copy to me; nor myself, who communicate it to the world; propose to ourselves any sort of pecuniary advantage, from this publication; nor will we accept of any, should the sale be ever so great.

Respect for the memory of that holy man of GOD who preached these sermons, and an hope of their being made useful to such as read them, were the motives which induced us to send them abroad.——One would wish to *gather up the* very *fragments that remain* of so distinguished a writer; and *that nothing* so apparently calculated for general benefit, might *be lost*.

I thought it necessary to add two or three occasional notes; of whose propriety the reader will judge for himself.

WESTMINSTER,
July 8, 1769.

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY

* Meditations, p. 62. note.

** *The two following sermons would have fallen to be annexed to* Mr Hervey's *five sermons, inserted above, had they been published before the five sermons were printed off.*

SERMON I.

ROMANS V. 19.

By the OBEDIENCE *of* ONE *shall* MANY *be made* RIGHTEOUS.

BY *the works of the law shall no man living be justified*, was, not long ago, the subject of a public discourse; and, I hope, has frequently been the subject of our private consideration.——O, that the important truth may be written most intelligibly upon our hearts, and beget in us a sound humility, and an evangelical poverty of spirit!—We then pulled up the *wrong* foundation, and, now, permit me to establish the *right*.——We then warned you of the *sandy* foundation; and, now, permit me to lead you to the *Rock* of ages; where you may safely repose all your confidences, and build, with the utmost security, for a blissful eternity. This is pointed out in the scripture before us; which, though concise in its expressions, is rich and copious in its meanings, and breathes the very spirit of the gospel.

By the obedience of ONE *shall* MANY *be made righteous.* The ONE mentioned in the text, is *the man* CHRIST JESUS. The *obedience* spoken of, includes both his *active* and *passive obedience*; the *labours* of his life, and the *agonies* of his death; all which he *exercised* and *suffered*, in conformity to his Father's will, for the sake of fallen men; that they, by HIS righteousness, might be made righteous; that, having these credentials, they may be admitted into the court of heaven, and, carrying this passport, may be admitted into *the everlasting habitations.*

This doctrine I take to be the most sweet and precious part of our Christian faith; that which gives the most pure and undivided *honour* to God; which yields the most reviving and solid *comfort* to the sinner; and, in the most endearing and effectual manner, promotes every interest of *holiness*. But inasmuch as it is little understood by some, entirely exploded by others, and scarce ever thought upon by many more; let us crave your impartial attention, while I clear up and confirm it: and not only crave your attention, brethren, but implore the renewing and enlightening influence of divine grace; without which, I am aware, my words will be unintelligible to some, and appear, perhaps, ridiculous to others: for *the natural man discerneth not the things which are of the Spirit of God*; on the contrary, *they are foolishness unto him.* Depending, therefore, on divine grace, let us examine,

I. How the obedience of *another* can make *us* righteous.

II. How *sufficient* Christ's obedience is for this purpose.

III. How *worthy* this method of becoming righteous is *of all acceptation*;—and then,

IV. Give some few directions, that may dispose us to rely on, and prepare us to receive the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

I. Let us examine how the obedience of *another* can make *us* righteous. This point may be proved and illustrated,—

(1.) From the nature of a *surety*.

(2.) From Christ's *dying* AS A SINNER for *us*.

(3.) From *Adam*'s sin being IMPUTED to *us*.

(1.) The doctrine, of our being made righteous through the obedience of Christ, may be proved and illustrated from the nature of a *surety*; who is *one that undertakes and engages for another*. Let us suppose the parties were *Paul* and *Onesimus*. *Onesimus* was *Philemon*'s slave.——The slave disobeyed his master, ran away from him and his service;—not only deserted his service, but stole his goods; turned *fugitive* and *thief* at once.——For the *first* of these crimes he deserves *stripes* and a rod; for the *last*, death and the *gallows*.——St. *Paul*, meeting with *Onesimus*, learns the state of his condition: and, having been the means of his conversion to Christianity, by his preaching; and of his reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ; offers to become his mediator with his offended master. In order to execute which office more effectually, he puts *himself* in the criminal's *stead*; becomes answerable for his villainy, and takes upon him to make full reparation for the injuries he had done to his master:——*If he hath wronged thee ought*, (says the beneficent apostle), *or oweth thee ought, put that to my account; I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it.*——By this means, the renegade slave is discharged, and *Paul* the innocent apostle becomes debtor. But how?—Not actually, but imputatively; for neither has *Onesimus* repaid, nor *Paul* stolen ought; but, by virtue of the undertaken suretyship, *Onesimus*'s debt lies upon *Paul*, and *Paul*'s freedom turns to the acquittance of *Onesimus*.

Thus it is in the matter of justification.——We had all sinned in Adam; forfeited the favour of God.—In order to our reconcilement, God required a *full satisfaction* to his justice, and a *perfect obedience* to his laws. These we could not possibly render in our own persons; therefore Christ graciously presented HIMSELF, and undertook to perform both in our stead.—*Upon* ME, says the compassionate Redeemer, *upon* ME, be their offences laid.—If they have transgressed, let vengeance make its demands on *me*: I will repay to the very uttermost farthing; and forasmuch as, through the weakness of their mortal nature, they are not able to yield an exact conformity to the divine laws, I am willing to *fulfil all righteousness* in their stead and behalf. *Lo! I come to do thy will, O my God!* I do it, not for myself, but for them, that the merit of my obedience may redound to my people, and that they, through my righteousness, may be made righteous.

(2.) The doctrine, of our being made righteous through Christ, may be inferred from his *dying as a sinner for us.*—'Tis a very remarkable passage, and full to our purpose, where the apostle declares, that the almighty Father made his Son, *who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God* IN HIM.

How you may be affected at present with such a scripture, brethren, I cannot determine: but if ever you come to the knowledge of *yourselves*, and the heinousness of your *sins*, and the worthlessness of your *duties*, such a text will be sweeter to you than the honey or the honey-comb to your taste, and more refreshing than the richest cordial to your souls.—However, from St. *Paul*'s declaration, we gather this precious truth, that we are *made righteous* before God, *in such a manner* as CHRIST was *made a sinner* for us: not by any personal demerit; for he had done no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; but *the Lord laid on* HIM *the iniquities of us all.*

In like manner, how are the greatest saints made righteous before God? Not by any personal merit. They have done nothing that can deserve God's love, or that is worthy of a reward; but God looks upon them as interested in his dear Son's obedience, and so rewards them purely for their Saviour's sake.—God visited *our sins* upon HIM; and God rewards *his merits* upon us; God accounted *our* transgressions to be *his*, and

and, on this footing, he was punished as a malefactor; and God esteems his righteousness as ours; and, by virtue of this *imputation*, we are accepted as complete.

(3.) Once again, the doctrine, of our being made righteous through the obedience of Christ, may receive stronger proofs and fuller illustrations from *Adam's sin being imputed unto us.*——This is an undoubted truth, written, as it were with a sun-beam, in almost every page of scripture. St *Paul* assures us, that *in Adam all die.* And, if so, 'tis certain that *in Adam all sinned.* Tell me now, how came that *personal* sin of Adam to be charged upon us? how can his having eat the forbidden fruit, render us liable to death and damnation? How, but *by imputation?* Adam was a public person: he represented the whole race of mankind: his act was imputed to his whole posterity. Such a communion there is between Christ and his elect: he, too, was a public person; he was a representative of all his chosen ones; and his obedience is looked upon as theirs. Thus believers are made righteous by the obedience of their everlasting head Christ Jesus, even as they were made sinners by the transgression of their mortal father, Adam; because of the analogy and similitude there is between his righteousness to justify, and Adam's iniquity to condemn *.

Let us now make a pause, and review our attempt. We have endeavoured to render the doctrine of the text somewhat clearer, by considering the nature of a *surety*,—from CHRIST's being *made sin for us*,—and from the *imputation of Adam's offence* to us. But these, alas! are points little known to the world. Corrupt nature is prejudiced against them; and Satan is studious to hide them from our eyes. Let us beseech *the God and Father of our Lord* JESUS CHRIST, to reveal the *mystery of godliness* in our hearts; that we may believe in JESUS CHRIST as the Son of God, and only Saviour of the world; *and that, believing, we may have life*, not through any fancied goodness of our own, but entirely *through his name.*

II. Let us now just take notice, how sufficient CHRIST's obedience is for the purpose of justification. It is a most incomparably-excellent obedience: it exceeds, not only the righteousness of innocent and upright *Adam*, but the righteousness of *angels, principalities, and powers.*——Extol this righteousness as high as words can reach, or idea soar! for it is the righteousness of incarnate Divinity; wrought out by HIM, who was GOD *and* MAN *in one* CHRIST; whose divine nature gave an infinity both of efficacy, and of dignity, to all he did. *To you that believe* the Godhead of JESUS, his righteousness must needs be inconceivably *precious*: you will not, you cannot think it strange, that *a whole world of believers* should be accepted through it, and owe all their salvation to it.——The prophet, in the most express terms, sets his seal to this truth, when he affirms, that *the* LORD, the supreme and incomprehensible JEHOVAH, is *our righteousness*: and who would forsake the *everlasting* ROCK, in order to lean on a *bruised reed?* who would quit an *illustrious* ROBE, for scanty covering and *filthy rags?* St *Paul* accounted *all things but loss*, in comparison of his Saviour's *righteousness*. Yea, his own eminent holiness, and transcendent usefulness, he regarded no more than *dross and dung*, that he might *win* CHRIST, *and be found in* HIM. This is the righteousness, whose influences extend to the earliest days, and will reach to the most distant ages. By *this* the holy men of old enjoyed the favour of God: by *this* ALONE, the generations yet unborn will enter into their Master's joy. In a word, this is the *hope*, the *sure* and *sole* hope of *all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea*; for, in every nation under heaven, and through all the revolutions of time, God is well pleased with sinners, only in his beloved Son. Let me draw one remark from the whole, and I have done. Let me observe the difference between *the law of* NATURE, and *the law of* MOSES, and *the law of* FAITH. The law of *nature* says, "*Live up to the duties of thy reason, and the conviction of thy* "*own mind; and thou shalt be safe.*" The law of *Moses* saith, "*Keep the commandments, and execute all the statutes,* "*and thy salvation shall be sure.*" But FAITH saith, "*Thou needest not attempt these impossibilities. CHRIST* "*hath done both, hath done all, in thy stead. He hath im-* "*proved the light of nature, and fulfilled the whole law of* "GOD; *and this in the capacity of thy Surety.*" Go, then, to thy Redeemer; lay hold on HIS righteousness. Believe truly in CHRIST JESUS, and what *he* hath done, shall be accounted *thine.* Thy eternal felicity is ALREADY procured. Thou hast nothing else to do, but to look upon it as thy certain portion, and unalienable inheritance, through Christ; and to live in humble and chearful expectation of that great day, when thy free title shall be changed into actual possession. And, in the mean time, love thy divine Benefactor with all thy heart, and study to please him in all holy conversation and godliness.

* Mr *Hervey* seems, here, to have had an eye to 1 Cor. xv. 22. *For as in Adam all die: even so in* CHRIST *shall all be made alive.* The πάντες, or *all*, affirmed by the apostle to have died in Adam, are the same πάντες, or *all*, that shall be made alive in Christ; namely, all the members of Christ's mystic body; all that church, which he loved, and for which he gave himself to death. There are two reasons, in particular, which determine the meaning of the word *all*, in this passage, to the *elect*, and to *them only*. 1. Throughout the whole context, St Paul treats solely of the *first* resurrection; the resurrection of the just; the resurrection to life eternal. He says not one word, in this chapter, concerning the resurrection of the ungodly; but confines himself singly to that of true believers. 2. He, in the very next verse, expressly points out the persons of whose resurrection he here speaks: these, he tells us, are οἱ Χριστοῦ, *those that belong to Christ*, and are his own peculiar property; who were given to him, by the Father, in the covenant of redemption; and in whom he has a special, inamissible interest.

SERMON II.

ROMANS V. 19.

By the obedience of ONE *shall* MANY *be made righteous.*

IN the book of *Job*, iv. 13.—17. we have a very awakening lesson of humiliation, most admirably calculated to impress the thought, and to bring down the conceited mind. *Eliphaz* relates a vision *. When midnight drew her black curtains over the world, when darkness and deep silence reigned through the whole universe; in these solemn moments, a spirit passed before his face. Fearfulness and astonishment seized the beholder; his bones shivered within him; his flesh trembled all over him; and the hairs of his head stood erect with horror. In the midst of these tremendous circumstances, a voice broke forth from the hoary phantom: a voice, for its *importance*, worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance; and, for its *awful-*

* See Mr HERVEY's *Contemplations on the Night*, above, page 72. In the present sermon, the description of *Eliphaz*'s vision resembles the primary sketch, the naked, imperfect out-lines of a masterly picture: but, in the *Contemplations* (published about four years after this was preached) we behold the picture completely finished; and touched, I had almost said, into the very perfection of grandeur and beauty.

awfulneſs, enough to alarm a heart of ſtone. It ſpake to this effect, "SHALL MORTAL MAN BE JUST BEFORE GOD? SHALL A MAN BE PURE IN THE SIGHT OF HIS MAKER?" The words, thus tranſlated, breathe a wonderful dignity of ſentiment; and lead our minds into the moſt exalted notions of GOD ALMIGHTY, immaculate, and inconceivable.——Certainly, they compriſe one of the moſt powerful antidotes, againſt the pride and haughtineſs natural to fallen man, that can poſſibly be imagined. They are a token, in this ſenſe, truly worthy of the awful Being who uttered them, and that air of vaſt importance with which they were introduced.——Our tranſlation ſinks the idea exceedingly. It tells us no more, than what all the world muſt acknowledge at the very firſt reflection; and ſo ſcarce deſerves to be uſhered in with ſo great ſolemnity. It ſeems alſo to oppoſe what no one can deny, or have inſolence enough to maintain:—for none, I ſhould imagine, even *Lucifer* himſelf, could ever preſume to think himſelf more juſt, more pure, than the ORIGINAL and STANDARD of all perfections.——No: let a perſon be eſteemed ever ſo juſt, in compariſon of his fellow-ſinners; let him be accounted moſt eminently holy, by thoſe that are polluted clay like himſelf:—Yet, before infinite and uncreated purity, O! let him be greatly abaſed; let him put his mouth in the duſt, take ſhame to himſelf, and cry out, *Unclean! unclean!* According to this tranſlation of the words, you ſee, the doctrine of man's univerſal depravity is as ancient as the times of *Job*; and, that there is no poſſibility of being juſtified by any *perſonal* accompliſhments or acquirements, was expreſsly taught in thoſe early ages.

O! that it may be as unfeignedly believed in theſe latter days! "But if this be the caſe," ſays an inquiſitive hearer;—"if all men are become abominable; if "their *beſt* deeds are ſtained, and there are *none* that are "righteous before GOD,—no not *one*;—how ſhall they "be accepted, when they are judged?"——Why, by a method that lies vaſtly beyond the reach of human wiſdom or device. By a method, that was but dimly* hinted at in the generations of old, but is clearly revealed by the apoſtles and preachers of the goſpel; even by the obedience of Jeſus Chriſt; by a righteouſneſs *not wrought* BY us, but *imputed* TO us. The nature of which imputation we have already illuſtrated, and ſhewn the ſufficiency of our Redeemer's obedience for this purpoſe.——Which two points being diſpatched,

III. I am to ſhew you how *worthy of all acceptation* this method of becoming righteous is.——And that as it is perfectly *conſonant to the ancient prophecies*; as it gives the *higheſt glory to God*; and as it yields *the richeſt conſolation to man*.

1. This method of becoming righteous through the obedience of Chriſt, is perfectly conſonant to the tenor of *ancient prophecies*. In the patriarchal age, GOD promiſed to *Abraham*, and renewed the gracious aſſurances to *Iſaac*, "that *in his ſeed all the nations of the earth ſhould* "*be bleſſed*." Now, what was this, but a diſcovery of this evangelical doctrine? 'Twas, indeed, ſomewhat obſcure then; but 'tis clear as the day now. The *ſeed of Abraham*, is doubtleſs our glorious *Mediator*,—who, in the fulneſs of time, took fleſh, and was born of a deſcendent from *Abraham*. IN HIM all the elect under heaven ſhall be bleſſed.——Obſerve, not in themſelves, not for any excellency that is in them; but IN HIM they ſhall inherit all heavenly bleſſings. He is the *Alpha* and *Omega* of our happineſs; the beginning and the end, the cauſe and the conſummation, of all our joy. He is the only ſpring and fountain of all bleſſedneſs, as much as yonder ſun is the only fountain of this light that now ſhines around us. Every ray of light that falls upon our eyes, proceeds altogether from that bright luminary: we do nothing towards enkindling it; we only *uſe* its beams, and *rejoice* in its ſplendor. So fallen man can do nothing towards procuring the favour of his almighty MAKER: but can only, by faith in JESUS CHRIST, receive it, already procured; and teſtify his gratitude for it, by a chearful obedience.

In the prophet *Iſaiah*, we find the following paſſages. God the Father, ſpeaking of his obedient and beloved Son, has this remarkable expreſſion; *By his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many*. Here, infinite wiſdom informs the whole world, how they muſt expect juſtification, and final acceptance. 'Tis entirely through his dear SON, our divine MEDIATOR; his holy life, and propitiatory death, are the only procuring cauſes of our forgiveneſs, the only conditions of our ſalvation; and a true knowledge of him,—a right belief in him, make the merit of both our own *.

GOD ſays not, he ſhall make them *capable* of reconciliation; he ſhall *in part* juſtify; he ſhall *fill up* their deficiency, and perfect what is wanting in their duties. No! but he ſhall *accompliſh* the whole work; he ſhall execute the great office without a rival; without a partner, he will juſtify the faithful, and not they themſelves.

2. This method of becoming righteous, through the obedience of Chriſt, is worthy of all acceptation, becauſe it gives *the higheſt glory to God*. Nothing can be ſo effectually calculated to *abaſe* the ſinner, and *exalt* the Saviour, as THIS way of obtaining ſalvation. This will bring down the lofty look of man: this will lay every aſſuming thought in the very duſt, and leave the Lord alone glorious and exalted. THIS thoroughly ſecures to God his great prerogative, and utterly excludes human boaſting, and brings unmingled honour and glory to the Surety of men. Whereas, was life eternal the reward of their own works, there would be ſome pretenſion for ſelf-admiration.——Men would arrogate ſome of the merit to themſelves, and ſay in their hearts, *My power, and the might of my hands hath gotten me this wealth*. If they were to expect the bleſſing of the eternal ſtate as *wages* which they have earned, O! what a damp would this ſtrike on their thankfulneſs! how little would they *think* themſelves obliged, and, indeed, how little *would* they be obliged, to God their Saviour, on this footing! But, when ſaints in light view their heavenly inheritance; when they ſurvey that great, exceeding great and eternal weight of glory, and remember that they did *nothing* to deſerve all this ineffable felicity; that, if it had not been procured entirely by their dying and obedient Saviour, they had been everlaſtingly baniſhed from the realms of bleſſedneſs; O! what pure and fervent gratitude muſt this inſpire them with!—what an emphaſis and ardor, while they utter that devout acknowledgment, "*Not, not unto us, O Lord! not unto us,* "*but unto thy* dear and adorable *name be the praiſe!* We "were *enemies in our minds*, and *by our wicked works*; but "thou haſt *redeemed us unto God by thy blood*: all our "choiceſt actions were polluted and unclean, but thou "haſt worked out for us a perfect and everlaſting righteouſneſs."

Thus will adoration and love be given to the Lamb that was ſlain: every crown will be caſt low before

* That is, dimly hinted at, in compariſon of that more perfect knowledge, which has been ſince brought to light by the goſpel eminently ſo called. See *Eph.* iii. 5.

* From a ſaving knowledge of Chriſt, and by faith in him, we are *manifeſtatively* intereſted in what he has done and ſuffered. Our intereſt in his righteouſneſs muſt, in the very nature of things, have been prior to our *ſenſe* of intereſt in it: otherwiſe, all ſenſe of it would be deluſive, and converſant with a non-entity. Faith is, as it were, the *medium of ſpiritual viſion*; a divine light whereby we ſee our intereſt in Chriſt, which we cannot ſee, till we believe with the faith that works by love. *Faith* is the ἔλεγχος, or *conviction of things not ſeen* before; and of juſtification among the reſt, Heb. xi. 1. But, ſurely, the bleſſings, of which faith is the conviction, had a real exiſtence before ever faith was acted: they are only *unſeen*, till faith is given to diſcern them by.

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the throne, and wear this humbling motto, *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.* O! the depths both of the wisdom and goodness of God!—*Goodness*, in establishing such a method of salvation for us; in all things so well ordered and sure! *Wisdom*, in cutting off all occasion of self-glorying, and bringing man to the deepest humiliation, even while it exalts him to the heaven of heavens!

3. This method of becoming righteous through the obedience of Christ, is worthy of all acceptation, because it administers the *richest consolation to man*; it is an inexhaustible spring of satisfaction and repose.

LUTHER, that renowned reformer, and great champion for the Protestant cause, when he broke away from the mists of Popery, and began to understand this most noble peculiarity of Christianity, declared, that *the gate of Paradise seemed to fly open to his view:—that he had a glimpse of its beauty, in contemplating this sacred truth; and a taste of its delights, in believing it: so sweet a composure, and such a charming tranquillity, did it diffuse through his mind.* Nor do I wonder at his saying, *for, while we are ignorant of this doctrine, there is nothing but horror and dread around us.* If we strike this text from our Bible, or this article from our creed, all is dismal and distressing. Turn which way you will, the prospect is uncomfortable. If we look to *ourselves*, we shall find misery and guilt; if to GOD, nothing but indignation and displeasure.——But this brightens up the whole scene. Let us observe, in the character of a feeble Christian, and of an awakened profligate, what glad tidings the gospel is, by virtue of this doctrine; and what a miserable comforter it would be without it. The language of the *former*, in his private meditations, must proceed in some such manner as this: "Wherewithal shall I come "before the most high God? Shall I offer him "my pious services! Alas! they are miserably defi"cient; they issue from a corrupt stock, and can"not but be corrupt shoots; I have done nothing that "is worthy of his acceptance, how then shall I stand in "his sacred presence? I strive to be perfect and entire, "and wanting nothing; but I feel myself to be poor "and indigent, and wretchedly defective. O! whither "shall I go, but to him who is appointed for this very "purpose? that the bones, which are broken by misery "and guilt, may rejoice; that the hands, which hang "down, through self-condemnation and despondency, "may be lifted up.——Thither then will I turn, frail "and dispirited as I am, and cast all my burthen upon "the LORD JESUS CHRIST: in his unspotted right"eousness, and in nothing else, can the sole of my foot "find any rest. When doubts arise, and fear, like a "gloomy cloud, thickens around me, this *Sun* of right"eousness shall dissipate the gloom in all my pilgri"mage; this shall be my constant song; in all my anx"ieties, this shall be my only cordial:—*Why art thou "cast down, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within "me! O! put thy trust in* JESUS CHRIST! His merits, "and not thine own works, are the horn of thy salva"tion: *whosoever believeth in him shall not be confounded.*" And as for the poor sinner brought to a sense of his enormous crimes; methinks, I hear him bewailing his condition, in some such disconsolate manner: "O wretch"ed man that I am! how shall I attain the favour of "God? My sins are multiplied above number, and ag"gravated beyond expression. I cannot make any sa"tisfaction for what is past, much less can I win the "divine good-will for the future. I am polluted, root "and branch: what can I do?"—Truly, sinner, I know not what thou canst do, unless thou comest to JESUS CHRIST: there is not a gleam of hope, or a grain of comfort, in all the universe besides. If thou lamentest thy folly, and seest thy undone state; *with the Lord there is mercy*, abundant mercy; and with the Lord JESUS CHRIST there is *plenteous redemption.* If thou canst rely on *Christ*, thy iniquities shall be done away like a morning-cloud; if thou canst believe in HIM, thy debts are cancelled through his blood; and that which thou art unable to perform, he hath fulfilled for thee. See, how consonant this doctrine is to the whole series of scripture, and the voice of ancient prophecies! See, what an unshared revenue of glory and thanksgiving it brings unto the blessed God;——both supporting the *feeble Christian* amidst all his infirmities, and opening a door of hope to the *awakened sinner*, notwithstanding all his impieties! Surely, then, this precious doctrine is worthy of all acceptation: surely we have reason to receive it with all imaginable thankfulness! But, lest it should, after all, seem to us as an idle tale, rather than glad tidings of great joy, let me,

IV. Give some directions that may dispose *us* to rely on, and prepare us to receive, the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

First, Bring a child-like mind to the consideration of it. Lay aside propositions *, and meekly receive the ingrafted word with a teachable simplicity. Let us sit at the feet of Jesus, and, like very little children, learn heavenly wisdom from his gospel. If we are conceited of our abilities, and lean to our own understanding, God may punish our pride, by leaving us in the dark; for he *hides these things from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babes.*—You must acknowledge your natural ignorance, and implore the teachings of his blessed Spirit; for this is his peculiar office, to *convince the world of righteousness*; that is, to convince the world of the fulness of the Redeemer's righteousness, of its unsearchable riches, and of its absolute sufficiency to justify his people.

Secondly, If you would not be offended at this doctrine, get a deep sense of *your own* UNrighteousness. It is the want of *this* conviction, that indispose men for a reliance on Christ; so long as they fancy themselves *rich and increased in goods*, they will never be concerned to seek the *fine gold* of their Saviour's obedience.——And, indeed, he *came not to call the righteous*; his gospel is of such a nature, that the self-justiciary will discern no comeliness in it: it will feed the *hungry*, and *poor in spirit*, with good things; but the *rich*, and those that are *righteous in their own eyes*, it will send empty away.

Labour, therefore, to see your own vileness: and then the merits of a Saviour will be precious. Be sensible of your own *nakedness*, and then the *robe* of a Redeemer's righteousness will be prized indeed. Consider yourselves as *insolvent, wretched bankrupts*, who HAVE nothing, who can do nothing, that is spiritually good; and then the perfect obedience, the full satisfaction of your divine Surety, will be *as health to your soul, and as marrow to your bones.*

Thirdly, Pray for *faith*. 'Tis faith that unites † to

* "Lay aside *propositions*:" a mistake, perhaps, for *prepossessions*. However, the sentence, as it stands, conveys a very useful direction: "Lay aside propositions;" *i. e.* Submit your wisdom to God's; embrace his gracious method of salvation; without arguing yourself into needless doubts and perplexities.—Mr HERVEY seems, here, to intimate, what another excellent divine has since expressed more clearly: "Believe simply, with the meek"ness of a child, just as you are told by GOD, without murmur"ing or disputing. Depend as absolutely, day by day, on the "teaching of Christ, through his word and Spirit, for the knowledge of all things needful to salvation, as any pupil, at an "academy, depends on the instructions of an able and celebrated "master.

Mr VENN's *complete duty of man*, p. 165.

† *Sensible* union with Christ, or actual fellowship with him, in a way of comfort, occasioning *the soul's calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt joy*, is, no doubt, a result of faith. But then, this is not so properly *union* itself, as *communion* flowing from an union that subsisted between Christ and his church from before all time; and of which union, that communion, which

Jesus Christ. By faith you are implanted into him. *Faith* is the *hand* that lays hold on the Saviour's merits: *By faith ye are saved*, says the apostle. This appears, to the soul, the *great salvation* purchased by our dear Redeemer: therefore beseech God to beget in you this lovely and lively faith, whereby you may lay hold on Christ, cleave most inseparably to Christ, and, renouncing every other refuge, lay the whole stress of your souls solely on Christ, as a shipwrecked mariner relinquishes all his sinking cargo, and clings only to the planks that may float him safe to shore. Seek this blessing to yourselves, brethren; and, if ever I forget to join my best supplications to yours, *let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.* My *heart's desire*, and *prayer to God*, shall always be, that you may *believe to the saving of your souls.*——And a *holy conversation* will be a sign unto you, that your *faith* is *real.*—A life of *sincere holiness* can spring from nothing but from this divine head, CHRIST JESUS. *By this shall all men know that ye are* his *disciples*, if ye *live by his Spirit*, and *walk as he walked.* *By* this, likewise, your own consciences may be assured, and God hath given you an interest in his dear Son, and sent him to bless you; if he has *turned you from your iniquities*, and *created you anew unto good works.*

Give me leave, at the close of all, to ask you with all simplicity, Have you understood these things? do you believe this report? or am I as one that speaketh a parable?

If any be of this opinion, I shall address them in the words of St *Paul* to the *Galatians*, and commit them to enlightening grace. The apostle, inculcating this very point, and persuading them to this self-same belief, says, follows upon faith, is no more than the perception, discovery, and enjoyment

Brethren, be as I am, for I WAS *as ye are* *. Thus the words I would translate; and then they are very pertinent to the purpose, and applicable to you and me; and when paraphrased, will run thus: "I don't wonder, "brethren, that ye are prejudiced against this doctrine. "I myself was strongly possessed with such prejudices. "I verily thought, that *my own* righteousness would, at "least, bear a part in procuring my acceptance with the "eternal Majesty. Determined I was, in some measure, to *stand on my own bottom*: and advance my plea "for life everlasting, from my own holy endeavours. "But now these arrogant resolutions and vain confi"dences are dropt. I now disavow all such preten"sions. God hath brought me to a sounder mind.— "And, as ye have been partakers with me in my mis"take, be partakers also of my righter judgment. "trusted to I knew not what: but *now I know in whom "have believed.* I put myself, and the whole of my sal"vation, in my adored Immanuel's hands; and doub"not of his sufficiency for my security. Henceforward "I set my heart at rest, not because I have gone through "such offices, or done such duties; but because my "Redeemer is mighty and meritorious. 'Tis God, the "incarnate God, *that justifies* me; *who is he that shall "condemn* me? Never, never shall my heart cry to di"vine justice, *Have patience with me, and I will pay thee "all*: this were the language of gross ignorance, or grea"presumption. But, in all my temptations, in every "discouragement, this shall be my acknowledgment; "this shall still be my earnest prayer. The righteous"ness of thy obedience, most blessed Jesus, is everlast"ing;" O! grant me an interest therein, and I shall "live.—Amen, Amen; so let it be, O Lord.

* Gal. iv. 12.

A COLLECTION OF LETTERS

Written by Mr HERVEY, from 1733 to 1758.

PREFACE.

IT has been already observed, in the account of Mr Hervey's Life prefixed to this work, that he frequently wrote religious letters to his acquaintance according to their different circumstances, in the most amiable and convincing manner; and that he seemed to make it almost an invariable rule, not to write a letter on any occasion, without at least one pious sentence in it; and that not introduced in a forced and awkward manner, but interwoven so as to appear naturally to arise from the subject *.

The reason for publishing this collection of Mr Hervey's letters, were the strong solicitations of those, who knew and valued the author and his writings; a desire of contributing to the interests of religion, which was the great scope of all his labours; and a persuasion, that such a collection would give a peculiar satisfaction to every intelligent and pious person:—especially as to be thus introduced to partake of the entertaining and instructive intercourses of his friendship, may possibly be the means of encouraging others to GO AND DO LIKEWISE. Nor will it be, it is presumed, necessary to bespeak the candour of the reader, or deprecate the petulance of criticism, whatever defects or inaccuracies may be found in a work of this kind, not intended for, though well worthy of, the public eye.

As the following letter to the editor is so truly characteristic of Mr Hervey, 'tis to be hoped that it will not be altogether unacceptable to the reader.—When writers like him, of distinguished superiority, have gained our admiration and applause, we are fond of penetrating into their more retired apartments, and associating with them in the sequestered walks of private life: for here these great geniuses appear in an undress; the intrinsic excellency of their characters shines out with genuine lustre; and although as authors, their talents are beyond our imitation, yet the several milder graces and virtues of their more common and ordinary behaviour, are in some measure attainable by every one.

SIR,

'TWAS with no small satisfaction I saw an advertisement in the public papers, desiring the correspondents of the

* Above, p. vi.

ion: Mr *Hervey* to furniſh the editor with ſome of his letters for publication, and glad I am 'tis in my power to ſend you ſo large a number; ſince in many of them will be found ſuch *traces of an upright heart*, as no ſtranger can otherwiſe be made acquainted with. *There* will be ſeen *the deepeſt humility*. Ever unconſcious of his own ſhining abilities, he was always deſirous of improving by the meaneſt in the church: in lowlineſs of mind he would prefer others to himſelf; he would frequently be the humble queriſt, and make his friend the reſpondent. *There* will be ſeen *the greateſt love* to mankind;—a love, which he has ſtrongly expreſſed on every occaſion, not only *in words*, but in the moſt important acts of benevolence, both temporal and ſpiritual. *There* will be ſeen the *moſt zealous attachment to truth*. He was extremely deſirous that every ſentiment of his ſhould be ſtrictly examined; and wherever he found any thing capable of the leaſt improvement, he immediately acquieſced with the greateſt thankfulneſs.——In a word, *there* will be ſeen the *utmoſt ſerenity of mind* under the preſſure of very grievous afflictions. As his joy was not of this world, no worldly calamities could take it from him; nothing could ruffle, nothing could diſcompoſe him.——He was indeed, what his Maſter ſays of the Baptiſt, a *burning* and a *ſhining* light; and as ſuch he was a guide for our feet.——As a *burning* light, he warmed many by his example: he had received the grace of God in abundance; which he had long and moſt earneſtly implored; and the fruits of which, in his life and converſation, the world have ſeen, and his friends will tell with pleaſure.——As a *ſhining* light, he inſtructed many by his doctrine. He was a moſt ſtrenuous aſſertor of the free grace of God. He taught men to be rich in good works, without placing the leaſt dependence on them. Chriſt was all to him, and it was his *whole buſineſs* to publiſh his Redeemer's unſearchable riches.——It was St *Paul*'s faithful ſaying, viz. That "Chriſt Jeſus *came into the world to ſave ſinners*;" and it was Mr *Hervey*'s conſtant employment to bring ſinners to him empty-handed, "to buy wine and milk without money and without price."

He was alſo a moſt ſtrenuous aſſertor of evangelical holineſs.—While he publiſhed the *free grace of God*, he was ſolicitous that none ſhould abuſe it to licentiouſneſs. Herein alſo he imitated St *Paul* in another faithful ſaying, *viz.* That "*they who* believe in God "ſhould be careful to maintain good works."

Such was the friend I have loſt. God grant we may all "*be* "*the followers of him, who through faith and patience* now *inherits* "*the promiſes.*"—He reſts from his labours, and my correſpondence with him is for ever at an end; but by the letters I here ſend, *he will, though dead, yet ſpeak*, and ſpread wide that valuable inſtruction, and thoſe ingenious remarks, which were originally deſigned only for the private inſpection of, Sir, your humble ſervant, *&c. &c.*

P. S. Mr *Hervey*'s zeal for his great Maſter, and his eminent abilities to advance the intereſts of religion, will, it is hoped, ſecure the good opinion of the community, in behalf of the publication of his private letters and life; eſpecially when it is conſidered, that it was in ſome meaſure neceſſary to be done; not only as they exhibit in their purport, compoſition, and various tendencies, a ſtriking, amiable, and true picture of the ingenuity, learning, candour, and piety of this excellent man; but as his character has been injured *by ſome* thro' miſrepreſentation; and as his writings have been cenſured by *others* through miſapprehenſion:—all ſuch will now ſee how far Mr *Hervey* is deſerving of blame, or of applauſe: ſince there is nothing that expreſſes a man's particular character more fully, than his letters to his intimate friends.

In this edition care has been taken to arrange the letters in the ſame order in which they were wrote, as far as was practicable. But there is no poſſibility of doing it exactly, for this plain reaſon, that in many letters written to thoſe with whom he kept a frequent correſpondence, Mr Hervey was accuſtomed to expreſs neither month nor year, but only to write *Monday morning*, *Tueſday night*, &c. and that ſeveral letters were tranſmitted to the editor, with the dates as well as names eraſed.

There are a few things inſerted in this collection, ſuch as the cottager's letter *, Mr Boyſe's †, the letter to Dr T** ‡, which were introduced, not only for the great propriety of ſuch an introduction, but at the particular deſire of ſome of Mr Hervey's friends, in order to fulfil his intentions, and render him, though dead, as extenſively uſeful as poſſible.

"I would by all means," ſays one of his moſt judicious and favourite correſpondents, "have that letter of mine, addreſſed to "Dr T**, printed in the collection; as I think this may in ſome "meaſure be fulfilling the will of my deceaſed friend, who ap"pears by his own letter ‖ to me to have judged ſomething of "that nature *highly neceſſary*; and he would certainly have attempted it himſelf, as he declared, had not a certain church"preferment brought him very unexpectedly into a connection, "which made ſuch a publication at that juncture ineligible.—— "Mr *Hervey* is now dead, and that reaſon is no longer in force; "and therefore now ſeems to me the fitteſt time for ſuch pur"poſe. I wrote that letter to Dr T** at Mr *Hervey*'s expreſs de"ſire, and I gave him full power to make what uſe of it he pleaſ"ed; hoping, that, after correcting it to his mind, he would have "ſent it to Dr T** himſelf; or elſe that he would have wrote in "another form (perhaps in an introduction to his laſt ſermons) "ſomething far more valuable, extracting from my letter what "beſt anſwered his ends. But that not being done, the publi"cation of my letter in this collection, immediately after what "Mr *Hervey* ſays in his to me * about Dr T**'s ſermon, may, "with the ſame divine bleſſing, be of uſe; and, though of little "worth, yet like the widow's mite, when it was her ALL, it may "be acceptable.——There are thouſands of preachers who think "in the ſame way with Dr T**, and very likely many of theſe "may be the readers of Mr *Hervey*'s letters: and if ſome of them "reflect and reform, the unjuſt anger of the reſt is very like to be "regarded. Therefore, upon the moſt ſerious conſideration, it "is my earneſt requeſt, that the letter to Dr T** ſhould be print"ed juſt as I ſent it to Mr *Hervey*."

It muſt be acknowledged, that ſome of his firſt letters written from college when he was not more than twenty years of age, either ſpeak a language different from free grace, for which we find he was afterwards ſo powerful an advocate, or at the leaſt they treat very confuſedly of it; and perhaps ſome may ſay, why then were they printed? For theſe two plain reaſons; that the reader may ſee and know what early and ſtrong impreſſions he had of piety! what love to GOD! and to his fellow-creatures!—Though we ſay not, that, like *John Baptiſt*, he was ſanctified from his mother's womb, yet his very early labours for his Saviour, when too many others of his age and ſtanding were captivated by their paſſions, and ſwallowed up by their luſts, prove to a demonſtration, the doctrine he afterwards taught, *viz.* the power of redeeming love: they ſhew how early the ſeeds of grace were ſown in his heart; and when they look forward, they may obſerve from what ſmall ſparks of light and grace the Holy Spirit hath gradually taught him †, and led him, as it were by the hand, into the full and holy liberty of the children of GOD. When but twenty-one years of age, we find him afraid of, and flying from praiſe, when others would be courting it: for having wrote ſome verſes to a relation which were greatly commended, he heartily wiſhes ‡ he never had wrote a line of poetry in his life: and he wrote upon another occaſion ‖ expreſsly blaming a friend for praiſing him; and again §, he ſays, "You have paid me an obliging compliment; beg of the "bleſſed GOD, dear Sir, that I may not be puffed up with vain "conceit of myſelf or my writings.

From the reading of theſe familiar letters, which is in a manner liſtening to and hearing the thoughts of the writer, we may learn, that, by nature, "his heart was hard as the flint, and his hands "tenacious even to avarice;" thoſe are his words ¶. Yet (ſee the power of that free grace, which living and dying he ador'd) he became a bright example of univerſal charity ⁂.

His great humility and diffidence of his own judgment and learning, appear in many of his letters ⁂; in one, which is far from being contemptible either for ſtyle or argument, he enjoins his friend to return his letter immediately to him, that it might never appear: yet his friend got the better of that modeſty, and obtained leave to keep it; to which is owing the publication of that now, which Mr *Hervey*, at the time of writing it, deſired might never ſee the light ⁂.

Another inſtance, and a ſtriking one, we may meet with, let. 53. where, anſwering the objections of a lady to the miracle which Chriſt wrought at the marriage of *Cana* in *Galilee*, he ſays, "I "have neither ſtrength of mind nor ſolidity of judgment, ſuffi"cient to conduct the procedure of an argument," *&c.*

As the love of GOD was ſhed abroad in his heart, it produced an ardent deſire to promote the cauſe of CHRIST Jeſus and of his religion. And when he found himſelf bowed down with the ſpirit of weakneſs and infirmity, he was apt to fear leſt he ſhould diſgrace the goſpel in his languiſhing moments ⁂; he earneſtly prayed to God, and deſired others to unite in the ſame petition, that he might not thus diſhonour the cauſe of CHRIST. And his and their prayers were heard; for notwithſtanding his lingering weakneſs and depreſſed ſpirits, which at length gave him up into the hands of death,

* Let. 83. † Annexed to let. 166.

‡ Let. 158. ‖ Let. 157.

* 'Tis ſo printed as here deſired.—See let. 158.

† Iſ. liv. 13. & John vi. 45. ‡ Letter 3.

‖ Let. 52. § Let. 60. ¶ Let. 53.

⁂ See his life, p. v. and let. 51, 60, &c.

⁂ Let. 24. ⁂ Let. 60.

death, yet he triumphed over his fears, he triumphed over the grand tempter and adversary of souls.

His willingness to have his writings corrected, by every judicious friend, and his thankfulness in receiving their criticisms, appear throughout all his letters written to his learned correspondents; a specimen of it you may see, let. 61, 101, 181. His earnest desire to prefer his friends opinion to his own; or, in other words, his humble opinion of his own judgment and powers in argumentation, makes him ever requesting, "Pray use freely the "pruning-hook," &c. It may seem a wonder, therefore, that he should ever, under these discouraging thoughts of himself, write at all, especially so much as he has done; considering he was no more than five and forty when he died, and that the first of his works was published when he was thirty-three.——Perhaps the reader might be almost tempted to suspect, that his humility was affected, and that pride lurked under that fair garment: but hypocrisy dwelt not in him; he wrote under all that weakness, and under all those fears, because he dared not be silent; the cause of God and truth was publicly attacked; the cause of his Master was opposed, and he as a faithful watchman was compelled, however weak in body, however unequal he thought himself to the talk, he was compelled to cry aloud and spare not; and therefore he wrote not from pride, or from avarice, but from conscience, and a sense of duty; and this the intelligent and candid reader will easily perceive from many of his letters.

At a time when infidelity and depravity prevailed, and when it was become almost fashionable to slander and speak evil of persons, depretiating another's reputation in order to raise or establish our own; we find Mr *Hervey* making it a rule to single out the best things he had heard of his neighbour, and carefully avoiding even to hint any thing which might be the cause of propagating a rumour to his detriment; or to disclose a secret which might be injurious to him; thus careful was he to carry into his own practice, the doctrine he taught, the religion he professed;——and thus far was he from espousing either the principles or practices of *Antinomians*. Some of his pretended friends of that stamp, as well as his adversaries, have taken much pains to make the world believe, that he in all things agreed with them, that, if possible, they might be thought not to differ from him; but they will find it as impracticable to raise their reputation upon his, as it will be to reduce his character to a level with their own, so long as his works shall live to proclaim his principles, and a friend shall remain to declare his truly Christian practices, his holy life and conversation.

It cannot but be observed, that Mr *Hervey*, in two of his letters * has repeated the same argument in pretty near the same words; and perhaps this repetition may disgust the delicate and curious reader, especially as it returns so soon as within the compass of thirty pages; but it is to be considered, that, they were written at different times; the one to a clergyman at *Bath* in 1743, and the other for the satisfaction of a lady five years afterwards; and as the objections were the same from both, Mr *Hervey* had a right to return each of them the same answer.

I must once more trespass on my reader's patience, as I cannot conclude without expressing my hopes, that every person of candour and judgment will make the necessary allowances for those different states, both of body and mind, which one of Mr *Hervey*'s weak constitution must have undergone in the space of five and twenty years, during which these letters were wrote.——A manifest inequality of judgment, of accuracy, and of style in familiar letters wrote at such distances, with more or less attention and care, according to the variety of circumstances which occur, and without the least thought of their publication, will appear; nor can it be otherwise expected indeed from any one.——Some of the greatest geniuses of the age, such as *Pope* and *Swift*, have made their apology in the same case; and no one, I am sure, is more justly entitled to the indulgence of the public, than he whose letters are here collected.

* Let. 17. & 53.

* Let. 52.

LETTERS

Of the late Reverend

MR JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER I.

To his SISTER.

Lincoln College, Oxon. Sept. 16, 1733.

Dear Sister,

WAS there any occasion to apologize for the serious purport of this, it would be sufficient to direct you to the date, and the time of its inditing; but I promise myself that to you any thing of this nature will be unnecessary. For though we are in the very prime and spring of our years, strongly disposed to admire, and perfectly capacitated to relish the gaieties of youth; yet we have been inured to moderate the warmth of our appetites, accustomed to anticipate in our minds the days of darkness, and incessantly disciplined into a remembrance of our Creator. For my part, I find no season so proper to address one of the principal sharers of my heart, one of my neareſt and dearest relations, as that I have at present chose and made use of, when either an universal silence composes the soul, and calms every turbulent emotion, or the voice of joy and gladness speaking through celestial music, invites to adore the wonders of our Redeemer's love, touches upon the strings of the softest passions, and inspires the most sweet, most tender sentiments.

As I was the other day traversing the fields in quest of health, I observed the meads to have lost that profusion of fragrant odours which once perfumed the air, to be disrobed of that rich variety of curious dies, which surpassed even *Solomon* in all his glory. Not a single flower appears to gladden the sight, to bespangle the ground, or enamel the barren landscape. The clouds that 'ere long distilled in dews of honey, or poured themselves forth in showers of fatness, now combine in torrents to overflow the lifeless earth, to bury or sweep away all the faint footsteps of ancient beauty. The hills that were crowned with corn, the vallies that laughed and sung under loads of golden grain; in a word, the whole face of nature, that so lately rejoiced for the abundance of her plenty, is become bare, naked, and disconsolate. As I was continuing my walk, and musing on this joyless scene, methought the sudden change exhibited a lively picture of our frail and transitory state; methought every object that occurred, seemed silently to forewarn me of my own future condition.

I dwelt on these considerations till they fermented in my fancy, and worked themselves out in such like expressions, "What! must we undergo so grievous an "alteration? we, whose sprightly blood circulates in "briskest tides! we, who are the favourites of time, "on whom youth, and health, and strength, shed "their selectest influence! we, who are so apt to look "upon ourselves as exempt from cares, or pains, or "troubles, and privileged to drink in the sweets of "life without restraint, without alloy! Must we fore-"go the sunshine of our enjoyments for any thing "resembling this melancholy gloom! Must the spark-"ling

"ling eye ſet in haggard dimneſs? the lovely features "and glowing cheeks be obſcured by pale deformity? "muſt ſoft and gay deſires be baniſhed from our breaſts, "or mirth and jollity from our converſation? muſt the "vigour of our age fall away like water that runneth "apace, and the bliſsful minutes of the prime of our "years vaniſh like a dream? If this be our caſe, in vain, "ſure, do we boaſt our ſuperior felicity, in vain do we "glory in being the darlings of heaven. The inani-"mate creation droop indeed, ſicken and languiſh, for "a time; but quickly revive, rejoice, and again ſhine "forth in their brighteſt luſtre: 'tis true, they relin-"quiſh, at the approach of winter, their verdant ho-"nours, but reſt fully aſſured of receiving them with in-"tereſt from the ſucceeding ſpring. But man, when "he has paſſed the autumn of his maturity, when he "has once reſigned himſelf to the cold embraces of age, "bids a long, an eternal adieu to all that is entertaining, "amiable, or endearing; no pleaſing expectations re-"freſh his mind; not the leaſt dawnings of hope "glimmer in to qualify the darkſome looking-for of "death."

I had not long indulged theſe bitter reflections, before I eſpied a remedy for thoſe ſore evils which occaſioned them. Though I perceived all our paſſionate delights to be vanity, and the iſſue of them vexation of ſpirit; yet I ſaw likewiſe that virtue was ſubſtantial, and her fruits joy and peace; that though all things come to an end, the ways of wiſdom were exceeding broad. The ſeeds of piety, if implanted in our tender breaſts, duly cheriſhed, and conſtantly cultivated, will bud and bloſſom even in the winter of our days; and when white and red ſhall be no more, when all the outward embel-liſhments of our little fabric ſhall diſappear, this will ſtill flouriſh in immortal bloom. To walk humbly with our God, dutifully with our parents, and charitably with all, will be an inexhauſtible ſource of never-ceaſing comforts. What, though we ſhall ſometimes be un-able to hear the voice of ſinging men and ſinging wo-men; though all the ſenſes prove falſe to their truſt, and refuſe to be any longer inlets of pleaſure; 'tis now, dear ſiſter, 'tis now in our power to make ſuch happy proviſions, as even then, in thoſe forlorn circumſtances, may charm our memories with raviſhing recollections, and regale all our faculties with the continual feaſt of an applauding conſcience. What ſweet complacency, what unſpeakable ſatisfaction ſhall we reap from the contemplations of an uninterrupted ſeries of ſpotleſs ac-tions! No preſent uneaſineſſes will prompt us impa-tiently to wiſh for diſſolution, nor anxious fears for fu-turity make us immoderately dread the impending ſtroke; all will be calm, eaſy, and ſerene; all will be ſoothed by this precious, this invaluable thought, that by reaſon of the meekneſs, the innocence, the purity, and other Chriſtian graces which adorned the ſeveral ſtages of our progreſs through the world, our names and our aſhes will be embalmed, the chambers of our tomb conſecrated into a paradiſe of reſt, and our ſouls, white as our locks, by an eaſy tranſition, become angels of light. I am, with love to my brother,

Dear ſiſter,

Your moſt affectionate brother,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER II.

To his SISTER.

Dear Siſter, *Lincoln College, Oxon, March* 28, 1734.

IT is now a conſiderable time ſince I enjoyed the true and real pleaſure of your company. I ſay true and real, becauſe my fancy has often took its flight to *Hard-ing ſton*, and delighted itſelf with the imaginary conver-ſation of you and my other dear relations; I have fre-quently recollected, and as it were acted over again in my mind, the many pleaſing hours we have ſpent toge-ther in reading holy and edifying books, or diſcourſing on pious and uſeful ſubjects. And methinks I ſhould have been exceeding glad to have had the ſatisfaction yet more improved, by receiving a letter from you; which I am ſure would have been full of the moſt tender endearments of love and affection, and I hope would not have wanted expreſſions of true religion and virtue; and could I but once ſee that, could I but obſerve our-ſelves not only dwelling together in unity, but travel-ling hand in hand towards the heavenly Jeruſalem, mu-tually encouraging and aſſiſting one another to fight the good fight, to lay hold on eternal life, then ſhould I greatly rejoice, then ſhould I begin to live.

I hope I may now congratulate your perfect recovery; however I am certain there is great reaſon for congra-tulation on account of your being ſo choice a favourite of heaven as your frequent ſickneſſes, and often infir-mities ſpeak you to be. Our gracious Father, though an indulgent lover of all mankind, ſeems to watch over you with more than ordinary care and concern, to be ex-tremely deſirous, nay, even ſolicitous for your ſalva-tion. How does his goodneſs endeavour, by the re-peated, though lighteſt ſtrokes of his rod, to cure what-ever is diſordered, to rectify whatever is amiſs in you? How ſtudiouſly does he ſeek by laying you on a ſick bed, to make you ſee yourſelf and all things elſe in a true and proper light: to point out to you your frailties and follies, your darling luſts, and the ſins that do moſt eaſily beſet you; to convince you that you are only a ſojourner here upon earth, your body a poor frail and corruptible houſe of clay, your ſoul a bright, glorious, and immortal being, that is haſtening to the fruition of God, and to manſions of eternal reſt; to diſcover to you the vanity, meanneſs, and contemptible littleneſs of this world, and the worth, the importance, and amazing greatneſs of the next. Do not then hold out againſt theſe kind calls to repentance and amendment; do not reſiſt ſuch earneſt importunities, ſuch ſweet ſolicitations. But ſuffer yourſelf, by this loving correction, to be made great; great in humility, holineſs, and happineſs. Humble yourſelf under the mighty hand of God; and by a hearty ſorrow for your paſt faults, and a firm reſo-lution of obedience for the future, let this fatherly chaſ-tiſement bring forth in you the peaceable fruits of right-eouſneſs. Oh! let us dread, let us tremble, to reject any longer the tenders of grace, leſt we awake at length his juſtice, and draw down vengeance upon ourſelves; leſt our viſitation be not in love and with kindneſs, but in heavy diſpleaſure and with fury poured out; leſt his next diſpenſation be not a merciful ſeverity, but indig-nation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh.

Sure I can't but admire that adorable wiſdom which has contrived all things ſo evidently and ſo directly to your advantage! Your late illneſs has, I doubt not, be-got in you ſerious thoughts and holy diſpoſitions, and theſe I flatter myſelf will be nouriſhed by the reception of the bleſſed ſacrament the following *Eaſter*. Let us, dear ſiſter, break off our ſins by repentance;—let us amend our lives, and begin from this very inſtant to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and live ſo-berly, righteouſly, and godly in the preſent world. So ſhall we anſwer the good ends of our ſickneſs;—ſo ſhall we be meet partakers of thoſe holy myſteries here, and enjoy an inheritance amongſt the ſaints in light hereafter.—And now I can't but acquaint you, how earneſtly I wiſhed that you and others of my neighbours (with whom I have diſcourſed upon this ſubject) were giving devout attendance to the prayers and praiſes that were offered up laſt *Monday* in your church, as likewiſe how I ſhould rejoice with exceed-ing great joy, to hear that both you and they continue

ſtedfaſt, or rather abound more and more in the practice of this and ſuch other religious duties. And if you think the deſire of my heart, and the longings of my ſoul are of any weight with any of them, pray let them know how I hope, deſire, and pray that we may be worthy communicants, by an immediate forſaking of all wicked ways, and a thorough amendment, as well as an unſhaken reſolution to perſevere and advance in that amendment.

My kind reſpects to all that you ſhall ſhew or read this letter to; deſire them not to forget me in their prayers: let * * and * * know that I often think of them, and hope they ſometimes remember me, and the words that I have often ſpoke to them.——I am, &c.

JAMES HERVEY

LETTER III.

Dear Siſter, *Lincoln College, Oxon, May* 2, 1734.

Finding myſelf in a writing humour, and remembering that I had formerly promiſed you an entertaining preſent, and being ſenſible of the decency of introducing it with an epiſtle; upon theſe accounts I again ſet pen to paper, and addreſs you, notwithſtanding you have ſo very lately received a letter from me. By an uſefully-entertaining preſent, I mean ſuch an one as will improve and edify, at the ſame time that it diverts and delights; as will not only make you eaſy to yourſelf and agreeable to others, but alſo good, and holy, and wiſe unto ſalvation. Now I ſcarce know any human compoſition more likely to promote theſe excellent purpoſes than this poem on the laſt day *. For being in verſe, and ſet off with all the graces of ſpeech and and thought, it can't fail of charming as well the nice ear as the ſound judgment; and as for the ſubject, ſure nothing can be more prodigiouſly pleaſing, than to read of that happy time which ſhall be the beginning of a bliſsful eternity; when our Redeemer, by his mighty power, ſhall change our vile bodies, that they may be like unto his glorious body, and tranſlate us from a ſtate of corruption in the grave, to ſhine forth as the ſun in the kingdom of our Father. And every one muſt own, that the moſt engaging perſuaſions to piety and holineſs of converſation are drawn from the recompenſe of a future invaluable reward; and that the moſt ſovereign preſervative againſt all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts is the terrors, the inſupportable terrors of the Lord. If therefore you would pleaſe yourſelf, refine your taſte, or have the practice of religion pleaſing, inſtead of plays, ballads, and other corrupt writings, read this almoſt divine piece of poetry; read it (as I have done) over and over, think upon it, endeavour to digeſt it thoroughly, and even to get by heart the moſt moving paſſages, and then I truſt you will find it anſwer the ends I purpoſe in ſending it.

You will excuſe me from exerciſing my poetical talent, ſince there are already two copies of recommendatory verſes, and becauſe I perceive ſuch an attempt will be either very abſurd or very dangerous. For ſhould I tack together a few doggrel rhymes, this would be an affront to you; whereas, ſhould I ſucceed ſo well as to gain the applauſe of my readers, this I am ſure would portend very great harm, if not to you, yet moſt certainly to me. For what can portend greater harm than the words of praiſe; which, though ſmoother than oil, yet be they very ſwords? What can be more deſtructive of that humble mind which was in Chriſt Jeſus, that meek and lowly ſpirit which is in the ſight of God of great price! I am ſo far from carrying on my verſifying deſigns, that I heartily wiſh I had never conceived any; that thoſe lines I ſent to my couſin ***** had either never been made, or that I had never heard them commended. Pride and vanity are fooliſh and unreaſonable in duſt and aſhes, and, which is worſe, odious and deteſtable before infinite perfection and infinite power. Oh! let you and I then dread whatever may adminiſter fewel to theſe worſt of tempers, more than the poiſon of aſps, or the peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs. Let us pray againſt ſeeking, deſiring, or taking pleaſure in the honour that cometh of men. And if at any time the flattering tongue, that ſnare of death, ſhall overtake us, let us inſtantly fly unto our Saviour, and complain unto our God; then let us remember; and remembering, let us acknowledge, that we are nothing, have nothing, and deſerve nothing but ſhame and contempt, but miſery and puniſhment.

I hope you was ſo happy as to receive the holy ſacrament this *Eaſter;* and I beg of you to be ſo wiſe as well to underſtand and often to conſider what you then did. We gave up ourſelves, our ſouls and bodies, to be a reaſonable, holy, and lively ſacrifice to God: ſo that we muſt look upon ourſelves as having now no longer any right or title to ourſelves, but as our heavenly Maſter's ſole property; we may not follow our own, but muſt do his will in all things. We undertook to lead a new life, to follow the commandments of God, and to walk henceforth in his holy ways; and this and whatever elſe we promiſed at that ſacred altar, we muſt endeavour to perform, if we hope to enter into heaven. Let therefore no day paſs without reflecting on the ſolemn engagement we have made, and without examining whether we have acted up to it. Let us not imagine that we did the whole of our duty, when we took the conſecrated elements into our mouths; but be convinced, that we only as it were liſted ourſelves afreſh under our Captain's banner, and that the ſervice, the fight againſt his and our enemies, is to be hourly renewed, and conſtantly maintained even unto death.—I am, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER IV.

Dear Siſter, *Oxon, March* 11, 1735.

Yeſterday the judge came hither, and to-day the aſſizes begin. I ſhall go to hear the aſſize-ſermon preſently. This cannot but put us in mind of that great account we muſt all give before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt. How melancholy a ſight is it, to ſee a poor criminal go up to the bar! All he has is no longer his own; his very life is in the power of the magiſtrate; and he is in great danger of a ſpeedy death. And if this be ſo dreadful, how infinitely more dreadful will it be to appear before a more ſtrict and awful tribunal? The good Lord grant, that you and I may not be caſt in that tremendous trial! A trial that will be undergone before angels and God; upon the iſſue of which our eternal life will depend. Was I to wiſh a wiſh for the deareſt friend in the world; it ſhould not be for gold, or jewels, or apparel; theſe things are fading, and the faſhion of them paſſeth away; but it ſhould be for a favourable ſentence in that laſt and great day. Will not the archangel ſhortly ſound the trump? Will not all the dead come forth of their graves, and the Antient of days ſit? How valuable then will an humble and holy life be! If you and I be found with the wedding-garment on, we ſhall doubtleſs enter into the joy of our Lord, never to die, never to grieve, never to be parted more. But if we ſhould either of us be negligent in this matter; if we ſhould be ſurpriſed without oil in our lamps: oh! the fearfulneſs and trembling that will come upon us! the horrible dread that will overwhelm us! to think that we muſt be for ever ſhut out of heaven, baniſhed eternally from the preſence of God, the ſociety of ſaints, and the fulneſs of joy! If you or I were to be torn from our kindred, and our father's houſe, and hurried away captive into a foreign country; there to be chained

* By Dr Young.

to

to the galleys, or condemned to the mines: how would this grieve both us and our dear relations! how would it pierce our ſouls as a ſword! If this be ſad, (as certainly it is,) alas! what will it be, to be everlaſtingly ſeparated by the unpaſſable gulf? for one to be caught up to heaven, and there to be ever with the Lord; and for the other to be thruſt down into torments, and dwell with wailing and gnaſhing of teeth? Dear ſiſter, let us conſider this; and give all diligence to make our calling and election ſure; that when the changes and chances of this mortal life are over, we may meet and live together in glory everlaſting. Which is, and ſhall be, the hearty prayer of,—your, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER V.

Good Madam, *Dummer, May 7,* 1737.

PRAY be pleaſed to caſt your eye to the bottom, and obſerve who it is that deſires to beſpeak you. It is one who knows himſelf to have been guilty of the moſt ſlighting behaviour, and to have deſerved, in return, your greateſt diſdain. If after you perceive his name to be *Hervey*,—that *Hervey* who was ſo lately and ſo long in *London*, without ever waiting upon Mrs ***; without paying his reſpects to her who merits ſo much the eſteem of every Chriſtian, without any thankful acknowledgment for her kind wiſhes ſo often conceived, and her prevailing prayers ſo often put up in his behalf:—if, Madam, after you are informed of all this, you can bear to give the remainder of the paper a favourable reading, I ſhall not only account myſelf highly obliged to your good-nature, but when I have an occaſion to put up an affront, and to exerciſe forgiveneſs, I will think upon it as a pattern.

On *Sunday* I was called out by Providence from my own flock, to preach at two ſtrange churches. They lay at a conſiderable diſtance from each other, and from *Dummer;* ſo that in paſſing to them, and repairing again to my own pariſh, I travelled a good many miles. All the way I went along, I was entertained in the fineſt manner imaginable; far more finely than mine, or, I may venture to ſay, than any words can deſcribe. I wiſh I had the glowing colours, the accurate pencil, and the maſterly genius of ſome firſt-rate painter, that I might draw out, with as little injuſtice as poſſible, the lovely landſcape, and make a preſent, in ſome degree, worthy your acceptance. The air was in its beſt temperament; neither ſo hot as to enfeeble or diſpirit, nor ſo cold as to cauſe any uneaſy chillneſs. It was fit to recommend and ſet off the moſt agreeable objects, and to be the vehicle of perfumes, not much inferior to myrrh, aloes, and caſſia. I was in company with a gentleman of a clear underſtanding, and a tolerable ſhare of reading; he had ſeen much of the world, and had a very deep piercing inſight into things; he could talk judiciouſly upon moſt topics, and would ſometimes beſtow ſome hints upon religious ones. So that when I was diſpoſed for converſation, I could have immediate recourſe to one that would refine my taſte, and improve my judgment, if not miniſter grace to my heart. The face of the ſkies alſo conſpired to render every proſpect completely pleaſant; it was decked and diverſified with ſilver-like clouds; not ſuch as were charged with heavy rains, but ſuch as prevented the annoyance of one continued glare, and changed the ſunſhine frequently for a welcome ſhade; ſuch as ſerved for a foil to the unſullied ethereal blue. Thus did God order all circumſtances, ſo as to render our ride exceedingly delightful. At our firſt ſetting out, we went over ſtrong ground; where no ſeed was ſown, and ſo no fruit could grow. Its uſeleſſneſs was not owing to any defect in point of fertility, but to a want of being manured.

Is not this the caſe of many immortal ſouls, who are born with bleſſed diſpoſitions, and bid fair for becoming eminent ſaints, but are loſt and ſpoiled for want of care and inſtruction? O for faithful ſhepherds to ſeek them, for induſtrious huſbandmen to cultivate them! Send, Lord, a plenty of ſuch to work in thy vineyard, and to watch over thy ſheep! This coarſe beginning, though it had no form nor comelineſs in itſelf, yet tended to give an additional verdure to the ſucceeding ſcenes. So the bottomleſs pit and the unquenchable fire, though infinitely formidable, will create in the elect a more taſteful reliſh and enjoyment of their heavenly felicity. We made more haſte than ordinary to get away from this barren ſpot. For why ſhould any one tarry in ſuch a place, or frequent ſuch acquaintance, where all that occurs is vain and unprofitable? where nothing truly beneficial can either be imparted or acquired? The ſooner we are delivered from ſuch a ſituation, the better; no departure can be abrupt, no flight precipitate. When we were advanced a little farther, we entered upon a large incloſure. Here were all the footſteps of a commendable and ſucceſsful induſtry. The wheat was in the blade, and ſprang up with a plenteous increaſe, and in goodly array. It was not choked with weeds, nor embarraſſed with thiſtles, but like a clean and even mantle covered the plain: a preſent credit, and likely to be a future comfort to its owner. This ſuggeſted to me the value of a diligent hand, that portion which it is in every one's power to bequeath to himſelf. All the affairs of the ſlothful are like the mountains of *Gilboa*, on which there was no dew, neither rain, nor fields of offerings. But where there is prudence and diſcretion to contrive, and a ſteady fervour to execute, there whatſoever is undertaken will, in all probability, proſper. By a ſpirit of management, even the wilderneſs may be brought to bud and bloſſom as a roſe: and was there ſuch a ſpirit in the profeſſors of religion, it would prompt them to be like *Dorcas*, full of good works; or, like the great apoſtle, continually aſpiring after freſh and higher meaſures of perfection. We ſhould be frugal of our time, careful of all our talents, and moſt laudably covetous of every grain of improvement in piety. We held on our courſe, admiring ſtill as we went, the teeming earth, the infant corn, and the pregnant promiſes of a prodigious harveſt. This led me to muſe upon one of the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of Chriſtianity, I mean the general reſurrection. It convinced me how perfectly poſſible it is with God to raiſe the dead; it gave me alſo a glimpſe of that perfection of beauty, to which the bodies of the juſt ſhall riſe.—For a little while ago I beheld, and lo! the whole vegetable world was naked and bare, without any ornaments, or ſo much as one amiable feature, like ſome withered, wrinkled, deformed hag. But now how charmingly it appears, and ſmiles, and ſhines! No virgin is more gay and blooming, no bride is better arrayed, or more ſparkling. And if God ſo enlivens and clothes the graſs of the earth, and the tenants of the field, how much more ſhall he quicken and ennoble our mortal bodies, which we hope are the temples of the Holy Ghoſt? Several of our dear friends we have accompanied to the grave; we ſaw with weeping eyes their poor bones depoſited in the duſt. But henceforth let us dry up our ſorrows; they are not to periſh, but to be purified in thoſe gloomy chambers. The hour is coming when the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from heaven, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God. Then ſhall they hear the almighty ſummons, and ſpring from their confinement like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of ſpices *. Then will they look forth from their dark abodes as the morning, fair as

* Cant. viii. 14.

the

the moon, clear as the sun *; never more to return to corruption, but to flourish in immortal vigour and youth. This is a pleasing meditation, and deserves to be indulged, but at this time it must give place to others. Our next remove was to a lane, set on either side with leafy trees and humble shrubs. Here the prospect was contracted, and we had nothing left to contemplate but our branching and leafy mound. The little boughs clad with a cheering green were refreshing to the eyes; and it was curious to observe, how every different plant was decked with a different livery. Here the twigs were gemmed with buds just ready to open and unfold; there they were already opened into blossoms, and garnished the pointed thorns; so that they were very delicate to look upon, though dangerous to touch. Oh! the adorable efficacy of the divine voice! how powerfully and how lastingly it operates! God said once, Let the earth bring forth; he spake not twice, and yet how punctually does nature obey this single command! Several thousand years are gone about, nor is its force evacuated, impaired, or at all diminished. It endureth in full authority to this day, and is still a most binding law to all the material world. O that men would lay this to heart, and learn a lesson of obedience from the inanimate creation! All other things continue according to their Maker's ordinance, and shall man be the only rebel in the kingdom of nature? Shall man alone make the word of Omnipotence to be of none effect? While our sight was regaled in this manner, a set of chiming bells saluted our ears with a solemn and serene harmony. It had no great diversity of stops, nor artful mixture of notes, but sure it was most gladdening music, and spoke a heavenly meaning. It was calculated to inspire such a joy as the royal psalmist felt, when he heard the acceptable invitation of going up to the house of the Lord. On a sudden, when we were least apprehensive of it, the wind wheeled about, and bore away the silver sounds. But it was only to bring them back again as unexpectedly, with the keen pleasure of a grateful surprise. Here I thought of the sweet influences of grace, and wished for that happy time, when the visits of the blessed Spirit will be uninterrupted. Quickly the lawns and plains disappeared again, and we dived into a wood. Numbers of sprightly birds, hopping and singing among the branches, solaced us as we passed. We thanked the pretty songsters, and bid them go on to supply our lack of praise. But what most of all affected us, being altogether new, was the warbling of the nightingale. What a tuneful throat has that charming creature, and what an unwearied use does she make of it! I myself heard her melody in the day-time, and I am told in the night-season also she takes no rest. How sovereign and undeserved is the goodness of the Lord to the children of men! The pipe of this wakeful chorister, though now so incessant in thanksgivings, must soon be sealed up in endless silence; while the mouth of dull and ungrateful mortals will be filled with everlasting anthems. The air was impregnated with sweets; and without money, or without price, we breathed in such a delicious fragrance, as far excelled the powders of the merchant *. This put me in mind of some beautiful lines of the great *Milton*:

Now gentle gales
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils.

The other recalled to my memory part of a divine description, vastly superior to *Milton*'s. Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land †. Two of our senses being so exquisitely gratified, we were in no haste to leave the place, though it was narrow, and afforded no other prospect but the shining canopy over our heads. But as soon as we were emerged from this sylvan path, what wonders presented themselves to our view! I think I was scarce ever more agreeably startled in my life. We stood upon the brow of a hill, and underneath were tracts of level ground of an immense circumference. The labouring eye could hardly descry the utmost bounds. The whole scene being parcelled out among a variety of tillers, and producing variety of fruits, was like a noble piece of chequer-work. The nearer parts, and those distinctly discernable, were replenished with rural riches. The folds were full of sheep, and of lambs, frisking by the side of their fleecy dams. The vallies stood so thick with corn that they even laughed and sung. One spot was not sprinkled, but seemed to be overlaid with a profusion of flowers, as the roof of the temple was with gold; another was, as it were, enamelled, like an embroidered carpet, with a well-proportioned distribution; some of them yellow as oranges, some white as snow, some tinged with a border as red as blood. The towns and villages interspersed here and there, looked like the tiny tents of the fabled fairies. Numberless other beauties glanced upon my sight; but as I had not then leisure to examine them, so neither have I now room to relate them. O that these, and all the charms of the delightful season, may lead up every spectator's thoughts to the inimitable glories of heaven. And while the eye feasts upon them, let every tongue acknowledge to the honour of the all-creating God;

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!
Almighty! thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair! thyself how wondrous then!

I am, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

* Cant. vii. 13.

† Cant. ii. 6.

LETTER VI.

Dear Brother, *Dummer, June 27, 1717.*

I Find you are at *London* looking out for a trade, and a master to set yourself to. I hope, you pray earnestly to God to guide you in your choice by his infinite wisdom. He only knows what kind of employ will be best for you; in what family or neighbourhood you will have the most helps and encouragement to holiness; where you will be most exposed to temptations, to evil company, and to an early corruption. Therefore, remember what you have learned in the 3d chapter of *Proverbs*, and now, above all other times, put in practice: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he "shall direct thy paths." Beseech the all-wise God to go before you in this mighty undertaking, and to lead you to such a master, and to settle you in such a place, where you may, the most advantageously, work out your salvation. Desire also your honoured mother, and mine, to have a great regard to your soul, and the things that make for its welfare, in putting you out. Let it be inquired, not only whether such a tradesman be a man of substance and credit, but whether he be also a man of religion and godliness? whether he be a lover of good people? a careful frequenter of the church? whether his children be well nurtured and educated in the fear of the Lord? whether family-prayer be daily offered up in his house? whether he believes that the souls of his servants are committed to his trust, and that he will be answerable for the neglect of them at the judgment-seat? It will be sadly hazardous to venture yourself

* Cant. ii. 11, 12.

under

under the roof of any person, who is not furnished with these principles, or is a stranger to these practices. But if he be quite contrary to all these, a despiser of God and goodness, wholly devoted to carnal pleasure, and worldly gain; if he not only omit the religious care and overlight of his household, but also set them a wicked and corrupt example;—let nothing induce you to enter into his service. A lewd, drinking, swearing, cheating master, will be sure to disregard the sobriety and purity of your behaviour, and very likely to corrupt it. To have his disorderly carriage daily before your eyes, will be as dangerous as to lodge in a plague-house. Therefore, let no consideration of profit, or advantage, or of any other sort, prevail with you to become apprentice to such a one. If you do, depend on it, you breathe tainted air; and it is much but you catch the deadly infection.——After you are bound to a master, you must be as diligent in doing your duty to him, as you should be of examining into his character before you are bound. As I have given you my advice concerning the latter of these particulars, I fancy you will not take it amiss, if I give you some directions concerning the former. As soon as you are bound, you are at your master's, and not at your own disposal: he has then a right to your hands, your strength, and all that you can do. He becomes a sort of parent to you; and though not a natural, yet a civil father. You are also obliged, not only by the laws of your country, and the tenour of your indentures, but by the 5th commandment of God, to pay him all due submission and honour. To do this, is a most material part of your duty, as a Christian, as well as your undeniable debt, as an apprentice. It is required of you by God, in holy scripture; and you must not once imagine that you do what is pleasing to him, unless you conscientiously perform it. Now, that you may know what it is that your master will expect from you, and what it is that the Lord has enjoined you, with regard to him, remember, it consists first, in reverence of his person; secondly, in obedience to his commands; and, thirdly, in faithfulness in his business.

First, in reverence of his person. You must esteem him very highly for his superiority's sake, and the resemblance he bears to God. For God, who made you, and has an uncontrollable power over you, has communicated some of that power to your master; so that you are to look upon him as the representative, in some sort, of the divine Majesty, and invested with some of his authority. Accordingly St *Paul* says, 1 *Tim.* vi. 1. You must count him worthy of all honour; all, *i. e.* internal and external, that of the actions and words, as well as that of the heart. It is not enough to maintain a worthy estimation inwardly; but you must let it appear on all occasions outwardly, by behaving yourself very obligingly to him before his face, and by speaking very respectfully of him behind his back. Suppose you should discern failings and infirmities in him, you must by no means divulge them, or make yourself merry with them, much less must you dare to set light by any of his orders. Whatever you have reason to think will grieve or displease him, will be prejudicial or offensive to him, that you must cautiously forbear.

Secondly, obedience to his commands. See how full the apostle speaks to this purpose, *Col.* iii. 22. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh. Observe likewise, from this passage, not only the necessity, but also the compass, and latitude of your obedience; how large and extensive it is. It reaches, not barely to a few, but to all and every instance. If you should receive orders that are ever so much against the grain of your own inclination, you must force yourself to comply with them; receive them as you used to do nauseous physic; though they be unpleasant at first, they will do you good, and be comfortable to you afterwards; your own pleasure must always stoop and give way to your master's. If he sets you such a task as is mean and ignoble, and such as (according to the expression of the world) is beneath a gentleman's son, do not scruple it, dear brother, but dispatch it chearfully. Remember who hath said, Servants, obey your masters in all things. And, oh! remember, that be we as well born and bred as we will, yet he that was higher than the highest of us all, even the most excellent and illustrious person that ever lived, condescended to the lowest and (such as our fine folks would account the) shamefullest offices. The Lord Jesus Christ, though the brightness of his Father's glory, disdained not to wash his disciples feet. Neither be dejected because you are treated in an unworthy manner, or set to do some mean and low office for him, or his family; but rejoice rather in that you are made like unto your Redeemer, and in the happy prospect you will have of becoming great in heaven, by being so little on earth. I am aware this piece of advice is not so unexceptionable as the rest; it may possibly be judged the mark of too yielding and sneaking a spirit; but never forget, that the things which are most highly esteemed by God, are held in least repute by men. I know, and am sure, that if any apprentice would make such a compliance for the sake of preserving peace, and out of conscience to the command of God, and with an eye to the example of Christ, there is a day coming when he will not repent of it; when it will not be deemed a blot in his character, but be an ornament of grace to his head, and more comely than chains about his neck *. Well, you see your obedience must be universal; you must come when he calls you, and go where he bids you; do all that he commands you, and let alone all that he forbids you. This must, moreover, be done, not grudgingly, or of necessity, but readily and gladly: for hear what the scripture saith, Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily †; and again, With good-will doing service ‡; so that we must not creep, but be quick and expeditious in our business, howsoever disagreeable. You must not go about it with grumbling words and muttering in your mouth, but with so satisfied an air, as may shew that you are pleased with whatever pleases your master.

Thirdly, in faithfulness in his business. This is the last branch of your duty to your master; and since *Moses* has obtained an honourable testimony, on this account, be you also faithful in all his house ‖. You may find this, as indeed all the qualifications of a good servant, described by St *Paul*, (*Tit.* ii. 10.) Not purloining, says he, but shewing all fidelity. You are charged not to purloin, *i. e.* not to keep back from your master, not to put into your own pocket, nor convert to your own use, any of that money, which, in the way of trade passes through your hands. You were taught from your childhood, to keep your hands from picking and stealing, and I hope you abhor such abominable practices from the bottom of your heart. You must not sell at a cheaper, and buy at a dearer rate, in order to have some valuable consideration made you privily in your own person. These differ from robbing on the highway, (they are flagrant acts of dishonesty, and will cry to heaven for vengeance), only in being less open and notorious. Such tricks and villainous devices do the same thing by craft and treachery, as housebreakers do by force and violence. Therefore, dear brother, renounce, detest, and fly from them as much as from fire, arrows, and death. Besides, you are not only to abstain from such clandestine knavery, but also to shew all good fidelity. What is meant by this, you may understand, by reading how *Joseph* conducted himself in *Potiphar*'s service. Your master, it is likely, will commit the management

* Prov. i. 9. † Col. iii. 23.

‡ Eph. vi. 7. ‖ Heb. iii. 5.

of ſome of his affairs to you; and you muſt endeavour, by a diſcreet behaviour, and a pious life, to bring the bleſſing of the Lord upon all that you take in hand. You muſt lay out your time and your labour, and give all diligence to anſwer the truſt repoſed in you. You muſt not delay the buſineſs which is urgent, nor do your work by halves, nor tranſfer that to others which is expected you ſhould do yourſelf. The ſlothful man ſays *Solomon*, is brother to him that is a great waſter; therefore you muſt avoid idleneſs, and careleſſneſs. In a word, you muſt do nothing knowingly and wilfully that is likely to impoveriſh your maſter, but ſeek by all lawful and laudable means to increaſe his ſubſtance. All this you muſt obſerve, not only when he ſtands by you, and inſpects you, but when his back is turned, and you are removed from his view; otherwiſe your ſervice is nothing but eye-ſervice, ſuch as will prove odious to man, and is already condemned by God. For if you appear to be induſtrious, and in earneſt, before your maſter, but to loiter and trifle when out of his ſight, you will be chargeable with hypocriſy; a ſin extremely hateful to Chriſt, and grievouſly pernicious to the ſoul. But I am afraid I tire you; this one ſentence, therefore, and I have done. You muſt carry yourſelf, throughout the whole courſe of your apprenticeſhip, ſo reſpectively, ſo obediently, ſo faithfully, that at the end of it you may truly ſay with *Jacob*, With all my power I have ſerved your father. I had more to write, but will ſend you (if you care to accept it) the remainder ſome other time. May God bleſs you all, and your affectionate brother, &c.

LETTER VII.

My dear friends, the inhabitants of Callingtree, near Northampton, *Dunmow, June* 29, 1737.

I Received the letter wrote in your name, and ſigned with your hands, and was very well pleaſed with its contents. I am glad that you are all in good health, and am obliged to you for retaining ſo honourable a remembrance of an unworthy youth. Your deſire to have a careful clergyman ſettle among you is perfectly right and laudable. But I fear you make an over-favourable and miſtaken judgment, when you imagine me to be ſuch an one, and pitch upon me for that purpoſe. However, letting this paſs; it is, I ſay, well and wiſely done for you, to be ſolicitous in this matter. For a miniſter is a perſon of the greateſt importance imaginable; his office is of the moſt univerſal concernment; and his demeanour therein of the moſt beneficial or prejudicial tendency. Beneficial, if he be able, faithful, and watches for his people's ſouls as one that muſt give account. Prejudicial, if he be unſkilful, unactive, and unconcerned about the ſpiritual welfare of his people. The things that pertain to ſalvation, and the means of obtaining everlaſting life, are lodged in his hands. He is the ſteward of the myſteries of Chriſt, and ſo the guardian (under divine grace) of your beſt and moſt abiding intereſts. If through ignorance he miſmanage, or through idleneſs neglect this weighty truſt, it may be the ruin of immortal ſouls. Whereas, if he be both diſcreet and diligent in his holy vocation, he may be the inſtrument of the richeſt benefits to thoſe committed to his charge. His praying to God, and his preaching to them, may be attended with ſuch a bleſſing from on high, as will fill them with heavenly wiſdom; form them to true holineſs; and fit them for the future glory. Benefits theſe, not inconſiderable or momentary, but ſuch as are great beyond all expreſſion, and laſting to eternity. For theſe reaſons, it will be your wiſdom and your happineſs to procure a paſtor whoſe life is exemplary; whoſe doctrine is ſound; whoſe heart is warm with zeal for God, and whoſe bowels yearn with compaſſion for men. If your bones were broken, or if you were brought to death's door by the force of ſome violent diſeaſe; you would not be content with the preſcription of a quack, but ſeek out for the beſt advice. If your wives were in hard labour; if the children were come to the birth, and there was not ſtrength to bring forth, you would not ſpare to ride for the moſt experienced midwife. Oh! be as prudent and careful for the ſalvation of your ſouls, which endure for ever, as you are for the life of your bodies, which is but as a vapour. Remember, that you are ſick of ſin, ſadly diſordered by ſundry corruptions, and muſt neceſſarily be cured before you go hence, and are no more ſeen. Remember, that you muſt be regenerated and born again, or you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. And be not willing to truſt ſuch matters, which are of infinite and everlaſting moment, to the management of any that comes next.

Now that you may be the better able to make a right choice in this important particular, I will lay before you two or three of the diſtinguiſhing characters of a true miniſter.——Firſt, he has a tolerable ſtock of knowledge. Though not enough to explain all myſteries, or to anſwer every perplexing queſtion, yet enough to make himſelf and his hearers wiſe unto ſalvation. He may be ignorant of many things without much diſparagement to himſelf, or prejudice to his people; but he muſt be acquainted with, and able to teach others all that is neceſſary for them to know.—Secondly, he has not only ſome underſtanding, but ſome experience alſo in the way of godlineſs. He has learned to ſubdue, in ſome meaſure, the pride of his nature, and to be humble in his own eyes, and not fond of applauſe from others. He has broke the impetuoſity of his paſſion, and generally poſſeſſes his ſoul in patience; or if, upon ſome very ungrateful and provoking uſage, he cannot calm his temper, yet he can curb his tongue; and though his ſpirit be ruffled, yet his words will be gentle. He is moſt commonly meek after the manner of his bleſſed Maſter, and will always return bleſſing for curſing, according to his holy command. He has often looked into the ſhortneſs of time, and the length of eternity; he has weighed the greatneſs and richneſs of heaven, with the inſignificant and deſpicable meanneſs of earth; and diſcovers ſuch a mighty difference, as helps him to live above the world, even while he is in it. So that he is no lover of filthy lucre, no hunter of carnal pleaſures, but his hopes, his deſires, and all his views of happineſs, are hid with Chriſt in God. He is courteous and condeſcending, and will ſtoop with the utmoſt chearfulneſs to the loweſt perſon in his pariſh. He will be affable and kind, and ſeek to pleaſe, not himſelf, but his neighbours, for their good, to edification. But you muſt not expect to find him trifling or ludicrous; he will not preach to you on the Sunday, and play with you on the week-days, but carry the ſpirit of his ſermons into his ordinary converſation. He will maintain an uniform gravity of behaviour, without ſuffering it to be frozen into moroſeneſs, or thawed into levity. He will love his pariſhioners, not for their agreeable perſons or amiable qualities, but becauſe they are redeemed by the blood of Chriſt. It will be his buſineſs and conſtant endeavour, I had almoſt ſaid his meat and drink, to ſet forward their ſalvation; that, by their being made meet for the inheritance of ſaints in light, his crucified Lord may ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied. He will never forget the importunate requeſt of his Saviour, but thoſe winning and commanding words, Feed my ſheep, feed my lambs, will be engraven upon the tables of his heart. To fulfil this earneſt requeſt, and execute this laſt charge of his deareſt Redeemer, will be the fixed and invariable ſcope of all his deſigns. If at any time he hits this deſirable mark, by bringing home to the fold any that have gone aſtray, he will be

as glad as one that findeth great spoils. To see the people of his care perishing in profaneness, sensuality, and an unconverted state, will be the greatest grief that he feels: but to see his children walking in the truth, mortifying their evil affections, and growing up in goodness as the calves of the stall, this will be his joy and crown of rejoicing; better to him than thousands of silver and gold. It is his work to win souls; and by the former of these qualifications he is fitted for it, by the latter he is wholly devoted to it. And in order to prosecute it with the greater success, he will, first, take heed to himself, that his life be a fair and beautiful transcript of his doctrine, such as may remind men of, and be daily reinforcing his instructions. He will not bind the yoke upon your shoulders, till he has wore it himself; and should the paths of religion prove never so thorny, he will go first and beat the way. As far as human infirmities permit, he will strive to be unblameable and unreproveable, that he may renew the apostle's challenge, Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ. Secondly, his preaching will be plain; full of such useful sense as may be edifying to the better learned, and be delivered in so easy a manner, as may be intelligible to the ignorant. It will not only be plain, but powerful also, if preceding prayers and tears, if words coming warm from the heart, and accompanied with an ardent desire of being attended to; if to feel himself what he speaks, and so long that it may be felt by others, can make it such, he will declare the whole will of God, without with-holding or mincing any. Be the truth never so disagreeable, contrary to your profits, or contrary to your pleasures, you will be sure to hear it. He will indeed shew it in as lovely a light, and make it as palatable as he can, but nothing will prevail upon him to conceal or disguise it. Thirdly, he will not confine his teaching to God's day or house, but will exercise his care of you every day, and will bring it home to your own houses, whether you invite him or no. He will frequently visit you, and for the same end as he meets you at church. Now, shall you like this part of his duty, or bid him welcome, when he comes on such an errand? Nay, he will think himself bound to proceed farther, and to inquire into the state of your souls, and your proceedings in your families; whether you are competently furnished with saving knowledge; and are careful to increase it daily, by allowing a daily portion of your time for reading the scriptures? what virtues you are deficient in, what vices you are subject to? what evil tempers, what vile affections, what unruly passions are predominant in you, and want to be suppressed? whether your children are catechised, and your servants instructed? whether you are constant in family-worship, and at your closet-devotions? how you spend the sabbath; whether you squander it away in impertinent visits, idle chat, or foolish jesting; or whether you consecrate it to the better exercises of prayer, praise, holy discourse, reading, and meditation? These, and other points of the like nature, he will examine into, and exhort you to amend what is amiss, no less than encourage you to persevere in that which is good. Nor will he exhort you once or twice only, but again and again, and hardly leave off till he has won your consent. In things that relate to himself, he will be easily sail nay; but when the great God insists upon obedience, and a blessed immortality will be lost by disobedience, he will be instant in season, and out of season, he will solicit with unwearied applications the important cause, and press you to perform your duty: as the poor widow importuned the unjust judge to avenge her of her adversary, he will add to his exhortations, reproofs. His eye will be open, and his ears attentive to what passes in his parish; and when any one walks disorderly, he will meet him as *Elijah* did *Ahab* *, with a rebuke in his mouth. This I can promise, that he will not rail at, nor scold you with reproachful words; but he will certainly lay before you the things that you have done. He will not defame you behind your backs, but whether you be rich or poor, whether you be pleased with it or not, he will bear in mind the commandment of the Lord, and shew his people their transgressions, and the house of *Jacob* their sins †. He will tell you with tenderness, but yet with plainness, that such courses are a sad and too sure a proof, that grace has not had its proper work on your souls, that ye are carnal, and have not the Spirit of Christ. So that a true minister of the gospel will be a constant inspector of your affections, a faithful monitor of your duty, and an impartial reprover of your offences. He will guide you by his counsel, and animate you by his example, and bless you by his prayers. If you be willing and obedient, he will conduct you safely through a troublesome and naughty world, and bring you to the land of everlasting felicity: but if you be perverse and obstinate, he will be a standing terror to your consciences here, and a swift witness against you hereafter; he will be the unhappy means of increasing your present guilt, and aggravating your future account, and of making it more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* in the day of judgment, than for you.

And now, my kind and dear friends, are you, upon second thoughts, desirous of having such a pastor placed amongst you? Shall you be glad to have the aforementioned vigilance and diligence exerted in the holy function? Can you willingly submit to an oversight so narrow, to admonitions so incessant, to corrections so close and particular?—If, after due consideration, ye are willing; give me leave to inform you, how ye may procure such a man of God to come unto you, and take up his abode with you. He is an exceeding great and precious blessing to any people; too precious to be purchased with money, and is the free gift of God. So that the way to obtain him, is to address yourselves to heaven, and make supplication to the Almighty. What cannot prayer, fervent and believing prayer do? I scarcely know any thing that is above its power, or beyond its reach. Prayer has locked up the clouds, and opened them again, made the earth as iron, and the heavens as brass; prayer has arrested the sun in his race, and made the moon stand still in her march, and reversed the perpetual decree; prayer has fetched down angels from above, and raised up the dead from beneath, and done many wonderful works. In like manner, prayer will get for you an useful and worthy teacher; if he be ever so far off, this will bring him near; if he be never so averse, this will over-rule his inclination. Do you doubt of this? I own you would have good reason, if you had nothing but my word to support it. But what if God, who cannot lie, has testified and given you assurance of the same? Why then, I hope, ye will be no longer faithless, but believing. Hear, therefore, what he himself has said by his own beloved Son, Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find †. Again, he saith, If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it ‡. Here you see the Almighty has passed his word, and he, to whom all things are possible, has pawned his veracity, that he will not deny you the request of your lips.——And dare you not trust the Allpowerful? Can you have a better security than his, whose title is faithful and true? The divine promises are all immutable, stronger than the strong mountains, and heaven and earth shall pass away, sooner than one jot or tittle of them shall pass unfulfilled. When ye desire a pious and able minister, ye desire a good thing, such as will be for the honour and glory of God to grant. Therefore, encouraged by this, and confiding on his most sure promise, beg of the Most High to give

* 1 Kings xxi. 20.

† Isa. lviii.

‡ Matth. vii. 7.

‡ John xiv. 14.

you

you a true paſtor and ſhepherd for your ſouls; one that may love you like St *Paul*, rule you like *David*, teach you like *Samuel*, and lead you like *Joſhua* to the heavenly *Canaan*; that bleſſed and bliſsful country, where we all would be!

O God, great and glorious, infinite in thy wiſdom, and uncontrollable in thy power! thy providence is over all thy works; thine eyes run to and fro through the earth, to behold the condition, and ſupply the wants of thy ſervants. Thou ſenteſt *Moſes* to deliver thy children out of *Egypt*, *Philip* to inſtruct the ignorant eunuch, and *Peter* to preach to the devout centurion. O bleſſed Lord, who art the ſame yeſterday, and to-day, and for ever, vouchſafe the ſame mercy to us of this pariſh, that we alſo may have a teacher come from God. Grant us, O thou Giver of every good gift, a faithful ſhepherd for our ſouls; who may feed us in a green paſture, and lead us forth beſide the waters of comfort: one that may be wholly devoted to thy ſervice, and intent upon nothing but the due diſcharge of his important office; who may be a light to our paths by his godly directions, and ſalt to our corrupting ſouls by his unblameable converſation. Let ſuch a miniſter, we beſeech thee, be placed over us, as will watch for our ſpiritual welfare; that will love us with an affectionate and parental tenderneſs; that will cheriſh us, as a hen cheriſheth her chickens under her wings: one that may be able as well as willing to inſtruct us in our duty, to whom thou haſt revealed the wondrous things of thy law, and the glorious myſteries of thy goſpel: whoſe lips may preſerve knowledge, whoſe tongue may be continually dealing it out, and whoſe mouth may be unto us a well of life: whoſe diſcourſes may be milk to the babes, meat to the ſtrong, and medicine to the ſick: who may have a ſkilful as well as a compaſſionate zeal, and know how to divide rightly the word of truth; who may be an example as well as an exhorter, a pattern as well as a preacher, of every charitable action, and every devout temper: under whoſe guidance we may walk in the ways of peace and piety, of meekneſs and humility, of righteouſneſs and ſalvation; till we all come to the city of the living God, to an innumerable company of angels, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. O grant us ſuch a prieſt, and clothe him with ſuch qualifications, and make thy choſen people joyful. Hear us, moſt merciful Father, for his ſake, whoſe ſheep we are, who bought us with his blood; who died for us on earth, and maketh interceſſion for us in heaven; even Jeſus Chriſt: to whom, with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, be all honour and glory, world without end.—Amen.

LETTER VIII.

To his SISTER.

Dear Siſter, *Dunmow, July 5,* 1737.

I Hope *London* does not diſagree with the health of your body, and I dare ſay it may be made ſerviceable to the health of your ſoul. There are precious opportunities of going to church, and worſhipping the divine Majeſty, every morning and evening; which I hope you do not ſlight, but embrace with all thankfulneſs, and prefer before every other engagement. If you was grievouſly ſick, and even hard at death's door, you would be glad to have recourſe to any phyſician; but if you heard of one that could not poſſibly miſtake your caſe, and would infallibly cure you, how eagerly would you fly to him? Siſter, believe me, our ſouls are ſick of ſin, ſick of worldly-mindedneſs, ſick of pride, ſick of paſſion, and ſundry other diſorders, which, if not ſpeedily healed, will bring us down, not only to the grave, but to the torments of hell. We have almoſt as little taſte or reliſh of holy and devout exerciſes, as a ſick and anguiſhing man has for the ſtrong meats he loved when he was well; which is a plain, and too undeniable a proof, that our better, our immortal part is ſadly out of order. Now, at church you may find a ſure and never-failing remedy for your ſpiritual diſorders. God's grace is a ſovereign medicine, and in his houſe it is to be obtained. There he, like a moſt bountiful and beneficent prince, ſtands ready to diſpenſe the help and aſſiſtance, the enlightening and purifying influences of his Spirit. Sure then, we who have ſuch urgent and immediate need of them, ſhall not be backward to go, and with an humble earneſtneſs ſeek them. I ſay immediate; for ſince our life is ſo uncertain, and we know not what a day may bring forth, we ought to get our work diſpatched, and our accounts ready without delay. It is evening now I write this; and I cannot tell whether this may not be the night, in which I am to hear that amazing cry, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh. I intend to direct my letter to my dear ſiſter ****, and hope ſhe will receive it ſafe; but I have no certainty, whether ſhe be yet alive or no. For ought I know, her ſoul may be ſtanding before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, and going to be fixed, if not already fixed, in an unchangeable eternal ſtate. Her body may be pale and cold, and ſtretched out in the coffin; my dear mamma and my brothers taking their laſt farewell, and giving her the parting kiſs; the joiner juſt about to nail on the lid, and hide her face for ever from mortal view. Nay, ſhe may already have been carried upon men's ſhoulders, and committed to the duſt, ſo that what I am inditing, may find her in the grave. She may be ſleeping in ſome church-yard that I know nothing of, among thouſands of dead bodies, never to awake, never to ariſe, till the archangel's trumpet ſounds, and the heavens are no more.—— The very imagination of this ſudden change, ſtrikes a damp upon my heart; I hope it is not a preſage of what has really happened; if it be, and if my dear ſiſter is a departed ſpirit, I will henceforth labour to dreſs my ſoul with holineſs, that it may be ready to go forth at a minute's warning, and give her the meeting in another world. There, if my ſiſter and I ſhall be found to have minded, above all things, the one thing needful, and to be full of heavenly, ſpiritual, and divine tempers, ſhe will be to me better than a ſiſter; and I ſhall be to her, better than a loving and affectionate brother, &c.

LETTER IX.

My dear Friend,

I Received your kind letter, and thank you for your affectionate wiſhes. I endeavour not to be behindhand with my people in this exerciſe of love. You are always on my heart, and often, often mentioned in my prayers. Eſpecially, that you may be partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, and feel all thoſe ſaving convictions, which are deſcribed by our Lord, *John* xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11. That you may be intereſted in the new covenant; and enjoy all thoſe precious privileges, which were purchaſed for us by our dying Saviour, and are recorded by his apoſtle, *Heb.* viii. 10, 11, 12.

Yeſterday, in the evening, two gentlemen of the city came to viſit me. Our converſation was ſuch, as I would have yours be; ſuch as was ſuited (if God vouchſafe his bleſſing) to edify one another, and miniſter grace to the hearers. We talked of that infinitely condeſcending and gracious Friend of ſinners, who came from heaven on purpoſe to be crucified for us, and is returned unto heaven on purpoſe to intercede for us. The interceſſion of our bleſſed Lord was the chief ſubject of our diſcourſe, and is a moſt comfortable article of our faith. Becauſe

His interceſſion never ceaſes.——He ſitteth at the right hand of his Father, in an abiding poſture.—— Other high prieſts are removed by death; but he ever liveth to make interceſſion for us.——We reſign part of our

continue to sleep, and then lose all attention to our own interests; but he is the Keeper of *Israel*, who never slumbereth nor sleepeth.——We too frequently forget our God, and neglect to carry on communion with him. But Christ has written our names (worthless as they are) upon the palms of his hands; and a mother may forget her sucking child, much sooner than he will discontinue his kind concern for the weakest believer.

His intercession always prevails.—If *Moses* was heard, when he made supplication in behalf of *Israel*; if *Job* was not denied, when he petitioned for the pardon of his three friends; if *Elijah*'s prayer entered into the ear of the Lord God of hosts, when he requested for rain upon the parched earth; surely God's dearly beloved Son will not be rejected, when he maketh intercession for the saints.——The Father loves him, infinitely loves him, and therefore hears him.——He has purchased whatever he asks; purchased it by his obedience and death, and therefore cannot but obtain his suit.

Perhaps, you will inquire, what it is that Christ prays for?—We are informed of this in *John* xvii. He prays, that we may be kept from the evil that is in the world, verse 15.—That we may be sanctified through the truth; sanctified through the word of scripture, verse 17.—That we may be united to Christ, and have fellowship with the Father by faith, fellowship with one another by brotherly love, verse 21.——That we may be made perfect in his righteousness; presented without spot through his blood; and, at last, be with him where he is, to behold his glory, and partake of his joy, verses 23, 24.

Should you be desirous of knowing, whether you are in the number of those for whom Christ intercedes? You may determine this important point, by the following questions.—Do you value above all things, the blessings for which Christ intercedes?——Do you join your own repeated and earnest supplications to his intercession?—And do you rely wholly upon Christ's unspeakable merits, for the acceptance of all your prayers?—If so, be not discouraged; Christ is your Advocate with the Father. He died for you on the cross, and pleads his meritorious oblation for you on his throne.

Is not this an inestimable blessing? If *Hezekiah* desired the prayers of *Isaiah*; if *Darius* desired the prayers of the godly *Jews*, for himself and his sons; how should we rejoice in having the prayers of the exalted Jesus!—If we are tempted, let this be our security, *Luke* xxii. 31, 32. If we fall into sin, through the infirmity of the flesh, let this be our refuge, 1 *John* ii. 1, 2. If under apprehensions of death, or eternal judgment, let this be our consolation, *Rom.* viii. 33, 34.

I don't write out the scriptures, because I would have you look them out, or even write them out with your own hand. And may the blessed Spirit of God write them upon all our hearts!——This will come to you, I hope, on *Christmas* eve. You will talk of this letter, and its contents, to your harvest-men. I should be glad to be with you, and converse as we used to do, on Christ and the kingdom of heaven. None of my flock, I hope, will be filled with liquor, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.——My kind love to your family, and all your neighbours; particularly to your brother *William*, whose letter I shall answer by the first opportunity.——Yours, &c.

LETTER X.

Dear Sister, *Stoke-Abbey, June* 19, 1738.

WILL you accept of another letter from your loving brother, who loves your better part, and would fain be helpful to your immortal interests? I think I wrote to you when at *London*; I know not what acceptance that letter found, but I can assure you it meant nothing but good, spiritual benefit, and everlasting advantage to you.

I hope my *** and *** are more easy with regard to me and my welfare. My disorder is a languor and faintness, a feebleness and inability for action, which is increased or lessened according to the various temperature of the weather. I bless God Almighty, I am not deprived of my appetite to food, neither are my bones chastened with pain; so that many impute all my complaints to a hippish and over-timorous turn of mind, to a distempered imagination, rather than a disordered body.

I write this in a pleasure-house of Mr ***, situate upon a high cliff, on the very edge of the sea. On one side a vast tract of land extends itself, finely diversified by stately trees, floating corn, and pasturage for cattle. On the other side rolls the great and wide sea, where go the ships, and where is that leviathan, whom the almighty Creator has made to take his pastime therein. Which way soever I look, I meet with footsteps of the divine immensity: I view thy great and marvellous works, O Lord God omnipotent: I am encountered with ten thousand arguments, to fear thy tremendous power, and love thy diffusive goodness. Oh! how safe are they, who have so infinite and mighty a being for their guard! how happy are they, who have so inexhaustibly-rich a God for their portion! But how wretched, dear sister, how miserably and emphatically wretched, who have such a one for their enemy and revenger! Oh! how can our feeble frame, that shrinks at a little light affliction, that is but for a moment,—how can it bear the never-ending vengeance of that prodigious arm, which stretched out the heavens, laid the foundations of the earth, and poured out the waters of the mighty deep!

I have been about twenty, or twenty-six miles into *Cornwall*, and seen wondrous workmanship of the all-creating God; ragged rocks, roaring seas, frightful precipices, and dreadfully-steep hills. At *Bideford*, a market-town, about fourteen miles off, I am pretty well known, and am a little esteemed. It is strange to tell, but let it be to the glory of God's free and undeserved goodness, though I am worthy of shame and universal contempt, yet I find favour and good understanding almost where-ever I go.

Mr ***'s house is situate in a fine vale. It is an ancient structure, built for the use of religious recluses, and has an antique, grave, and solemn aspect; before it is a neat spot of ground, set apart for the use of a garden, enriched with fruits, and beautified with flowers. This leads into a curious sort of artificial wilderness made of elms and limes, planted in rows, cut into form, and uniting their branches. In the midst is a fountain large enough to swim in, and a little engine playing the waters. On each side are arbours for shade, in various parts seats for rest; on the right hand runs parallel to it a clear purling brook replenished with trout, on the left a thick grove hanging from the side of a hill; the one serves for a watery mound, the other is a leafy shelter from the north wind, and both, I think, greatly ornamental. This, you will say, is pleasant; but how unworthy to be compared with those blissful mansions fitting up for the righteous in the heaven of heavens! This, and if there be any other spot a thousand times more delicate, is no better than a howling wilderness, if compared with the regions of paradise. I wish my dear sister would earnestly seek for God's grace to draw off her affections from earthly delights, and fix them there where real, substantial, and eternal joys are to be found, even on the blissful vision of God, and the fulness of joy that is in his presence for evermore.——Your, &c.

LETTER XII.

Dear Sister, *Biddeford, Dec.* 10, 1740.

THough I am so backward in my compliments, I am most hearty in my wishes, that your spouse and yourself may enjoy abundance of happiness in the married state. I congratulate late, but I shall ever pray, that you may find blessings twisted with the matrimonial bands; and not only live lovingly together, as one flesh, but live holily together as fellow-heirs of the grace of life.

I hope you will both remember the eternal world, which must very shortly receive you: That ere long the nuptial bed must be religned for a lodging in the grave; and the ornaments of a sparkling bride, be exchanged for the dressings of death. And if, under the frequent view of these serious truths, you study to further each other in faith and holiness,—then will you be true helpmeets one to the other: then will you come together, not for the worse, but for the better: then may you trust, that when death shall dissolve the union below, Christ Jesus will bid it commence again above; and continue to endless ages, in the midst of unspeakable delight.

Please to present my humble service to the several Mr ***, and Mrs ***, that still remain in your town; to Mrs ***, and her daughter; Mr *** and his spouse, and Mr ***. Remember me also in the kindest manner to your poor neighbours, particularly those who have Mr ***'s books. May God Almighty give them grace to make a proper and practical use of them! May he sanctify the attentive and diligent reading of them, to their increase in godliness, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

When you see my *Collingtree* relations and acquaintance, salute them affectionately in my name. I suppose you will soon see my ***, and ***; present my duty to them. I should rejoice to see them again in the flesh, before any of us go hence, and are no more seen. May the Father of our spirits, and the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, our righteousness, prepare us for a happy meeting in the regions of glory, and for the blissful vision of his own adorable self.

There is at *Biddeford*, and has been for a considerable time, a townsman of mine, a middle-aged man, born at —— ; his name is ***. I little thought to find such a person in these remote parts. It puts me in mind of heaven, where people of every kindred and tongue, of all nations and languages, will form one general and glorious assembly. May you and I, dear sister, one day be numbered with those children of God; and have our lot, our delightful and everlasting lot, among the saints. —I am, &c.

LETTER XII.

Reverend and dear Sir, *June* 2, 1747.

CAN you accept the will for the deed? It was in my heart, long before this, to have made you my best acknowledgments; and not in my heart only, but actually attempted. In *Buckinghamshire* I remembered my kind and obliging friend, and was with delight set down to give vent to my grateful thoughts. But company on a sudden coming in, arrested my pen; and engaging me till I returned from that place, prevented the execution of my design. Now, Sir, my heartiest thanks for your welcome assistance, desire your acceptance. And if the utmost sincerity can atone for the delay, my conscious heart assures me, they will not be rejected.—My father is wonderfully recovered. Had he lived in the times of superstition, for ought I know, his uncommon disorder might have been ascribed to witchcraft, and his speedy recovery passed current for a miracle. The grave seemed to have opened her mouth for him. We thought him to be on the very brink of death.

Quam pæne furvæ regna Proserpinæ,
Et judicantem viderit Æacum,
Sedesque descriptas piorum!

But now God has turned, and refreshed him; yea, and brought him from the deep of the earth again. He lives and regains his strength daily. Last *Sunday* he read prayers in his church, and intends next *Sunday* to fill the pulpit.

Mrs ***, I hope, is very well; to whom I beg my humble service may be acceptable. Your dear little ones too, the olive plants about your table, I trust are in a flourishing state. May the good Lord fulfil his precious promise to them, and the children of your honoured neighbour. May he pour his Spirit upon your seed, and his blessing upon your offspring, that they may grow up (in knowledge and grace) as willows by the water-courses.——I am just now going to our visitation, held at *Northampton*. I shall appear as a stranger in our *Jerusalem*; knowing few, and known by fewer. Methinks, there's something august and venerable in a meeting of the clergy; especially, if one looks upon them as so many agents for the invisible God, and envoys from the court of heaven. I hope to be put in mind of that awful day, when the Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, and Bishop of souls, will make his entrance in the clouds of heaven. Then, at that great, final, and decisive entrance, may my dear friend receive the approbation of his Judge. May he then be rewarded for his kind offices to myself and others, in everlasting honour and joy.—I am, &c.

LETTER XIII.

Dear Sister, *Biddeford, July* 7, 1741.

AFter a very sultry journey, I arrived safe at *Biddeford*. Here I have been one whole week. At *Bath* and *Bridgwater* I made a considerable stay. I tarried at each place a couple of nights; was entertained with abundance of civility.

There is a general prospect of a plenteous harvest. The valleys stand so thick with corn, as makes the traveller rejoice, and the husbandman sing. There is great want and scarcity of many things, but there is plenty of fish. Now the dry land is so barren, the waters yield the larger increase. It is observed, to the glory of God's good providence, that now flesh is so dear, fish is uncommonly cheap. Thus graciously does the Almighty, when he locks up one, open another fountain of his beneficence. During my absence from *Biddeford*, a lusty man, in the prime and vigour of life, was carried off by my father's disorder. It is therefore distinguished mercy that our father has enjoyed; such as has been with-held from others, while it has been vouchsafed to him.

I am now far from my dear relations. Friends I have indeed, but not one of my kindred near me. O! that God may be my guide, my protector, and my portion here and for ever. If the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ be my Shepherd, I shall lack nothing. Unworthy, altogether unworthy of such an inestimable favour, I desire to lie at the feet of his free unmerited grace; seeking what he is ready to give, though I, alas! am most undeserving. And surely we have good reason to hope, and the very best encouragement to seek. For if he gave his life, and spilt his blood for us, will he not much rather give us pardon of our sins, and justification through his righteousness?

I hope my brother *** is in perfect health. I wish him

a seasonable and kindly harvest; and wish you h abundance of happiness;—and am, dear sister,

His and yours, *&c.*

LETTER XIV.

My dear Friend,

I find you have had Mr *** among you lately.——Many, I hope, have found abundant benefit from is preaching, and you in particular. He is a shining ght, a choice and illustrious ambassador of Jesus Christ. What a savour of his divine Master does he shed broad whenever he preaches! such a savour, as many orruptions cannot overcome, nor all the world supress. *Biddeford*, I hope, has experienced this savour.—Methinks, I now see him in the pulpit, and hear im lifting up his compassionate voice like a trumpet, nd proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord. Methinks, I see him displaying the gospel-standard, and his ongue touched from the heavenly altar, inviting sinners to flock under his shadow; crying, Come, ye simple ones, whom Satan has beguiled, and Christ shall ive you light; come, ye wicked ones, whom Satan as enslaved, and the gracious Redeemer shall set you ree; come, ye that have been righteous in your own yes, forsake this refuge of lies, and enter into the ark efore the rains descend, and the floods come, which will sweep away every false hope: O! lean not upon broken reed; build not upon the sinking sand; but upon the Rock of ages; the Foundation laid in *Zion* by he hand of heaven itself. Come unto Jesus, ye ruined nd undone sinners, for he has a tender heart that is ever open to receive you; and an arm that is omnipotent to save you. Indeed, my friends, those that know Christ's name will seek no other Saviour, nor desire any other good; all their bones will cry out, Lord, unto whom shall we go, but unto thee? thou only hast the words of eternal life. They that know Christ's free goodness, will put their whole trust in him, and seek no other way to the Father of mercy, but through his merit. This is their only claim they have to make for their acceptance, Christ died; but for whom did he die, my dear friends? He gave himself a ransom for all; he was lifted up upon the accursed tree, and out of his side came a fountain of blood and water, where every sinner may bathe and be made clean. The awakened sons of *Adam*, that feel their miseries, see a fulness of merit in one drop of that blood, sufficient to atone for the guilt of ten thousand worlds. This fills them with great comfort, although they are vile sinners. What though they are loathsome beggars, taken from the dunghill of uncleanness, that are but now returning from the highways and hedges of every abominable practice? What though they are as beasts before God, very dogs, like that poor *Syrophenician* woman? yet Christ's saving kindness is so great and unbounded, that he casteth out none who come unto him. Here is consolation for the trembling sinner, though he has not a grain of worthiness in himself, yet his Lord has infinite treasures of unmerited grace. They who believe that Christ shed his precious blood for guilty sinners, will chearfully put their trust in this atonement for pardon. They will say, O! they will often say, with gratitude glowing in their breasts, and tears in their eyes; Be it that my sins are as the deepest crimson die, and more in number than the hairs of my head, yet the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, and washeth a filthy polluted conscience whiter than snow. With him there is no scanty, but plenteous redemption. Be my debts ever so great, ten thousand times ten thousand talents; yet the agonies of the once slaughtered Lamb has paid it to the very uttermost farthing. They who know his righteousness, will put their trust in it alone for justification. If I had the righteousness of a saint, says one, O how happy should I be? If I had the righteousness of an angel, says another, I should fear no evil. But I am bold to say, that the poorest sinner that believes in Christ, has a righteousness infinitely more excellent than either saints or angels. For if the law asks for sinless perfection, it is to be found in my divine Surety. If the law requires an obedience that may stand before the burning eye of God, behold it is in Jesus my Mediator. Should the strictest justice arraign me, and the purest holiness make its demands upon me, I remit them both to my dying and obedient *Immanuel*; with him the Father is always well pleased, in him the believer is complete. They who know Christ's power, will put their trust in him for sanctification of heart and newness of life. Though sin is rooted in my soul, and rivetted in my constitution, yet Christ can purge it out. Though it were twisted with every nerve of my flesh, yet he can make the rough tempers smooth, and the crooked dispositions straight: the vile affections, like legions of devils, he can root out, and fill every heart with the pure love of God. To which happy state of soul may both you and I be brought while here below; that he may be made meet to ascend to that habitation of God, where nothing unclean can enter.—I am yours sincerely, *&c.*

LETTER XV.

To his FATHER.

Rev. and Hon. Sir, *Biddeford, Oct.* 1, 1742.

YOUR last, containing the melancholy account of the death of both my aunts, I received. I hope they died in the Lord, and sleep in the bosom of Jesus; and then, truly, they are the happy persons, and we the objects of pity. They rest, and have cast anchor in the harbour; whereas we are still beating on the ocean, and tossed in the storm.——If we consider things impartially, this world is our grave; nor do we really live, till we burst the fleshly prison, and get beyond the visible skies.

In the grave is darkness. It is called the shadow of death. And what else is this wretched world? what, but a state of gloominess; a valley of the thickest darkness? where poor mortals grope in spiritual ignorance, and wander up and down, not seeing the things that belong to their peace.

In the grave, and among the tombs, we look for phantoms and apparitions.——And what else do we meet with here below? A thousand sorts of happiness present themselves to our wishes, but are unsubstantial and phantastical all. They are a gay delusion, and mock our expectation, as one of those vanishing forms would baulk our embraces.

The grave is the land where all things are forgotten. The ideas of friendship are obliterated, and the dearest relatives are remembered no more.——And is not this too true a description of our present state? Do we not unaccountably forget Jesus Christ, our almighty Friend, and everlasting glory, our invaluable heritage? Where is the man that remembers his bleeding Saviour on his bed, and thinks upon him when he is waking? No; the Redeemer's inconceivable love, and the precious benefits of his passion, are buried in a deep oblivion.—This world then of darkness, apparitions, and forgetfulness, is the grand dormitory; flesh and blood the tomb of our immortal minds.

Nascentes morimur.

I fear I tire you, honoured Sir: but because I have no news that you can apprehend or relish, I allow my pen in these excursions.——This week I was sent for to visit a lady of this parish, in the same disorder, that proved so fatal to my two aunts. She lay, poor gentle-

gentlewoman, most terribly afflicted, and is now releas-ed. It put me in mind of the *psalmist*'s penitential ac-knowledgment, which, I think, is never more applica-ble than in the case of the small-pox: When thou, Lord, with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment. I shall rejoice to hear that you and my mother continue well, under all your trou-ble and fatigue; and remain,

Reverend and honourable Sir,

Your most dutiful son,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XVI.

Dear Sister, *Biddeford, October* 12, 1742.

I Received your kind letter. It was a pleasure to hear from *Hardingstone*, the place which gave me birth, and the place which preserves my sister.——I am ob-liged to the Rev. Mr *Ros* for remembering me, and de-sire him to accept my best compliments; I hope he will be an instrument of doing much good in your parish. To save souls, is the noblest acquisition in the world; infinitely more desirable, than to find great spoils.—— May this be his honour and happiness, and may it be my continual aim!

My poor *aunts* are no more, they are gone the way of all flesh; eternity has received them; their state is now become unchangeable. Oh, that we may be alarmed by their departure, and labour, while we have time, to make our calling and election sure!

My mother tells me, you have been much indispo-sed; I shall rejoice to hear that you are better. Sick-ness and afflictions are God's call, they are divine admo-nitions, and warn us not to be fond of the world, but set our affections on things above. May the blessed Jesus make them effectual to our souls!

I wish I had any news to write, that you can under-stand and relish. The small-pox is marking many, and carrying off some among us; it is a privilege of no small value, to be past that infectious disorder: I have often thought, that it is too lively an emblem of the condition of our souls, by corrupt nature and evil prac-tice. So polluted, so loathsome is our better part, in the eye of uncreated purity, till we are washed, till we are cleansed in redeeming blood. May we earnestly long to be washed in that fountain, opened in our Saviour's side, for sin and for uncleanness.

See how our judgments and inclinations alter in pro-cess of time! I once thought I should make less use of the *Spectator* than you; but now I believe the reverse of this is true, for we read one or more of those elegant and instructive papers every morning at breakfast; they are served up with our tea, according to their original design. We reckon our repast imperfect, without a little of Mr *Addison*'s or Mr *Steele*'s company. I wish Miss *Becky K*—— an increase of happiness in the change of her state; marriage should augment our joys, and di-minish our sorrows. My humble service attends Mrs *K*—— Mr *C*——'s family, and Mr *V*——. My love to my brother, and to yourself, concludes all at present to be communicated by,

Dear Sister,

Your affectionate brother,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XVII.

Rev. Sir, *Bath, August* 27, 1743.

SUNDAY last, I happened not to be at the Abbey-church, in the afternoon. But conversing yester-day with a gentleman who was one of your auditor I desired to have a summary account of your sermo And truly he gave me such an account, as both astonish-ed and grieved me. You dignified worldly prosperit at so extraordinary a rate, and almost canonized th prosperous man. On the other hand, you vilified th glorious Jesus in so scandalous a manner, and set th incarnate Godhead to one of the most ignoble and abo minable offices. This made me encourage my frien to draw his pen, and send you a word of admonition And when he declined the task, I could not forbear un dertaking it myself. For it would be unkind to you Sir, to perceive you under such grievous mistakes, an not warn you of the error of your ways. Nor woul it be less unfaithful to your Master, and my Master, t be informed of such preaching, and suffer it to pass cur-rent without any animadversion.

If I misrepresent you in any particular, I am ready to retract. And if I have truth on my side, and you, Re-verend Sir, have spoken unworthy your sacred office, have dishonoured the divine Redeemer, and perverted his everlasting gospel;—I trust, you also will be so inge-nuous, as to condemn that offensive sermon to the flames, and such doctrines to silence and darkness. For I assure you, it is from no ill-natured spirit of criticism, no moroseness of temper, or fondness for contradiction, but from a sincere concern for the interests of true reli-gion, and the honours of our common Lord, that I take leave to suggest the following hints.

I think you first exhorted people to rejoice, when their circumstances were affluent, and their worldly af-fairs prosperous; you enforced this palatable advice, by the precepts of scripture; and lest it should not be re-ceived with a proper welcome, you further urged it up-on your hearers, by the example of our blessed Saviour. In opposition to this strain of teaching, permit me to observe,

1. That worldly prosperity is no sufficient cause for a Christian to rejoice.
2. That it is often one of the sorest evils that can be-fal a person.
3. To sketch out the true nature of scriptural prosp-erity; or discover, what is that solid ground for re-joicing, which the oracles of God recommend.

First, worldly prosperity is no sufficient cause for re-joicing, because worldly things are empty and unsatis-factory. That which is lighter than vanity itself, can-not possibly give substantial joy. If we build for con-tentment, upon sublunary things, we rear our edifice up-on the sinking sand. You can no more bring satisfac-tion out of any thing created, than you can carve an image out of the rising smoke, or fill your belly with the east wind. Those that rejoice only (and you, dear Sir, assigned no other cause for rejoicing) because they have abundance of earthly things richly to enjoy, are like some bewildered and benighted traveller, pierced with cold, dripping with wet, that leaps for joy because he finds a glow-worm under the hedge. Alas! this is in nowise able to direct his wandering feet, to light him through the dismal gloom, or to warm his benumbed limbs; no more than it is able to supply the place of the sun, and dart its faint glimmer through the universe.— The pleasures which a superior fortune furnish out, O! how soon do they become stale, and pall upon the ap-petite! How easily may a thousand accidents snatch them from our embrace, or dash them to pieces in our arms! How certainly must we forsake them in a very little time; and when we have taken a few more plea-sant morsels, a few delicious draughts, eat and drink again no more for ever! And what a wretched dispro-portionate delight is this, for an immortal mind, that is to survive the dissolution of the globe; this is to live unnum-

unnumbered ages, when all that our eyes have ſeen, is paſſed away and gone?

Again, worldly proſperity is no ſufficient cauſe for rejoicing, becauſe a perſon may poſſeſs this, and have neither faith, nor grace. There is no manner of connection between faith and wealth. The poor frequently receive the goſpel, while numbers of the rich reject their own happineſs. And without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God; it is unreaſonable and unwarrantable to rejoice. The believer, indeed, has a permiſſion; has a privilege, yea, has a patent for rejoicing. The Chriſtian has all joy and peace in believing. All—you ſee here is a monopoly, faith has ingroſſed this precious commodity. None is to be procured, but from her.—And as for grace, talents of gold may be in the coffers, and not one grain of grace in the heart. Thoſe that call whole lordſhips their own, cannot, perhaps, ſay, that they have received the Holy Ghoſt. And while they are deſtitute of this divine principle. I can call them nothing but wretches. You may add Illuſtrious, Right Honourable, and Worſhipful, if you pleaſe; but ſtill they are miſerable wretches, unleſs Chriſt, the hope of glory, be formed in their ſouls. The Holy Ghoſt, you know, Sir, is called the Comforter, becauſe it is his amiable office to adminiſter conſolation to his people. He giveth joy, and who can make ſadneſs? But alas! if he withdraw his benign influences, who or what can create ſatisfaction? Silver ſhoes may as well charm away the racking pains of a goutified foot, or golden duſt quench the thirſt of a parched throat, as any worldly abundance, as all worldly plenty, beget real joy, without the communications of the comforting Spirit.—— You forget, Sir, the prayers which you daily offer up in the congregation. In them, you acknowledge that the world cannot give peace. And if not peace, ſurely not joy. If not the fruit, ſurely not the bloſſom. There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked. And all are wicked, who are void of faith, and unrenewed by grace. All run counter to the divine declaration, who bid ſuch perſons rejoice, though they ſhould have every kind of proſperity that a carnal heart can wiſh.

Once more, worldly proſperity is no ſufficient cauſe for rejoicing, becauſe a man may poſſeſs this, and be a child of wrath notwithſtanding. Providence often ſcatters temporary things among the tents of his enemies. They have children at their deſire, and leave the reſt of their ſubſtance for their babes. Theſe are huſks which the ſwine are permitted to eat. God's deareſt ſervants, thoſe who are heirs of glory, are frequently ſeen to be without any ſhare of them, while the moſt abandoned ſinners have them to the full. *Lazarus* has not a houſe to lay his head in, while the voluptuary dwells in apartments ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion. *Lazarus* has not enough to purchaſe one morſel of meat, muſt be beholden to charity for the leaſt crumb of proviſion; while his hard-hearted neighbour drinks wine in bowls, and eats the choiceſt of the flock; is clothed in purple and fine linen, and fareth ſumptuouſly every day.—Who then can rationally rejoice in that which is no pledge of the divine acceptance; which carries with it no proof of our reconciliation to that eternal Majeſty, whoſe ſmile is inconceivable bliſs, whoſe frown is inſupportable woe?—A wealthy and ſucceſsful perſon, if he be conſiderate as well as fortunate, muſt go home from ſuch a ſermon arguing in this manner: "The preacher ſolicits me to rejoice in my worldly goods. But how can I find complacency in ſuch periſhing poſſeſſions, when, perhaps, I may be an outcaſt from heaven, and have no place in that kingdom which endureth for ever? how can I take pleaſure in theſe dainties that repleniſh my table, when perhaps the heavy wrath of God may fall upon me, while the meat is yet in my

"mouth? This ſumptuous furniture, this glittering "equipage, theſe delicious treats, how can I take real "ſatisfaction in them, when, for ought I know, a "hand-writing upon the wall may be denouncing my "doom? If God would lift up the light of his counte-"nance upon me; if I was ſweetly aſcertained of his "good-will; then I could rejoice unfeignedly. But as "for theſe large revenues, and tides of ſucceſs, that are "ſo much extolled by the preacher, they may prove "like the rich paſtures that fatten the ox for the knife."

Will you have patience with me, Sir, if I proceed to prove,

2. That worldly proſperity is ſo far from being an adequate cauſe for our rejoicing, that it is frequently one of the ſoreſt and moſt miſchievous evils?—This I am ſure was the opinion of Archbiſhop *Uſher*. That moſt renowned and excellent prelate, in his younger days, had a continued ſeries of proſperity: health, impaired by no attacks of ſickneſs; credit ſullied by no breath of ſcandal; and ſucceſs interrupted by no diſappointment, or diſaſtrous turn. And what emotion did this occaſion in that devout and judicious perſon's mind? did his heart dance within him for joy? did he bleſs himſelf on this behalf? No.——But he was under ſad apprehenſions, leſt God had forſaken him, and given him over to a reprobate courſe. He feared, that his heavenly Father, becauſe he ſpared the rod hated the child; that not being brought under the diſcipline of providential correction, he was a baſtard, and not a ſon of the Lord Almighty.——How diametrically oppoſite was this way of thinking, to your way of preaching! And whether it was not a very ſober and juſt method of thinking, let the following conſiderations determine.

Worldly proſperity is apt to attach men to earthly things. When ſucceſs ſwells their ſails, and all proceeds according to their wiſh, O! how prone are we to diſregard Jeſus, and everlaſting ages! Many are immoderately fond of the world, becauſe they have ſwam ſweetly done the ſtream of proſperity; who, probably, would have been weaned from its delights, and indifferent to its goods, in caſe they had toiled upon the craggy cliffs of ſome intervening adverſity. When they walk always upon roſes, and meet with no thorns in their paths, the conſequence is an acquieſcence in their preſent ſtation, and remiſſneſs in ſeeking the joys of an inviſible world. A contentment in the things that are ſeen, without any aſpiration after the things that are not ſeen, is the moſt unhappy condition imaginable, and is generally the offſpring of worldly proſperity. And when this worldly proſperity is ſo highly rated in the calculations of the pulpit, what other effect can poſſibly attend ſuch lectures, but to glue our affections more cloſely, and rivet them more inſeparably, to theſe trifles of a day?

Again, worldly proſperity is frequently a miſchievous evil, becauſe it is apt to make men proud. They come in no misfortune like other folks, ſays the *pſalmiſt*, and this is the cauſe that they are ſo holden with pride. Proſperity is often a luſcious poiſon. It bloats and puffs men up with an overweaning opinion of themſelves. It intoxicates the mind, and makes it drunk with ſelf-conceit. It prompts people to idolize themſelves, and contemn others. The intollerable arrogance of the *Babyloniſh* monarch, what was it owing to but his vaſt and uninterrupted ſucceſſes? He meaſured his merit by the length of his purſe, and challenged a veneration proportionable to the extent of his dominions. This vile, rank weed, thrives in the hot-beds of honour, wealth, and carnal pleaſure. Whereas it might never have reared its head, in the colder climate of tribulation, or ſcantineſs of circumſtances.

Once more, worldly prosperity is frequently a pernicious evil, because it renders men carnally secure. It case-hardens the mind against all the threatenings, and makes it deaf to the invitations of heavenly wisdom. It is a stupefying potion, and lulls the soul into a fatal forgetfulness of everlasting things. Those that were lusty and strong, in our Saviour's days, joined with the impious multitude in despising the veiled Divinity. But those who were diseased in their bodies, or disordered in their minds, with eagerness fell prostrate at his sacred feet, and implored his healing hand.——*Periissent, nisi periissent.*—You cannot but have observed various proofs of this remark in the course of your ministry. You must have seen many persons that rejected all your counsel, and would none of your reproof, while they washed their steps in butter, and the rock poured them out rivers of oil. But how teachable were these once refractory worldlings,—how willing to hear the consolations of the gospel, when their sensible delights were perished and gone? How desirous to be informed of a happiness in the heavens, which fadeth not, when their carnal pleasures had made themselves wings, and were flown away? In the gaiety of their health, and abundance of their plenty, they were settled upon the lees of their supineness. But when the scene was shifted, they cried out with vehemence, What must we do to be saved? This I myself have frequently remarked in the short compass of my experience. Men who were like an iron sinew in their flourishing condition, have been impressible as melting wax in a reverse of fortune.

We see then, that the prosperity of this world is always dangerous; often pernicious; and too frequently destructive. It yields pleasures that infatuate;—sweets that are impoisoned;—delights that stupefy. Insomuch, that a Heathen could say, *Nihil infelicius illo, cui nihil infelix contigit.*

Here it may be asked, Are we to take no comfort in our portion on earth? must we become gloomy and melancholy, and go mourning all our days?—Far, far from it. Religion allows us, religion enables us, religion requires us to be joyful. Yea, it gives its faithful adherents to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.——But then it is founded on a principle vastly superior to that which you, Sir, thought fit to single out and display. It springs from a source, and rests on a basis, that has no manner of dependence on worldly circumstances. Which reminds me of another point I am engaged to clear up, *viz.*

The true nature of scriptural prosperity.—The scripture is a spiritual scheme. Spiritual goods are what it chiefly recommends, and from spiritual evils it chiefly deters. Christ's words are spirit; tending to make men not carnally minded, but spiritually minded; to render them spiritual in their understandings, their affections, their conduct. Insomuch that one need not scruple to affirm constantly, That the holy scripture never calls that state a state of prosperity, which is not grounded on the favour of God; nor ever encourages people to rejoice in any thing, till they are—reconciled to God,—interested in Christ,—and renewed by the Holy Ghost; which, I think, constitute the scriptural prosperity; I am sure, are the ground-work of all happiness.——First, for reconciliation to God. His favour is better than life. Life itself is worthless, and, consequently, all its enjoyments, without this prime fundamental blessing. For this cause, the Prince of Peace bled to death, that the hand-writing of guilt might be blotted out; that the wrath of God might be appeased; and that we who were enemies, might be brought near through his blood. This is the door to all good. Enter in by this gate, O ye sons of men, or else you will inevitably miscarry in your search after felicity. If you seek for bliss, and bottom not your expectations on this rock, you are sure to be disappointed of your hope. I can no more have true comfort in any possession, till I have redemption thro' my Redeemer's passion, than that unfortunate captive could rejoice in the royal banquet that was before him, when a ponderous sword, edged and unsheathed, was hanging by a slender thread, and shaking every moment over his head.——An interest in Christ. This is another pillar to support our felicity. Therefore, our blessed Lord, directing us in the way to our true good, says, Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness. The everlasting kingdom of heaven as the end, and the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, as the way. Till the one is our actual possession, and the other our certain reversion, we may look for real satisfaction, but shall find none. Apply to all the creatures; rifle all their charms; taste all their sweets; you will perceive them to be altogether lighter than vanity itself, without an union with Christ, and an establishment in his merits.——Renovation of mind, is another ingredient of the prosperity delineated in scripture. Till the soul be sanctified, it is in a state of grievous disorder; like a body, all whose bones are out of joint. And, oh! what joy can be tasted in such a condition? Till divine grace have the ascendant within us; till the kingdom of God be set up in our hearts; we are in bondage to corruption. Vile affections domineer over us. The devil and our own lusts play the tyrant in our breasts. We are like slaves under a galling yoke, and like lepers under a noisome distemper. Therefore the *psalmist* says, When I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it. Till thy image be reinstamped upon my heart, I never expect to see good. While we are in the bond of iniquity, we must infallibly be in the gall of bitterness.

This is the prosperity celebrated in the scriptures. Of this every believer is a partaker; and you will please to remember, that every exhortation to rejoicing, which we meet with in those inspired books, are addressed to such persons only. They give not the least invitation to any one, no nor the least licence, to rest satisfied, much less to rejoice, till they are brought into such circumstances of reconciliation with heaven, and renovation of mind. Nor have you, Sir, any warrant to say to yourself, or your people, Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry, because thou hast much goods laid up for many years. This is the epicure's creed. The lively oracles bear their testimony against such conclusions. They style all the unregenerate, fools. And to such, worldly abundance is not matter for mirth, but matter of ruin. For the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. Be they grand as *Nebuchadnezzar*, in as much as *Ahasuerus*, honoured as *Herod* was by the applauding multitude, yet every page of scripture says to them, as *Jehu* to *Joram*'s messenger, What hast thou to do with peace? And, however some smooth-tongued preacher may flatter and cajole them in their pomp; however they may prophecy smooth things, and solicit them to rejoice on such a footing, as the Lord has not made a ground for rejoicing; yet an apostle bespeaks them in very different language: Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl. The teacher sent from God has other tidings to tell them, Woe unto you that are rich, that are full, for ye have your consolation, ye shall hunger hereafter. And, in another world, they may hear this awful admonition sounding in their ears, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things; thy good things, those which thou accountedst good, not that really were good, but only appeared so, to thy distempered judgment, and vitiated taste.

Surely, Sir, it must have been perfectly prudent, or rather absolutely necessary, to caution your audience against so fatal a mistake; especially since the consti-

conſiſt of the gay, the grand, the pleaſurable. A vigilant miniſter would certainly give them to underſtand, that wealth and plenty is, by no means, the proſperity which the Spirit of God commends; that joy, without the loving-kindneſs of the Lord, is a mere chimera; that none are entitled to this medicine of life, but thoſe who can lay their hand upon their hearts, and ſay, with a faith unfeigned, My ſins are all forgiven, through the atonement of the ſlaughtered Lamb; my peace is made with the eternal God, and the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt dwells in me. This is that which juſtifies, which produces joy. Then, indeed, and not till then, the wiſe man's advice may be thy practice: Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth both thee and thy works.—— Then thou mayſt take comfort in thy earthly accommodations, as ſo many little appendages of thy bliſs; not as the eſſence which conſtitutes it; but as the cement, which ſerves to fill up ſome little interſtices, and renders the whole ſomewhat more compact. And even, in this caſe, our bleſſed Maſter (who bid his diſciples not to rejoice, becauſe the devils were ſubject unto them, but becauſe their names were written in heaven) would, probably, caution us not to rejoice, becauſe we have all worldly things copiouſly to enjoy, but becauſe we are pardoned, we are juſtified, we are ſanctified.

Upon the whole: Suppoſe worldly proſperity was not oftentimes a moſt miſchievous evil, which it undoubtedly is;—ſuppoſe it was a ſubſtantial ground for Chriſtian rejoicing, which it really is not;—ſuppoſe this was the ſcriptural proſperity, which notion is, I truſt, ſufficiently diſproved:—in a word, ſuppoſe the whole tenor of your doctrine to be true, whereas it ſeems to be palpably falſe: yet what good, in the name of wonder, can you poſſibly propoſe by ſuch preachments? You cannot but be ſenſible, that we are all ſtrongly addicted to inferior things. We are already too fond of worldly goods, too impetuous in our purſuit of ſenſual gratifications. We want, we extremely want a curb to check our career, and you clap a ſpur on our ſides. You employ your eloquence as a provocative, in a caſe that cries aloud for reſtrictives. Alas! Sir, you have no occaſion to puſh the headlong torrent!——But I have done with this point; have nothing more to add upon this head, unleſs it be to recommend to your ſerious conſideration, that alarming verdict, pronounced by infinite wiſdom, He that liveth in pleaſure, is dead while he liveth; dead to God, dead to grace; a dead Chriſtian, though a living animal. Compare, Reverend Sir, this declaration with the tendency of your doctrine. Then, I aſſure myſelf, you will not redden with indignation at theſe plain remonſtrances; but rather (as I ſhould in your caſe) turn pale with grief, at your paſt teachings; and tremble with fear, for the conſequences of them.

Thus much for your divinity: Now, Sir, if you pleaſe for your logic. We have canvaſſed your doctrine; let us next conſider the argument, with which you eſtabliſh it. This is, if poſſible, ten thouſand times more exceptionable than the tenet itſelf. For after having told your audience, that the carnal delight, which you ſo earneſtly preſs to take, is agreeable to the reaſon of things, is conſonant to the deſigns of providence, you think proper to add, that it is alſo countenanced by our Saviour's example; ſince, at a certain marriage-feaſt, when the wine fell ſhort, he wrought a miracle, and furniſhed them with a freſh ſupply on purpoſe, That the mirth might not die. This was your expreſſion. And, ſurely, a more ſhocking one never came from a preacher's lips. Was ever ſo abject and ſcurvy a reaſon aſſigned, for one of the moſt illuſtrious actions? Could any debauched libertine, at a drunken club, have derogated more contumelioufly from the dignity of our Lord's behaviour? Jeſus, the mirrour of purity, the fountain of wiſdom, of whom it is teſtified, That he did all things well;—this wiſe and glorious Being is repreſented, not by an abandoned lot, but by a miniſter of the goſpel, as exerting his omnipotence to prolong a merry bout. O! that it might not be told in *Gath*, or publiſhed in the ſtreets of *Aſhelon!* But—*fugit irrevocabile verbum*; you cannot revoke the words. The only reparation you can make to the injured Jeſus, or the offended Chriſtian, is to give us a ſermon of recantation, and antidote the poiſon that has been propagated.

But, I would hope, it is too groſs to ſpread. That the mirth may not die, is an aſſertion that muſt ſtartle every hearer. Why, this a common vintner might have prevented, as well as an almighty Being; a few flaſks from the tavern would have anſwered this end.—Moſt ignoble purpoſe! unworthy, altogether unworthy ſo auguſt, divine, and admirable a perſon.——O! what a handle does this yield to infidels for profane banter! That Jeſus ſhould deſcend from the heaven of heavens, and come into the world, veſted with uncontrollable power, on ſo poor, grovelling, and ſordid an errand! That a part of his buſineſs, in the ſtate of humanity, ſhould be to guard againſt the extinction of ſuch idle mirth, as owes its birth to a bottle!——The ſoldiers that ſtripped our Lord of his apparel, and mocked his ſacred perſon; that ſpit upon his bleſſed face, buffeted his divine head, and loaded him with all manner of ſcurrilities and indignities; did not commit (in my opinion) ſo flagrant an abuſe, as a modern preacher in one of his ſtudied ſolemn harangues. They took him to be a mere man; they pronounced him a vile man; and, therefore, offered him ſuch opprobrious affronts. But you, Sir, acknowledge him to be God; you know him to be infinitely wiſe, and yet make him a lacquey to the moſt arrant trifles, a drudge to men's carnal indulgences.——Suppoſe both our houſes of parliament, after the matureſt deliberation, ſhould employ the whole army of the nation, to clear away all obſtructions for a butterfly in her flowery range, or to ſee that a ſilly kitten goes on unmoleſted in her ſportive gambols; would you extol the wiſdom of our ſenators? would you not cry ſhame upon their conduct? Now, your aſſertion is full as depretiatory to the conſummate prudence, and exemplary purity of our divine Maſter: ſince you ſet them both on work, joined with his irreſiſtible might, only to furniſh out a little more gaiety, a little more laughter, to a ſet of carouſers, whom you deſcribe as pretty well in for it already.

That the mirth might not die! That is, That thoſe who were already made merry with liquor, might go on in their jovial delights, till they added drunkenneſs to their thirſt. For when people are thus exhilarated, to take freſh draughts, and pour down more wine, muſt indeed make them, as a profeſſed ſcorner profanely expreſſes himſelf, on this very occaſion, more than half ſeas over. So that when you give an evaſive flouriſh or two, and would have your hearers to believe, that you are no advocate for intemperance, it is plain, you are only complimenting the cauſe of ſobriety. This interpretation put upon our Lord's conduct, knocks all ſuch ſham pretences on the head. For, if he wrought the miracle with ſuch a view, and for ſuch ſort of people, all the world cannot clear him from being a promoter of exceſs; and if he did not, all the world cannot acquit you, Sir, from the moſt abuſive miſrepreſentations of your Redeemer.

That the mirth might not die! What could a lewd rake have done at his riotous table, worſe than that which you aſcribe to the pattern of all perfection?—— My blood grows chill: my thoughts recoil at ſo horrid a poſition. Any gentleman of tolerable ſerioufneſs, when he perceives his friends are got merry with

with his drink, would rather withdraw the glaſs, than add fewel to the flame. For my part, I ſhould think myſelf an abettor of exceſs, and little better than a pimp for debauchery, if when men are merry in their cups, I ſhould ſupply them with means of driving on the wanton humour. And yet,—be amazed, O ye heavens, and be horribly afraid, O earth!—A miniſter, in the midſt of a thronged congregation, charges this very practice upon the moſt immaculate Lamb of God!—O! Sir, how could he who came to be our ſanctification, adminiſter to our inordinate gratifications? how could he who has injoined us not to make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof, be inſtrumental to continue a luxurious revel?—O bleſſed Jeſus, ſurely that is fulfilled which was ſpoken by thy prophet, Thou art wounded in the houſe of thy friends. Thy character is debaſed, thy doctrines adulterated, by thoſe who profeſs themſelves adorers of the one, and expounders of the other. O! that ever the Chriſtian pulpit ſhould become a porch to the temple of *Bacchus!* and a Chriſtian preacher act the part of a purveyor for the tippling-houſe!

Do you intend to pleaſe, Sir, or to profit your audience, by theſe admonitions?—You can pleaſe none but men of corrupt minds, whoſe God is their belly, who mind earthly things. You can profit none but thoſe, whoſe heaven is to be found in the juice of the grape. They can ſerve no other end, but to give a ſort of ſanction to their extravagancies. Your lectures, perhaps, may be recollected with applauſe on an ale-bench, and pleaded among a circle of jolly topers. But I aſſure you, Sir, they are heard by the ſerious and devout, with the utmoſt ſorrow, and with equal deteſtation. Their ears are wounded, and their hearts bleed, under the ſound of ſuch *Bacchanalian* doctrines.

May I now be permitted to declare my ſentiments, with regard to that paſſage of ſcripture, which you have ſo unhappily perverted?

As to the mirth you ſeem ſo fond of, there is no mention of it in the ſacred narrative. For Chriſt went not about to ſpread the laugh among his company, but to make them ſerious, ſober, and wiſe unto ſalvation. If he vouchſafed his preſence at entertainments, and ſat at the tables of ſinners, it was with a gracious deſign of inſtructing and converting them in their own houſes. He came to feaſts in the ſame ſpirit, and for the ſame purpoſes, as he came into the world; to turn poor mankind from darkneſs unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God; ſo that none can imagine, when he was in the room, that there could be any thing like that licentious diverſion, which too generally prevails in our merry meetings. If they did rejoice, they rejoiced, doubtleſs, after a godly ſort. They rejoiced in the precious and inſtructive words, that dropped from Chriſt's lips, as ſweets from an honey-comb. They rejoiced to have ſo divine a prophet raiſed up unto God's people, and to have the honour of ſo illuſtrious a perſonage amongſt them. They rejoiced, without all peradventure, to ſee, and hear, and handle the word of life.

As for that expreſſion, which we tranſlate well drunk,—μεθυσθωσιν,—profane wits, I know, raiſe mighty triumphs upon it: but, in truth, they are *Babel* buildings, and proofs of nothing but their own folly. They thereby give us to underſtand, that their want of ſenſe is as unqueſtionable, as their malignity to Chriſtianity. For, ſurely, they muſt be full as arrant idiots, as they are ſhameleſs ſots, who can offer to fetch the leaſt ſhadow of a plea for riotous indulgences from this paſſage. Since, let the meaning of the word be ever ſo looſe and exceptionable, yet nothing can be concluded from thence, againſt the œconomy and decorum of that entertainment, becauſe the governor ſpeaks only of the uſual cuſtom at other treats. He ſays not a word, good or bad, of the gueſts that were preſent at that bridal-feſtival. It muſt, therefore, be not only precarious, but ridiculous and abſurd, to infer the diſorderly proceedings of thoſe people, from what the ruler obſerves concerning others. I once was acquainted with a worthy gentleman, who frequently invited to his table the young perſons of his neighbourhood; and would take a pleaſure in inſtilling or cultivating in their minds the principles of ſobriety, induſtry, and piety. Now in caſe he had ſaid, after ſupper was removed, "I know very well, my honeſt neighbours, it is cuſtomary with ſome perſons of fortune, both to pleaſe and pride themſelves in making their viſitants drunk. They puſh the glaſs briſkly round, and preſs one bumper upon another, till they ſend their gueſts ſtaggering to bed." But,—now, would any one be ſo ſtupid, as to infer from this acknowledgment of the practice of others, yet this was alſo the practice of my friend? Yet this they may do, with as much juſtneſs and ſolidity of reaſoning, as deduce any maxim in favour of exceſs from the ſpeech of the *Architriclinus* (or maſter of the feaſt.)

Evident, I think, it is, that this expreſſion, whatever be its exact import, is in no wiſe referable to the condition of thoſe gueſts; ſo that we allow our adverſaries too much advantage, by admitting any of their remarks upon its ſignification. We ſhould wreſt this weapon out of their hands, which they brandiſh ſo formidably, rather than guard againſt its ſtrokes.——But in caſe it was applicable to them, yet it is moſt monſtrous, to ſuppoſe it ſignificant of the leaſt deviation from temperance. For had we not known the company to be of the moſt exemplary behaviour, and heavenly-minded ſpirit; had they been a parcel of irreligious and lewd fellows, inſtead of the virgin-mother, and the Redeemer's diſciples, yet it would be impoſſible to conceive, that any thing which had the leaſt approach towards ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs ſhould be tolerated, when Jeſus himſelf was in the midſt of them. Before ſo venerable and divine a perſon, they would not dare to allow themſelves in any miſbecoming indulgences, or indecencies of carriage. Beſides, had their inclinations been ever ſo abandoned or impetuous, his eternal power and Godhead would have reſtrained them. He that intimidated the ſacrilegious rabble, when they profaned the temple, and drove them before his ſingle ſcourge; he that ſtruck proſtrate to the ground, a whole band of armed men, only with his word; he that had all hearts in his hand, and could manage them as he pleaſed; would, doubtleſs, have forbid, at this juncture, whatever bordered upon diſſoluteneſs.

Should any one inquire, For what cauſe then did Chriſt work this miracle, if not to revive the dying mirth?—I anſwer, ſeveral noble reaſons are aſſignable and obvious.

One; To furniſh a ſupply for freſh gueſts, which on thoſe occaſions were continually pouring in; that the feaſt might be prolonged to its uſual period, and all that came might be moderately refreſhed. For I can by no means imagine, that this freſh ſupply was intended for thoſe, who had cheared themſelves already with a ſufficient quantity. This indeed is what your ſermon takes for granted, or elſe your application of this fact is frivolous and impertinent. But I promiſe myſelf, when you give it a ſecond conſideration, you will wonder, how ſo unworthy a thought could come into your mind; and be ſorry, that it ſhould ever proceed from your lips; ſince it is ſo entirely repugnant to the whole character, conduct, and preaching of our Lord Jeſus.

Another reaſon might be, To reward the married pair, for their hoſpitality to himſelf and his followers. To give early notice to the world, that none ſhould be loſers by ſhewing kindneſs to him or his: That every

piece of reſpect paid to Jeſus, and every kindneſs exerciſed towards his family, ſhould meet with a full recompence of reward. Thus did he prepare an extenſive fund for thoſe, who had forſaken houſes, lands, relations, and their earthly all, for his ſake; prepare a fund for their ſubſiſtance, by diſpoſing people to entertain and accommodate them, when they ſhould be ſent forth, without ſtaff, or ſcrip, or money in their purſes.

Another cauſe, and that which is remarked by the holy hiſtorian, was, To manifeſt forth his glory; to give a moſt conſpicuous diſplay of his Meſſiahſhip. He opened, as it were, his commiſſion, and ſhewed his divine credentials: which was done with perfect propriety, in a public manner, before more ſpectators than his own attendants: And whatever effect it might have upon others, it confirmed the faith of his diſciples. Seeing this inconteſtible proof of his miſſion, it is ſaid, They believed on him; and were henceforth inviolably attached to his perſon and miniſtry.

Other reaſons may be ſuggeſted, and thoſe exceeding ſound and uſeful; ſuch as point out a noble and deep ſignificancy in this miracle; make it rich with divine and ſpiritual meaning; and, upon this footing, a more delicious feaſt for our ſouls, than wines of the fineſt flavour, and moſt generous quality, are to our animal nature.

For inſtance; it might ſignify the ſuperior richneſs of thoſe comforts, which his goſpel was introducing into the world: That they exceeded thoſe broached by *Moſes* and the law, as much as the pure blood of the grape excells the water of our common wells: That his fleſh and blood would be a ſovereign ſource of alacrity and conſolation to his people; gladden and revive their hearts, like ſome exquiſite cordial; ſtrengthen and invigorate their minds, like the beſt-bodied wines.

This particular ſeaſon of a marriage-ceremony, was probably choſen, in order to intimate the neceſſity of being eſpouſed and united to Chriſt, before we can be partakers of theſe evangelical delights. Divorced we muſt be from our old huſband, the law; divorced from the covenant of works; and no longer wedded, by ſelf-opinionativeneſs, to our own righteouſneſſes; but married, by the bond of a lively faith, to that everlaſting Bridegroom, in order to taſte thoſe comforts, and have our ſhare in thoſe joys.

A reaſon fixed upon by our church is, That Chriſt would hereby put an honour upon the matrimonial ſtate; by gracing the ſolemnity with his ſacred company, and performing his firſt public miracle on this occaſion. A fine admonition this, to render us more than ordinarily ſolicitous, to have the favourable concurrence of Jeſus, both when we deviſe, and when we take, ſo important a ſtep. Becauſe the tranquillity and happineſs of our ſubſequent life depends, very much, on this alteration of our condition.——That we ſhould, by all means, marry in the Lord; and implore his ſpiritual gracious preſence at the wedding; which will improve the advantages, and ſanctify the enjoyments, of that comfortable ſtate; will, as it is delicately figured out in the metaphor, turn our water into wine.

It might alſo be intended to remind us, That the comforts, even of animal life, were recovered by the ſecond *Adam*, as they were forfeited by the firſt *Adam*. When our firſt parents were guilty of rebellion againſt their Maker, they loſt all right to the valuable productions of nature. This, indeed, was their dowry originally ſettled upon them; but by their diſloyalty it became confiſcated. Juſtice ſeized upon their inheritance, and vengeance ſaid, Curſed be the ground for your ſakes. Chriſt, in this exigency, immediately interpoſed; took off the attainder, and reſtored to poor *Adam* and his poſterity, the precious fruits of the earth. Theſe bleſſings, derived from Chriſt's mediation, were very properly recognized at a wedding; becauſe, ſtraightway after the marriage of the firſt couple, they were alienated and ſequeſtered.

This, Sir, is a way of expounding our Redeemer's miracles, well worthy your conſideration, if not your imitation. In this light they appear, not barely ſo many witneſſes of his being the Meſſiah, but ſo many living mirrours of his mediatorial mercies. In which we diſcern a moſt expreſſive figure of thoſe ſpiritual good things, which we extremely want, and may fully enjoy through Jeſus Chriſt.—The marvellous things brought to paſs by the agency of prophets, apoſtles, and holy men of old, were indiſputable vouchers for their being ſent of God. But our Redeemer's works had a farther excellency, and anſwered a diviner end. They held forth and preſented, even to the ſenſes, a moſt ſtriking pattern of thoſe ſpiritual bleſſings, which ſinners may enjoy through their Saviour.——Thus, when he cured the man born blind; what did this ſignify but his healing the blindneſs of our underſtandings, and pouring the day of his glorious goſpel upon our internal ſight?——When he made the poor paralytic ſtrong and vigorous, that was not able to turn himſelf on his bed, or to uſe his limbs; what a lively emblem was here, both of our diſeaſe, and his ſovereign help? Of our diſeaſe, whereby we are utterly impotent to do a good work, or think a good thought: of his ſovereign help, whereby we are enabled to do all things, through Chriſt ſtrengthening us; enabled to believe through his grace, and to mortify our corruptions through his Spirit.——Was not the filthy leper, a true picture of our loathſomeneſs, thro' original defilement, and actual tranſgreſſions? and when our Redeemer diſdained not to touch this noiſome creature, and make him perfectly clean; how appoſitely did this image point out the condeſcenſion of his goodneſs, in undertaking our redemption; and the efficacy of his blood, in accompliſhing our purification?——I might go through the whole ſeries of our Lord's miracles, and diſcover in them a moſt ſignificant and complete portraiture of all manner of ſpiritual bleſſings.—But the foregoing inſtances ſhall ſuffice. From theſe hints, we may diſcern an adorable depth of deſign; unſearchable treaſures of contrivance, as well as beneficence, in thoſe operations of his mighty power. Which noble peculiarity gives a vaſt pre-eminence above all the miracles in *Egypt*, and the wonders in the field of *Zoan*; renders them ſo many fine repreſentations of the deliverances and privileges, enjoyable through our ever-bleſſed Immanuel; in a word, renders them a kind of goſpel that addreſſes itſelf even to our eyes; and ſo moſt wiſely calculated, both to direct our hopes, and ſtrengthen our faith in the incarnate God.—I am, *&c.*

LETTER XVIII.

Dear Madam, *Bath*, 1743.

AT *Bath* I have tarried thus long, but purpoſe to ſet forward for my father's houſe, if I live till next week; and if I have as good a journey thither, as I had to this place, I ſhall have cauſe to be very thankful to that gracious Providence, which bleſſes our going out, and our coming in; which protects us from wrong and robbery; from evil accidents and dangers, as with a ſhield. I hope you, Madam, and Mr ***, are well; and ſhould rejoice to hear of your both being partakers of that which I wiſh you to enjoy; and none can be ſaid truly to enjoy health, but thoſe who improve it to the purpoſe: all others waſte health; embezzle it; ſquander it away; all but thoſe who uſe it as a precious opportunity of making their calling and election ſure. We have had moſt delicate weather for the harveſt; a bleſſing, which I don't

doubt has been vouchſafed to you as well as to us; an univerſal bleſſing! and ſuch as will prove very extenſive. We ſhall feel the good effects of it, all the year round, when winter freezes the air, and turns the earth into iron, or buries it under heaps of ſnow. We ſhall be refreſhed even then with the productions of the fruitful ſeaſon. O! that our hearts may be filled with gratitude, as our barns are with plenty. The harveſt puts me in mind of the end of the world; then our bodies ſhall ariſe out of the duſt of the earth; having lain a while under the clods and ſeen corruption, they will then ſpring up incorruptible and immortal, an amazing multitude, like the blades of graſs, or the ears of corn, innumerable.

The huſbandman in harveſt, receives a reward for all his toil. The labours of the preceding year are amply recompenſed by the rich fruits of increaſe. And the conſummation of all things will be the great retribution-day; then the Chriſtian receives the end of his faith, even the ſalvation of his ſoul; then the riches he has coveted, will be beſtowed in the favour of ſeeing him who is immortal, inviſible; whoſe loving-kindneſs is better than life. He will ſee the deſire of his ſoul, and the fruits of his Saviour's ſufferings, and ſit down everlaſtingly ſatisfied. The huſbandman rejoices in harveſt, this is his time of feſtivity and delight. They joy before thee, ſaith the ſcriptures, according to the joy of the righteous; they will look up and rejoice, to behold their Redeemer coming in the clouds of heaven, and all the holy angels with him; then will they look down and rejoice to ſee the wicked world burning, in which they were tempted; rejoice to ſee all their enemies put under their feet; and when the doors of heaven are left open, then ſhall they enter triumphantly into that city of the living God, and everlaſting joy will be upon their heads, and reign with Chriſt for evermore. Into this exceeding great and eternal bliſs, I wiſh you, Madam, and your huſband, an abundant entrance, and remain his and your, &c.

LETTER XIX.

Dear ***, *Weſton-Favell*, 1744.

I Promiſed *** to ſend the remainder of her letter, in a few lines to you. Either ſhe may tranſcribe from you, or you from her, in order to complete the little eſſay.——I left off, I think, ſomewhere hereabouts.—*But ſpiritual intereſts are infinitely more valuable.* For thoſe, therefore, Chriſt will provide more abundantly: if they want knowledge, he will not only give them his divine word, but his enlightening Spirit, to lead them into all truth.——If they are poor, he will give them the fine gold of his obedience: he will ſay to them as the father ſaid in the parable, Son, all that I have is thine. Are they wounded? he will give them the healing balm of his precious blood; this will cure the wound which ſin has made in the ſoul; and make the bones which have been broken, to rejoice. Are they naked? he will clothe them with the robe of his own righteouſneſs? they ſhall appear before the God of gods in the garments of this their elder brother. Are they weak? his ſtrength ſhall be made perfect in their weakneſs; he will work in them both to will and to do of his good pleaſure. When they die, he has provided a flight of angels to attend their departing ſouls, and conduct them to his own compaſſionate arms; he has provided manſions of glory, a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, for their future reception. He has provided a fulneſs of joy and pleaſures for ever more, for their final portion and inheritance.

Oh! what ample proviſion is here! this is indeed good meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together, and running over.—What can needy creatures want, which Jeſus does not ſupply? Juſtly was it once ſaid by an eminent believer, Jehovah Jireh, The Lord will provide. Let this be the language of our hearts in all our needs.

The hen comforts her winter-brood; ſhe ſcreens them from the inclemencies of the weather. She ſpreads out her wings, and forms a canopy over them; this affords them a houſe to lodge in, and a bed to ſleep on; no velvet is ſofter, no blankets are warmer; here they are cheriſhed and refreſhed; here they find heat when they ſhiver with cold, are dried when they come dropping with wet.

Jeſus alſo comforts his poor people; he is called the conſolation of *Iſrael:* Come unto me, ſays the merciful Redeemer, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt; all ye that are weary, and I will refreſh you. He is afflicted in all their afflictions, and is as ready to ſuccour them, as a man is to allay the anguiſh of his own ſmarting fleſh. He is the good, the inconceivably-good Shepherd, whoſe bowels yearn with the tendereſt compaſſion, when his lambs are fatigued or diſtreſſed; he even lays them in his boſom.—Every thing but Jeſus ſpeaks terror, and creates diſmay to his little flock. But this compaſſionate Shepherd leads them forth beſides the waters of comfort. The world lays many a ſnare for their feet; the world perſecutes and hates them. In the world they muſt have tribulation; but Chriſt ſays, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, and will make you partakers of my victory; becauſe I have conquered ye ſhall conquer alſo. The law lays dreadful things to their charge; the law is the miniſtration of condemnation; the law thunders out threatenings; they are rebels, ſays that righteous law; they have tranſgreſſed my precepts; they deſerve to ſuffer all the curſes denounced againſt the diſobedient and ungodly. But Chriſt gently whiſpers, Be of good courage, my people, take ſanctuary in your Mediator, I have anſwered all the demands of the law: if it requires puniſhment, I ſuſtained torments unutterable; if it inſiſts on blood, I ſatisfied it with divine blood; with every drop of my heart's blood; ſo that there is no condemnation to them that are intereſted in me.——If it called for righteouſneſs, I ſubmitted to its authority; I performed every jot and tittle of its commands, and thereby brought in a perfect and everlaſting righteouſneſs. Lay hold on my obedience; receive this from my free grace, and the law has nothing more to charge againſt you; for the righteouſneſs of the law is fulfilled in them that believe, though the devil tempts and diſtreſſes the children of Jeſus.—— He not only tempts, but accuſes them, aggravating and calling aloud for vengeance; cries, Down with them, down with them, even to the duſt. But Jeſus graciouſly ſteps in, baffles the accuſation, arreſts the judgment, and ſays, I have died to ſave them from going into the pit; for I have found a ranſom: if they have ſinned, I have taken them upon myſelf: if they have multiplied tranſgreſſions as the ſtars of heaven, my Father hath laid on me the iniquities of them all. They are my redeemed ones; they are bought with my blood, I cannot loſe my purchaſe; if they are not ſaved, I am not glorified.

Such ſweet truths ſent home upon the poor ſoul, muſt be very comfortable and reſtorative to the drooping ſinner; more refreſhing and gladdening to the conſcience than the feathers of the hen are to her feeble ſtarving brood.

Upon the whole, let us imitate the chickens, by truſting in Jeſus for all we want or wiſh; let us lean upon our Beloved in all our progreſs through this wilderneſs; expect to be furniſhed entirely out of his fulneſs; look for protection from his almighty arm. Depend upon proviſion from his inexhauſtible treaſures

ſures; and for comfort, from a growing ſenſe of our intereſt in him.

Let this be the habitual language of our heart.—Bleſſed Lord, I am weak and wretched, ſurrounded by a multitude of dangers, and defiled by a thouſand corruptions, O defend me by thy eternal power. Let thy almighty arm be over me. Let thy Holy Spirit be ever with me; never leave me to my enemies; never give me up to my own blindneſs and impotency, for I flee unto thee to hide me: on thee I depend to break every ſnare of temptation that endangers me from without, to mortify every ſeed of corruption that pollutes me from within. I am poor and needy, bleſſed Jeſus, do thou provide for me. Since I muſt one day give an account of myſelf to God; let thy blood waſh away my guilt, and drown all my tranſgreſſions. Since I muſt, ere long, ſtand before him whoſe eyes are as a burning fire, O! clothe me with the robes of thy righteouſneſs, the garments of ſalvation, that I may be holy and blameleſs in his ſight. Since I muſt quickly die out of this miſerable world, provide me an entrance into thine own everlaſting kingdom; and while I continue in this world, provide me with grace ſufficient for me, that I may live like thine elect, and adorn the goſpel of God my Saviour.

I am often diſtreſſed; miſgiving thoughts and anguiſh of mind, makes me hang down my head like a bulruſh. Through fear of death, and dread of eternal judgment, my joints are ſometimes ready to ſmite one againſt another; but O! holy and moſt merciful Saviour, be thou my ſupport. Pour the oil of gladneſs into my inner man; give me the joy of thy ſalvation: the law condemns me, but do thou juſtify me; my own conſcience writes bitter things againſt me, but do thou whiſper to my ſoul, Be of good cheer, thy ſins are forgiven thee. The roaring lion often terrifies me; but O! thou good and faithful Shepherd, let thyſelf comfort me. Let me know, and feel, that I am thine, and then nothing ſhall pluck me out of thy hands.

This was wrote before my late illneſs. You ſee from hence, that you my friends at *Biddeford* have been on my thoughts, though they have not of late been addreſſed by way of letter; and I ſhall always ſay, that whether we are ſick or in health, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt may be the ſtrength of our hearts, and our portion for ever.—I am, *&c.*

LETTER XX.

Dear ——,

IT is our duty continually to ſing hoſanna to the King of *Iſrael*, who treadeth all enemies under his feet. He can tread them down like clay in the ſtreets, or caſt them out as lightning from heaven. Nothing is impoſſible to him; they who know Chriſt's faithfulneſs and truth, will put their truſt in him; they will hang upon him every moment, as the feeble child in the arms of the indulgent mother, for grace to ſtrengthen and enable them to withſtand the devices of that enemy of ſouls, who is ſeeking every moment to deſtroy the weak believer, the babes in Chriſt.——Satan ſays, with that wicked one in *Exodus*, I will purſue them with inconceivable malice and rage, I will overtake and tear them in pieces like a lion; I will lay ten thouſand ſnares in their way, and, if it be poſſible, bring them under the dominion of ſin, and after that into the damnation of hell.——The believer replies, Thou wouldſt effect this, O thou enemy of all godlineſs. I know thou wouldſt effect it with as much eaſe, as a feather is borne down by a ſweeping whirlwind, was I left a moment to myſelf; but my ſtrength do I aſcribe unto my incarnate God. The bleſſed Jeſus has undertaken for my ſecurity; he watches over me every moment, and nothing can pluck me out of his hands. He hath ſaid, who ſhall diſannul it? that ſin ſhall not have dominion over me; he will preſerve me by his almighty power unto ſalvation. Let all my adverſaries know aſſuredly, that my ſafety is not in myſelf.——But as the hills ſtand round about *Jeruſalem*, even ſo ſtandeth the Lord round about his people, from this time forth for evermore.

Whoever attempts the ruin of a ſoul that is ſtaid on Jeſus, muſt wrench the ſovereignty from the hand of Omnipotence, and cauſe unſhaken faithfulneſs to fail. So long as all things in heaven and earth, and under the earth, do bow, and obey the Lamb that was ſlain; ſo long as Chriſt is a God unchangeable, and faithful, that cannot lie, ſo long ſhall a poor feeble worm that truſts in him, be ſecure from apoſtaſy and perdition. O! the bleſſings, the comforts that ſpring from a right knowledge of Jeſus! Richer bleſſings I cannot wiſh! greater treaſures I cannot enjoy nor poſſeſs. This, this alone is that knowledge which St *Paul* valued above all other accompliſhments or acquirements; in compariſon of which, he counted all things elſe no better than droſs or dung. O! let my dear *Biddeford* friends beg of the Father of lights to ſend out the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, that I may be filled with the knowledge of him, and of Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent; and in return both they and you, my friends, may be aſſured of the moſt hearty and repeated prayers of—

Your ſincere friend, *&c.*

LETTER XXI.

SIR, *Weſton-Favell, November* 16, 1745.

IT is not eaſy to expreſs the ſatisfaction I received from your agreeable and uſeful converſation this afternoon. I rejoice to find, that there are gentlemen of genius, learning, and politeneſs, who dare profeſs a ſupreme value for the ſcriptures, and are not aſhamed of the croſs of Chriſt. I congratulate you, dear Sir, on this occaſion: and cannot but look on a mind ſo principled, and a heart ſo diſpoſed, as a very choice and diſtinguiſhing part of your happineſs. Was I to frame a wiſh for the deareſt and moſt valuable friend on earth, I would earneſtly deſire, that he might grow daily in this grace, and increaſe in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. And when my pen begs leave to aſſure you, that this is my unfeigned wiſh for ***, it only tranſcribes what is deeply written on my heart.

This brings the dedication and the preface, which are to introduce a little eſſay, entitled Meditations among the tombs, and reflections on a flower-garden, in two letters to a lady. I hope, Sir, in conſequence of your kind promiſe, you will pleaſe to peruſe them with the file in your hand. The ſeverity of the critic, and the kindneſs of the friend, in this caſe will be inſeparable.—The evangelical ſtrain, I believe, muſt be preſerved; becauſe, otherwiſe, the introductory thoughts will not harmonize with the ſubſequent; the porch will be unſuitable to the building.——But if you perceive any meanneſs of expreſſion, any quaintneſs of ſentiment, or any other impropriety and inelegance, I ſhall acknowledge it as a very ſingular favour, if you will be ſo good as to diſcover and correct ſuch blemiſhes.

I hope, Sir, my end in venturing to publiſh, is an hearty deſire to ſerve, in ſome little degree, the intereſts of Chriſtianity, by endeavouring to ſet ſome of its moſt important truths in a light, that may both entertain and edify. As I profeſs this view, I am certain, your affectionate regard for the moſt excellent religion imaginable, will incline you to be concerned for the iſſue of ſuch an attempt, and therefore to contribute to its ſucceſs,

ceſs, both by beſtowing your animadverſions upon theſe ſmall parts, and by ſpeaking of the whole (when it ſhall come abroad) with all that candour which is natural to the Chriſtian, and will be ſo greatly needed by this new adventurer in letters, who is, &c.

LETTER XXII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Nov.* 19, 1745.

I Cannot forbear making my grateful acknowledgments for your moſt obliging letter. You could not poſſibly have imagined any thing more agreeable to my inclination, than the propoſal you are pleaſed to make of admitting me to your acquaintance and converſation. I accept your kind offer, Sir, with thankfulneſs, with joy; and ſhall moſt gladly cultivate a friendſhip, which is not only perfectly innocent, but remarkably elegant and improving. Eſpecially, ſince you are pleaſed to permit the diſcourſe to turn upon thoſe points, which it is my duty to ſtudy, and my delight to contemplate. Nor ſhall I forget, how much I am indebted to your condeſcenſion for this favour; but ſhall always bear a reſpectful ſenſe of the diſtinguiſhed rank, and ſuperior abilities of my worthy friend.

Indeed I am particularly delighted with ſuch interviews, as ſerve to enlarge our knowledge, and refine our affections; ſuch as have an apparent tendency to render us more uſeful in our preſent ſtations, and to ripen us for future happineſs; ſuch was that which I lately enjoyed in your company. This is a feaſt of reaſon; a feaſt of truth; and, I muſt own, has charms for me, infinitely ſuperior to all the impertinent amuſements of modiſh chat, or the mean gratifications of the bottle.

When I have been aſked to ſpend an afternoon with gentlemen of a learned education, and unqueſtionable ingenuity, I have fancied myſelf invited to take a turn in ſome beautiful garden; where I expected to have been treated with a ſight of the moſt delicate flowers, and moſt amiable forms of nature: when, to my great ſurprize, I have been ſhewn nothing but the moſt worthleſs thiſtle, and contemptible weeds. To one who has ſo often been diſappointed, it muſt be peculiarly pleaſing to find the ſatisfaction which he has long ſought in vain. This I make no doubt of obtaining, if I may be permitted to be a third perſon in the interview, when you and Mr *** ſit together in ſocial converſe.

I beg leave to return my thanks for your ingenious remark upon a ſentence in the eſſay towards a preface; and alſo to expreſs my entire ſatisfaction in your motion for conſidering more attentively the ſpiritual intereſts of the poor patients in the hoſpital. At preſent, it is undeniably plain, that much more aſſiduous and effectual care is taken of their temporal, than of their eternal welfare. With pleaſure I ſhall join in concerting ſome proper method to rectify this miſconduct, and with a real alacrity ſhall execute (as far as I ſhall be enabled) any expedient which you ſhall judge conducive to the recovery and health of their ſouls.

I almoſt repent that my pen has intruded, perhaps, in the midſt of important buſineſs, and ſtole ſo much of your valuable time.——But now I have done:——and ſhall only repeat, what agreeable views I form from the proſpect of your future acquaintance, and what an addition it will be to my happineſs to be owned and regarded, as, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

SIR, *Weſton-Favell, Dec.* 17, 1745.

I Admire your remarkable regard for truth, and that noble greatneſs of ſoul, which ſcorns to ſacrifice conſcience to intereſt, and cannot ſtoop to receive temporal honours on ſuch ignoble terms. Your conduct reminds me of a moſt amiable peculiarity in the upright and religious man's character, as it is drawn by the inſpired writers; with which you cannot but be particularly pleaſed, as it ſo exactly correſponds with your own; ſuch a one, ſays the royal preacher, ſweareth an oath, ſuch a one, adds the ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael*, ſpeaketh the truth from his heart.

The thirty-nine articles I have more than once ſubſcribed; and as I continue ſtedfaſt in the belief of them, as you are pleaſed to aſk my opinion relating to ſome ſeemingly-exceptionable tenets contained in them, I moſt readily ſubmit it to your conſideration; not, Sir, in the capacity of a caſuiſt, who would attempt a ſatisfactory anſwer to your queſtions; but only under the notion of a ſincere friend, who would freely diſcloſe his whole ſoul, and entertain no one ſentiment, but what ſhould be communicated to a valuable acquaintance.

"You are a good deal puzzled about the equality of "the Son with the Father, in *Athanaſius*'s ſenſe." —— I own, it is no wonder, that we ſhould be ſomewhat ſtaggered at this myſterious truth; eſpecially if we indulge a wanton curioſity, and inquire after the *quomodeity* of the doctrine; if nothing will content our buſy minds, but a clear comprehenſion of this particular, they will never be brought to acquieſce in this article. But, if they dare venture to believe the expreſs declarations of infinite wiſdom, and wait till a future ſtate for a full evolution of the myſtery, their aſſent will ſoon be determined.

I once thought a very ſtriking proof of this ſcriptural doctrine might be derived from the known properties of a mortal child, conſidered in compariſon with the parent. Is not the ſon as perfect a partaker of all the conſtituent parts of the human nature as the father? Are not the children of this age poſſeſſed of the ſame endowments of body and mind, as their fathers in the preceding age? Whatever eſſential excellencies belong to the one, may with equal truth be predicated of the other. And if the ſon, in this our inferior world, be in all points equal to his progenitor, why ſhould we not ſuppoſe, that the glorious Son of God is equal, in all reſpects, to his almighty Father?

But I chuſe to forbear all ſuch fond endeavours, to explain what, to our very limited apprehenſions, is altogether inexplicable. I rather receive ſcripture for my teacher, and give up my ſentiments to be formed and conducted by that infallible guide. In ſcripture there are abundance of texts, which, in the moſt explicit terms imaginable, aſſert the Son to be God. Now, if he be God, he cannot have any ſuperior: inferiority evidently deſtroys divinity: inferiority, in any inſtance, is inconſiſtent with the notion of a ſupreme Being. So that every text in ſcripture which aſcribes a divine nature to the bleſſed Jeſus, ſeems to ſpeak all that *Athanaſius* maintains, concerning the abſolute, univerſal equality of the Son with the Father.

In what reſpects can the Son be ſuppoſed inferior? Are not the ſame honours given to the Son, as are paid to the Father? The pſalmiſt mentions two of the incommunicable honours which are due to the ſupreme Majeſty. Both which, he declares, are, and ſhall be, addreſſed to the Son; Prayer ſhall be made ever unto him, and daily ſhall he be praiſed.——This adorable perſon is the object of our worſhip throughout the whole litany. In the doxologies of our liturgy, the ſame glory is aſcribed to all the three infinitely-exalted perſons of the Trinity.——I take notice of this, not as a concluſive argument, but only to hint at the uniform judgment of our reformers on this important head, and to point out their particular care to inculcate, with inceſſant aſſiduity, this belief upon the members of their communion.——Are not the ſame works aſcribed to the

the Son, as are aſcribed to the Father? God, the ſovereign and ſupreme God, (according to the periphraſis of a Heathen poet, *Cui nihil ſimile, aut ſecundum*), often declares his matchleſs perfections, by referring mankind to his aſtoniſhing works of creation. And is not the Son the Creator of the univerſe? All things were made by him, is the teſtimony of one apoſtle; and, He upholdeth all things by the word of his power, the deposition of another.——Is not the ſame incommunicable name applied to the Son? Jehovah is allowed to be a name never attributed, throughout the whole ſcripture, to any being, but only to the one living and true God; who only hath immortality, who hath no ſuperior, none like him in heaven or earth. But this title is the character of the incarnate Son. If we compare *Moſes* and St *Paul*, we ſhall find that Chriſt is Jehovah, *Numb.* xvi. 6. with 1 *Cor.* x. 9. This argument, I think, is not common; and, I muſt own, has had a great influence in ſettling my judgment, ever ſince I was apprized of it.——Another proof was ſuggeſted in the morning-leſſon for the day, *Iſ.* xlv. 23. compared with *Phil.* ii. 10. It is the Lord in the prophet, that infinitely-wiſe God who manifeſteth, even from ancient time, the dark and remote events of futurity; who peremptorily declares, that there is no God beſides him, conſequently none ſuperior in any degree to him; yet this moſt ſacred perſon, who in the prophet's text has the attributes of incomparable perfection and unſhared ſupremacy, is, in the apoſtle's comment, the Redeemer.

I fancy all thoſe texts of ſcripture, which ſeem to you, Sir, ſo diametrically oppoſite to this doctrine, will, upon a renewed examination, appear referable only to the humanity of our Saviour. If ſo, they cannot affect the point under debate, nor invalidate the arguments urged in its ſupport.

After all, I believe, here lies the grand difficulty. Sonſhip, we take for granted, implies inferiority. Sonſhip implies the receiving of a being from another; and to receive a being is an inſtance of inferiority.—But, dear Sir, let us repreſs every bold inquiry into this awful ſecret; leſt that of the apoſtle, *α μη εωρακεν εμβατευων*, be the lighteſt cenſure we incur. What is right reaſoning, when applied to the caſe of created exiſtence, is little leſs than blaſphemy when applied to that divine perſon, who is from everlaſting to everlaſting, the great I AM. ——The generation of the Son of God is an unfathomable myſtery. A prophet cries out with amaze, Who can declare his generation; and if we cannot conceive it, how can we form any concluſions, or determine what conſequences follow from it?—Here it becomes us not to examine, but to adore. If we know not how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, how ſhall we be able to ſtate the nature, or explain the effects of a generation, inexpreſſibly more remote from our finite apprehenſions?

Upon the whole; ſince the ſcripture has given us repeated and unqueſtionable aſſurances, that Chriſt is God; ſince common ſenſe cries aloud againſt the abſurdity of ſuppoſing a God, who has a ſuperior; ſhall we reject ſuch poſitive evidences of revelation, and be deaf to the ſtrongeſt remonſtrances of our reaſon, merely becauſe we cannot conceive, how the Sonſhip of the Redeemer can be compatible with an abſolute equality, in all poſſible perfection, to the Father?

It need not be hinted to * * *, that this doctrine of the Divinity, conſequently of the equality, of the ſacred TRI-UNE, is not merely a ſpeculative point, but has a moſt cloſe connection with practice; and is admirably fitted to influence our lives, in the moſt powerful and endearing manner. That it is no leſs inſeparably connected with the grand bleſſings of acquittance from the guilt, and delivery from the bondage of ſin; bleſſings of unutterable and infinite value, without which the children of men are of all creatures moſt miſerable; which yet we cannot reaſonably hope to enjoy, if any of thoſe illuſtrious perſons concerned in accompliſhing the great redemption, be ſuppoſed leſs than divine.

The 18th article, you add, is another objection to me, which begins thus, They alſo are to be had accurſed, &c.——This, as you obſerve, ſeems harſh. Yet the harſhneſs is not ours, but the apoſtle's. I imagine, this is no more than a tranſcript of St *Paul*'s awful and ſolemn declaration, tranſmitted to the *Galatian* converts, and denounced againſt their corrupting teachers. Be pleaſed, Sir, to peruſe attentively that whole inſpired letter, and eſpecially to conſider chap. i. verſes 6. 7. 8. 9. Then permit me to appeal to yourſelf, whether our article profeſſes any doctrine, which is not clearly eſtabliſhed in that moſt excellent epiſtle; or whether our church uſes more ſevere terms, than the apoſtle thinks proper to thunder out, in that memorable paſſage? ——But might not this doctrine have been palliated a little, or the tremendous ſanction ſomewhat ſoftened? No; we muſt not add to, or diminiſh from, our inviolable rule. A faithful ſteward of the divine myſteries, muſt declare the whole will of God, in its full extent and latitude; together with the fearful conſequences of preſumptuouſly oppoſing it, as well as the bleſſed effects of cordially receiving it.

I am not ſurpriſed, that this procedure ſtartles ſome, offends others. St *Paul* ſeems to have foreſeen this event; and therefore apologizes for himſelf, ſhall I ſay? rather declares his unalterable reſolution of perſiſting in this practice; *q. d.* I am ſenſible, that ſuch teachings will be far from palatable to too many of my hearers; I am aware alſo, that to threaten the divine anathema on every oppoſer of this doctrine, will be ſtill more offenſive. But ſhall I deſiſt on theſe conſiderations? ſhall I accommodate the ſtandard doctrines of heaven to the depraved taſte of the age; or be ſolicitous to make them ſquare with the favourite ſchemes of human device, only to avoid creating diſguſt in ſome minds? No, verily: I preach what unerring wiſdom has revealed, not what capricious man has dreamed, (*ασπερ γαρ ανθρωποις πειθω, ουτω και θεω*;) and therefore dare not vary one jot or tittle from my high orders. My buſineſs is principally to pleaſe God by a faithful diſcharge of my commiſſion, not to ingratiate myſelf with men, by modelling my doctrine in conformity to their humours; (*ζητω ανθρωποις αρεσκειν*;) and, therefore I muſt, I muſt deliver it, juſt as I received it.

But why do I offer to illuſtrate theſe texts? Your own meditations, I perſuade myſelf, will diſcern, much more clearly than I can repreſent, that the compilers of our articles are no other than the echo of St *Paul*: or rather that they only ſet their ſeal to the doctrines of Chriſt, which he taught: and approve that verdict of heaven which he has brought in. This conſideration will acquit them from the charge of harſhneſs of expreſſion, or uncharitableneſs of ſentiment.

Your objections thus proceed. I believe that every one will be ſaved, who acts up to the beſt of his knowledge.——I almoſt durſt venture to join iſſue with my friend upon this footing; and undertake to prove, from this very poſition, the univerſal neceſſity of believing in Chriſt for ſalvation. Becauſe, I think, it is indiſputably certain, that there is no man living, who has in all points acted up to his knowledge: and if he has ſwerved, in any inſtance, from his known acknowledged duty, how ſhall he eſcape puniſhment, without an atonement? *Video meliora proboque, deteriora ſequor*, is what the moſt vigilant and upright of mortals have, at ſome unhappy moments, felt to be true. If ſo, how ſhall they ſtand before that righteous God, who will not acquit the guilty, without an intereſt in

the great expiation?—But, I presume, your proposition is to be taken in a more qualified sense; it means, that those who sincerely, though not perfectly, in the main course of their life, and as far as the infirmities of a frail nature admit, act up to their knowledge; that these shall be saved, even without their application to the merits of a Saviour. If this opinion be true, I own, it must be very unsafe to subscribe our articles.

When this point is in dispute, I apprehend, we are to confine it to those who live in a gospel-land, where opportunities of knowing the good will of God present themselves every day, every hour. As for the Heathens, who lie under unavoidable and irremediable ignorance of the blessed Jesus, they are out of the question. They, I think, should be remitted to God's unsearchable wisdom and goodness. There may be uncovenanted mercies for them, which we know nothing of. It seems to be a daring and unjustifiable rashness, for us to determine one way or the other, with regard to their final state. This, however, is plain from the the oracles of revelation, that it will be more tolerable for those poor Gentiles in the day of eternal judgment, than for those inexcusable infidels, who have heard and disobeyed the glorious gospel. The controversy then concerns those only, who have the Bible in their hands, or the voice of the preacher sounding in their religious assemblies every sabbath-day. These, dear Sir, I cannot think will inherit salvation, though they act with ever so much sincerity, according to their knowledge, unless they add to their knowledge, faith.

Perhaps, what we call their knowledge, is no better than downright and wilful ignorance: the light that is in them is darkness. Perhaps, they never took any pains to get themselves informed in the glorious peculiarities of the gospel. If so, their conduct is one continued disobedience to the divine commands, which require us to seek for wisdom as for hid treasures; which charge us to search the scriptures (ἐραυνᾶν) as narrowly, as industriously, as the sportsman searches every spot of ground, beats every tuft of grass, in order to start the latent game. In this case, what we call their knowledge, is really blindness itself; and their want of a true knowledge cannot be their plea, because it is evidently their neglect and their sin.

But suppose these persons have searched the scriptures, and yet are persuaded, that there is no such need of a Saviour's merits. Shall we condemn them in these circumstances?—We do not presume to sit as these judges, or to scatter at our pleasure the thunders of eternal vengeance; we only declare, what sentence is passed upon them by the supreme Dispenser of life and death. He has made it an adjudged case, he has passed it into an irrepealable law, That whoso believeth not in the Son of God, whosoever perversely persists in seeking some other method of salvation, and will not fly to that Redeemer whom infinite Wisdom has set forth for a propitiation, this man is condemned already.

Will it be said, That a man cannot help assenting to what he is thoroughly persuaded to be right? And if a Deist from his very soul believes, that morality alone is the way to life; and that the notion of a Redeemer, to make satisfaction, and procure justification, is a religious chimera; shall we blame such a one for following the genuine dictates of his mind?—I answer, still I answer, That we must abide by the determinations of that sovereign God, whose judgment we are sure is according to truth. He has said, nor can all the cavils and sophistry in the world supersede the decree, He that believeth not, shall be damned. Be not shocked, Sir, at the seeming severity of the doom. Rather let us be shocked, be greatly astonished, at the prodigious hardiness of those more than steely hearts, which can attend to such terrors of the Lord, and not be persuaded to come to Christ; nay, what is enough to make heaven and earth horribly amazed, can hear of these terrors, and yet regard them no more than a puff of empty air.

Nor will it extenuate the crime of unbelief, to allege in behalf of the infidel, that he is actually convinced, in his own conscience, that his sentiments are right. He may be so; and yet be inexcusably guilty notwithstanding: for is it not owing to his own fault, that he has imbibed such sentiments? Is it not through his own criminal misconduct, that he has contracted such a perverse habit of thinking? Has he not indulged some darling vice, which has clouded his understanding? Or instead of obeying the great mandate of heaven, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him; has he not attended solely to the arguings, deductions, and discernment of his own reason, as his only guide to heavenly truth? A drunkard verily thinks, (if he thinks at all), that he does nobly in committing insults on quiet harmless people. But will his bare thinking, that he acts gallantly, acquit him at the bar of equity? Perhaps, in his present condition, he cannot help fancying, that his actions are becoming, and that he does well to be turbulent and outrageous; but though he cannot help the effect, might he not have avoided the cause of his phrenzy? Methinks, this comparison will hold good, if applied to the case of many scorners of the gospel; who think contemptuously of Jesus Christ, and who really apprehend they do nothing amiss in depretiating his obedience and death. But I fear, they have brought upon themselves this deplorable delirium or intoxication of their understandings, either by voluptuousness and debauchery, or else by self-conceit, and the most odious arrogance of mind; which, in the estimate of the Holy One of *Israel* is no better than spiritual idolatry.

For my part, I am assured, that God has vouchsafed us the means of obtaining the knowledge of himself and of Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent; it is equally certain, that he has commanded us to acquaint ourselves with him, and be at peace; it is no less undeniable, that whosoever seeks this inestimable knowledge, by a diligent application to the scriptures, by a child-like dependance on the teachings of the divine Spirit, by humble prayers to be led into all truth, and by doing the will of God, so far as he is acquainted with it,—whosoever seeks, by using these means, shall find, shall come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved. If therefore persons are so negligent, as not to use these methods; so audacious, as to contemn them; so haughty, as to imagine they have no need of them; they may justly be given over to their own delusions, and yet be most righteously punished as suicides of their souls.

But still it is pleaded in vindication of the good-natured, civilized infidel, That there is no turpitude in his life; that his behaviour is every way irreproachable.——As to the turpitude of his life, when compared with the conversation of other men, I have nothing to say: but surely, there is the highest iniquity in his principles and conduct, when compared with the revealed will of God? which is the only criterion of truth, the only standard of excellence. God has commanded all men to honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; but these people protest against the divine edict, and say, with those insolent subjects in the gospel, We will not have this Jesus to reign over us. God has solemnly declared, That all mankind are become guilty before him; that by the works of the moral law, no flesh living shall be justified; that there is no mediator between God and men, but the man Christ Jesus; but these people maintain, in defiance of this declaration, that they themselves are able to make up matters with the offended Creator, and can, by their own honest behaviour, secure a title to ever-

everlasting felicity. God, of his superabundant and inconceivably-rich goodness, has given his Son, his only Son to suffer agonies, to shed blood, to lay down an infinitely-precious life for them; yet these people, like those impious wretches that crucified the Lord of glory, deride his agonies, trample upon his blood, and though he has redeemed them, they speak lies against him *. ——Let us see them a little part of the evidence summed up against the spirit of unbelief. It implies stubbornness, which is as the sin of witchcraft; rebellion, which is as iniquity and idolatry: it implies the most assuming pride, which is an abomination to the Lord: it implies the vilest ingratitude, even amidst the most unbounded beneficence; and the voice of nature has proclaimed, *Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dixeris.*——Let the impartial considerer decide, whether the heart of these persons be right before God; or whether their conduct, when brought to the test of that word which is to judge them at the last day, be so unblameable as is frequently pretended.

Enough has been said of the two first points; I fear, more than enough to fatigue your attention. However, I now draw in the reins, and promise not to put your patience upon doing such tedious penance any more.

This is another expression in the paragraph relating to the 18th article, which, since you expect my undisguised opinion, I cannot dismiss without a remark. When the scriptures say, that men shall be saved through the name of Christ, you suppose, Sir, they mean, that Christ made a general atonement for original sin. Whereas, I apprehend, that such texts import abundantly, I had almost said infinitely more. Thus much, I think, at least they must amount to in their signification; that if we are saved from the guilt of our offences, it shall be only through the all-atoning blood of the Lamb of God. If we are made acceptable to that awful Majesty who dwelleth in light inaccessible, this our justification shall be in consideration of the obedience and righteousness of the beloved Son; if we obtain the Spirit of sanctification, are enabled to deny all ungodliness, and to live soberly, righteously, and godlily in this present evil world, it shall be through the intercession of Jesus our great High Priest, by whom alone the Holy Ghost is vouchsafed to unworthy polluted sinners. All this I take to be included in that word, of most rich and comprehensive meaning, salvation; and since it is affirmed, that we are saved by Christ, I should think, it must signify, that we obtain all these glorious and invaluable benefits through that all-sufficient Mediator.

As to Christ's making an atonement for original sin, that surely was but one single branch of his important undertaking: Wo, wo be to the inhabitants of the earth, if he did no more. Our actual sins, the sins of our heart, the sins of our life, our sins of omission and sins of commission; and all these sins, which are more in number than the hairs of our head, heavier with horrid aggravations than the sand of the sea, he bore in his own body on the tree. He was wounded for our offences; he was bruised for our transgressions; and the Lord laid on him (not only the innate depravity, but) the actual iniquities of us all.

Your next objection lies against the 13th article, namely, Works done before the grace of Christ, are not acceptable to God:—Is the meaning of this tenet, you ask, that men are made with a natural incapacity of doing any thing but sinful actions?——I answer, this is not so properly the meaning of the article, as a most cogent reason to establish it. Only let it be stated a little more clearly, and it is no inconsiderable argument in proof of the doctrine. Men were not made by their Creator with this incapacity, but they have brought it upon themselves by their own fault. By their original sin they have contracted a most miserable depravity, and have made themselves προς παν εργον αγαθον αδοκιμους. Since therefore we can do no good work, before we are renewed by the grace of Christ, it seems to follow, that we can do no work acceptable to God, till this renovation take place.——This, you observe, does not seem so agreeable to charity, as one could wish.——Worthy Sir, our notions of charity are not to be the rule of the divine acceptance either of persons or things. If the doctrine be agreeable to the declarations of unerring wisdom, we are to admit it with all readiness, and rather conclude, that we mistake the nature of charity, than that the scripture mistakes the terms of the Almighty's acceptance and favour.——You know, Sir, it is the express voice of scripture, that without faith it is impossible to please God; and till the Spirit of Christ be shed abroad in the soul, it possesses no such sacred principle as true faith.——It is a favourite apophthegm of our divine Master's, That a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. And are not all that spring from the stock of fallen *Adam*, corrupt trees, until they are ingrafted into the true olive-tree, and partake of his meliorating and generous juices?——I shall only mention one more scriptural oracle; an oracle delivered not from *Delphos*, no, nor from mount *Sinai*, but immediately from heaven itself: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. I have always thought these words are to be taken in an exclusive sense; as though the everlasting Father had said, I am well pleased with the apostate race of *Adam*, only as they are reconciled through my beloved Son: unconcerned in him, no persons are the objects of my complacency; unrecommended by him, no actions are the subject of my approbation. If this be the genuine sense of the passage, it will serve at once to confirm the article, and to obviate the objection derived from the deficiency, and remains of pollution, that cleave even to the performances of a believer.

I am glad you have satisfied yourself with relation to the article, which touches upon predestination and election. These are sublime points, far above the solution of our low capacities. But, for my part, I am no more surprised, that some revealed truths should amaze my understanding, than that the blazing sun should dazzle my eyes. That such things are mentioned in the inspired writings as real facts, is undeniable. I should renounce my very reason, if I did not believe what Omniscience attests, even though it should imply what is altogether inexplicable by my scanty conceptions. And why should the incavern'd mole, whose dwelling is in darkness, whose sight is but a small remove from blindness, why should such a poor animal wonder, that it cannot dart its eye through unnumbered worlds, or take in at a glance the vast system of the universe?

Your sense of the 20th article is exactly mine. The authority you mention, is, in my opinion, all the authority which the church, the rulers and governors of the church, can reasonably claim, or regularly exercise, in matters relating to faith.——These rulers have power, as you justly observe, to settle, in conformity with what they conclude to be the meaning of scripture, the nature and extent of their own creed; and none, I think, can fairly deny them a right to determine, what points of belief shall be the indispensable terms of enjoying communion with their society. But as for I know not what privilege of interpreting scripture, in such a manner, as that it shall be contumacy to examine, before we credit, or heterodoxy and heresy to controvert their exposition; this is an authority which I cannot allow to any man, or body of men, now in the world. At this rate our faith would be built upon the decisions of the church, not on the determinations

* Hos. viii. 13.

minations of the inſpired word; and, conſequently, be not of God, but of men.

Could I have imagined when I ſet pen to paper, that it would have run ſuch extravagant lengths! Bear with my prolixity, dear Sir, and excuſe my freedom; or rather, if I have ſaid any thing in too free a ſtyle, you muſt charge it upon your own condeſcenſion and candour, which have emboldened me to deliver my ſentiments without the leaſt cloak or reſerve.

But I muſt not, I dare not, cloſe, without acting as becomes a miniſter of the goſpel; without reminding my valuable friend, that the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth wiſdom; that a man can receive nothing, much leſs an acquaintance with the myſteries of the Redeemer's kingdom, unleſs it be given him from above. To this Fountain of wiſdom, and Father of lights, let us make humble, earneſt, daily application. Then ſhall we ſee the things that belong to our peace, and, as it is moſt emphatically expreſſed by the ſacred penman, know the truth as it is in Jeſus.——I am, &c.

LETTER XXIV.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Jan.* 10, 1745-6.

HOW arduous, and how momentous, is the taſk you have aſſigned me! A ſenſe of its difficulty and importance almoſt deterred me from venturing ſo much as to attempt it. A cordial friendſhip inſtigated, and a conſciouſneſs of my own incapacity checked, for ſome time, my fluctuating mind. At length the bias inclined to the ſide of the former; my reluctance, urged by the requeſt of a friend, gives way; and now I am fully determined.——Determined, to what? To enter the liſts againſt the adverſaries of the Trinity? More particularly to appear as the champion for the perſonality and divinity of the Holy Ghoſt? With a view of reſting the grand debate on the dexterity of this pen? No; Sir, I form no ſuch romantic ſchemes; I renounce any ſuch undertaking; I am only determined to lay before you the thoughts which have occurred, ſince I have received your laſt letter; and this, on the condition of having them returned to the ſecrecy of my cloſet, after you have paſſed your judgment, and beſtowed your corrections upon them.

In managing this controverſy, ſhall I ſay? or rather in purſuing this inquiry, it behoves us humbly to apply to the great Father of lights for direction. They ſhall all be taught of God, ſays the prophet: this promiſe we ſhould humbly plead at the throne of grace, and, in chearful dependence on its accompliſhment, proceed to examine, with a modeſt and reverential awe, the myſterious points before us. Whoever rejects this key, and yet hopes to be admitted into the treaſures of heavenly knowledge, acts altogether as imprudent a part, as if he ſhould expect to attain a maſterly ſkill in mathematics, and at the ſame time neglect to inform himſelf of the firſt principles of that admired ſcience. When a divine perſon is the object of our conſideration, then ſurely it becomes us, in a more eſpecial manner, not to lean to our own underſtanding, but, like little children, to rely on the teachings of that all-wiſe Spirit, whoſe nature, dignity, and attributes, we would devoutly contemplate.——You will, perhaps, take notice, that I anticipate what is to be proved; and take it for granted, that the Holy Ghoſt is indeed God. I would only obſerve from this remark, how naturally we wiſh, how almoſt unavoidably we conclude, that perſon to be really God, who is appointed to lead us into all truth.

Let us now, Sir, if you pleaſe, addreſs ourſelves to the inquiry, whether the Holy Spirit is a real perſon,—whether that perſon is very God?—and, theſe particulars being diſcuſſed, it may be proper to examine briefly the moſt material of Mr *Tomkins*'s objections.——But to whom, to what ſhall we apply, in order to find the ſatisfaction we ſeek? To reaſon, and her naked unaſſiſted dictates? Hardly can reaſon gueſs aright with relation to the things that are before our eyes; much leſs can ſhe determine, with any certainty, concerning the unſearchable depths of the divine nature, thoſe τα βαθη του θεου. We have in the word of revelation an infallible oracle. To this let us direct our ſearch. To the deciſion of this unerring ſtandard, let us inviolably adhere; however it may ſurpaſs our comprehenſion, or run counter to our fond prepoſſeſſions.

Here we may poſſibly aſk, Is not the Spirit of God, by a common metonymy, put for God himſelf?—I own I have ſometimes been inclined to heſitate on this queſtion. When it is ſaid, My Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man, and, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God; I have never thought theſe paſſages a ſufficient proof of the perſonality of the bleſſed Spirit, though (if I miſtake not) commonly urged in ſupport of the doctrine. Theſe, I apprehend, might fairly be interpreted of grieving God himſelf, and reſiſting the tender gracious overtures of his mercy. Conformably to that parallel form of ſpeech, where it is ſaid by the inſpired writer, *Paul*'s ſpirit was grieved, *i. e.* without all diſpute, *Paul* himſelf was inwardly afflicted.

Again; perhaps, the Spirit of the Lord may be nothing more than a particular modification or exerciſe of a divine power reſident in the Deity. For inſtance, when it is ſaid, in the prophetic language, Not by might, nor by force, but by my Spirit, ſaith the Lord; or by the evangelical hiſtorian, The Holy Ghoſt was upon him. Are not theſe texts nearly equivalent, in point of ſignification, to theſe ſcriptural expreſſions, The right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to paſs, The inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding? Is not this the meaning of the former paſſage, Not mortal ſtrength, but God's omnipotent aid giveth victory in the battle, and ſucceſs in every undertaking; and this the import of the latter, The communications of infinite wiſdom enlightened his mind in an extraordinary manner?

Were there no other ſcriptures which concerned themſelves in this debate, I ſhould be ready to give up the point. But there are ſeveral, which moſt ſtrongly imply the perſonality of the Holy Ghoſt, though they may not aſſert it in poſitive terms. It is true, we meet with no ſuch term as perſonality in ſacred writ; but if we find the thing ſignified, it is in effect the ſame. No one can ſhew me the word reſurrection in the whole Pentateuch, but will any one preſume to maintain, that this doctrine is not to be proved from the books of *Moſes?* Our Lord's famous reply to the enſnaring interrogatory of the *Sadducees*, muſt for ever ſilence ſuch a ſuggeſtion. And this we may further learn from his method of arguing, that it is not only proper, but our duty, to deduce truths, by fair conſequences, which the text may not explicitly ſpeak.

Be pleaſed, Sir, to conſider the apoſtolical benediction. The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you all. If we allow the apoſtle to underſtand the true import of language, muſt it not follow from this paſſage, that the Holy Spirit is a real perſon, and diſtinct from the Father and the Son? Otherwiſe, would not the ſacred writer, ought not the ſacred writer, to have expreſſed himſelf in a different manner; to have ſaid rather, The fellowſhip of his, or the fellowſhip of their ſpirit?—The form of adminiſtering baptiſm is another text of this nature: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt. It is evident; I believe, it is allowed by all, that the two firſt are real diſtinct perſons; and is there not equal reaſon to

to conclude, that the laſt-mentioned is a perſon alſo? Suppoſe you ſhould endeavour to diſtinguiſh three perſons in your diſcourſe, what other language would you uſe than this?——I dare ſay, Sir, you are ſenſible, that one ſcripture-proof, if plain in its ſignification, and inconteſtable in its evidence, is as valid, as deciſive as one thouſand; becauſe one ſuch proof bears the ſtamp of infallible wiſdom and infinite veracity. Therefore, was there no other hint in all the inſpired volumes, but theſe pregnant words which compoſe the form of baptiſm, this ſingle proof would be ſufficiently ſatisfactory to my judgment.

I ſhall take leave to refer you to a few more evidences, and tranſcribe only the following: There are three that bear witneſs in heaven, the Father, the Logos, and the Holy Ghoſt, and theſe three are one.—But this, we are told, is a ſurreptitious text; foiſted by the bigotted eſpouſers of certain favourite ſet of doctrines——The only reſource this of our oppoſers, when their caſe becomes deſperate, when conviction flaſhes in their faces; when every other ſubterfuge fails; then the pretence of ſpurious, and interpolated reading is trumped up. It is not to be found, they cry, in ſome very ancient copy; perhaps, the *Alexandrine* MS. acknowledges no ſuch paſſage. But this I muſt be allowed to queſtion: I dare not take our adverſaries bare word; eſpecially, ſince ſome of the declared enemies of orthodoxy are not the moſt exemplary for truth and integrity. However, granting that there may be no ſuch text in the *Alexandrine* MS. for my part, I ſhould not ſcruple to abide by the univerſal teſtimony of all editions, in all countries, much rather than to give up myſelf implicitly to the authority of a ſingle MS. I ſhould think it much more reaſonable to conclude, that the tranſcriber of that particular copy, had, through overſight, dropt ſome ſentence, rather than to charge all the other copies with forgery, and the editions of all ages with a groſs miſtake. Conſider, Sir, not only the apparent difficulty, but the moral impoſſibility of corrupting the ſacred books in that palpable manner, which this objection would inſinuate; at a time when every private Chriſtian valued them more than life, and ſpent no day without a diligent contemplation of them; at a time, when each particular ſect read them conſtantly in their public aſſemblies, and watched over the genuineneſs of each text with a moſt jealous eye.——Would it be an eaſy matter to introduce a ſuppoſititious clauſe into an ordinary will, after it had been ſolemnly proved at *Doctors Commons*, and one authentic copy preſerved in the archives? If this is ſcarce poſſible, how much more unlikely is it, that any one ſhould be able to practiſe ſo iniquitouſly upon the inſpired writings, when not one only, but unnumbered copies were depoſited in the moſt vigilant hands, and diſperſed throughout the world?

I ſhall only deſire you to conſult thoſe other ſcriptures, *Rom.* xv. 16, 30. *John* xvi. 13, 14, 15. which, without heaping together a multitude of other proofs, ſeem to put the matter beyond all rational doubt. In the laſt of thoſe places, you will take particular notice, that the writer ſpeaks of the Holy Ghoſt in the maſculine gender. How could this conſiſt with propriety of ſtyle, upon any other ſcheme than ours? The expreſſion ſhould have been *it*, not *he*, if the Holy Ghoſt were a divine energy alone, and not a real perſon.—Nay, it is remarkable, that though πνευμα be a neuter, yet the hiſtorian varies the gender, and gives us a maſculine relative, ὁταν ελθη εκεινος, Εκεινος με δοξασει; and on what principles can this conſtruction be accounted for, or juſtified, but by allowing the Holy Spirit to be a perſon? This, I think, is an obſervation of ſome conſequence; and, therefore, accurate writers ſhould beware of uſing the word *it*, and rather chuſe the pronoun *him*, when ſpeaking of this divine Being.

The mention of divine Being reminds me of our ſecond ſubject of inquiry, *viz.* Whether the Holy Ghoſt is very God?—Here I ſhould be glad to know, what kind or degree of evidence will ſatisfy the inquirers. If we are ſo far humble and impartial as to prefer the declarations of an unerring word, to the preconceptions of our mind; I think, there is moſt ſufficient proof afforded by the ſcriptures. Whereas, if we bring not theſe diſpoſitions to the ſearch, it will be no wonder, if we are bewildered; if we are given up to our own deluſions; nay, it will be no incredible, no unprecedented thing, for God to hide theſe myſteries from ſuch (in their own opinion) wiſe and prudent ones, while he reveals them to (men endued with the ſimplicity and teachableneſs of) babes.

Is that Being truly God, who is poſſeſſed of divine attributes? This queſtion, I imagine, every body will anſwer in the affirmative. So that if it appears, that the Holy Ghoſt is inveſted with the incommunicable attributes of the Deity, our aſſent will be won, and our diſpute at an end.—Is it not the prerogative of the all-ſeeing God, to ſearch the heart, and try the reins? *Jer.* xvii. 10. and is not this the undoubted prerogative of the bleſſed Spirit? 1 *Cor.* ii. 10.—Is eternity an attribute of God, and of God only? *Deut.* xxxiii. 27. ὁ μονος εχων αθανασιαν 1 *Tim.* vi. 16. This is clearly the property of the Holy Ghoſt, who is ſtyled by the author of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, The eternal Spirit, *Heb.* ix. 14.—Is wiſdom, underived, eſſential wiſdom, a character of God, called by the apoſtle μονος σοφος Θεος, *Jude* 25.? This is the illuſtrious character of the Holy Ghoſt. He is the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, *Eph.* i. 17. In conſequence of which ſacred excellency, he is able to lead his people into all truth.—Is Omnipreſence a neceſſary proof of Divinity? If ſo, the Holy Ghoſt challenges it upon this claim; for thus ſaith the inſpired poet, Whither ſhall I go then from thy ſpirit? *Pſal.* cxxxix. 7.—Is Omnipotence a ſufficient aſſertation of the Godhead of the Holy Ghoſt? He that enableth mortals to controul the powers, to alter the courſe, to ſuperſede the fundamental laws of nature; can he be leſs than the Lord God almighty? Yet St *Paul* declares, that his ability to work all manner of aſtoniſhing miracles, for the confirmation of his miniſtry, was imparted to him by the Spirit, *Rom.* xv. 19.—If any farther proof is demanded, be pleaſed to conſider, with an unprejudiced attention, that very memorable paſſage, *Matt.* xii. 31, 32. Surely, from an attentive conſideration of this text, we muſt be conſtrained to acknowledge, that the Holy Ghoſt is ſtrictly and properly God.—Otherwiſe, how could the ſin againſt him be of ſo enormous a nature, ſo abſolutely unpardonable, and the dreadful cauſe of inevitable ruin?—St *Paul* in his firſt epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, (vi. 19.), addreſſes his converts with this remarkable piece of inſtruction, Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghoſt. The ſame apoſtle writing to the ſame believers, in his ſecond epiſtle, (vi. 16.) has the following expreſſion, Ye are the temples of the living God. Who can compare theſe texts, and yet be ſo hardy as deliberately to deny, that the Holy Ghoſt and the living God are one and the ſame? Beſides, if theſe two ſcriptures, viewed in conjunction with each other, did not aſcertain the Divinity of the bleſſed Spirit, the very purport of the expreſſion, Ye are temples of the Holy Ghoſt, ſufficiently evinces it. It is certain, that the very eſſence of a temple, or, to ſpeak in the terms of the logician, the *differentia conſtitutiva* of a temple, conſiſts in the reſidence of a Deity. The inhabitation of the higheſt created Being cannot conſtitute a temple; nothing but the indwelling of the one infinite, almighty Lord God. Since, therefore, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit renders the bodies of Chriſtians temples, it ſeems to be a clear caſe, that he is truly God.—Another text, a text never omitted when this point is under debate, and a text, in my opinion, ſingly ſufficient to give a final deciſion to the doubt, is in

Acts v. 3, 4. where the perſon ſtiled Αγιω Πνευμα in one verſe, is expreſsly declared to be Θεος in the next. Now, can we imagine, that an evangeliſt, under the guidance of unerring wiſdom, could write with ſuch inaccountable inaccuracy as the deniers of this article muſt maintain? Were this ſuppoſition admitted, I ſhould almoſt begin to queſtion the inſpiration of the ſacred books. At this rate, they would ſeem calculated to confound the judgment, and elude the common ſenſe of the readers. For to ſpeak ſo frequently of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt,—to ſpeak in ſuch language as we always uſe in diſtinguiſhing various perſons,—to aſcribe to them ſeverally ſuch attributes as, by univerſal acknowledgment, comport only with the ſupreme God,—nay, to call each perſon by himſelf, diſtinctly, expreſsly to call each perſon God and Lord;—ſure, if, after all theſe declarations, there be not three perſons in the one, incomprehenſible Godhead; if each of theſe illuſtrious perſons be not very God;—what can we ſay, but that the ſcriptures are inconſiſtent and ſelf-contradictory pieces?—So that, upon the whole, we are reduced to this dilemma, either to admit this abſurd and impious charge upon the ſcriptures; or elſe to acknowledge the perſonality and divinity of the three perſons in the adorable Trinity.

But, perhaps, a curious genius, that has been accuſtomed to enter deep into the *rationale* of things; that thinks it beneath a ſagacious inquirer to credit, unleſs he can comprehend,—ſuch a genius may aſk, with a kind of amazement, How can theſe things be?—Here I pretend to give no ſatisfaction. Here I confeſs myſelf at a loſs. I cannot conceive how the principle of gravitation acts, or what conſtitutes the power of attraction. If I cannot penetrate the hidden qualities of a thouſand common objects, that daily preſent themſelves to my ſenſes; no wonder, that I ſhould be unable to unravel the awful ſecrets of the divine nature; no wonder that I ſhould be incapable of finding out to perfection that infinite Majeſty, who dwells in light inacceſſible. Since the [illegible] is atteſted by a multitude of witneſſes from ſcripture, let us be content to wait for the [illegible], till this groſs interpoſing cloud of fleſh and mortality flee away; until that happy hour arrives, that deſirable ſtate commences, when we ſhall no longer ſee through a glaſs darkly, but ſhall know even as we are known.

I ſhould now proceed, according to the ability which the great ſource of wiſdom may pleaſe to beſtow, to examine Mr *Tomkins*'s *Calm Inquiry*; but this is what my time, claimed by a variety of other engagements, will not permit; and what, I preſume, you yourſelf, tired already by a tedious epiſtle, will very readily excuſe. Hereafter, if you inſiſt upon my executing the plan, laid down in the beginning of this paper, I will communicate my remarks (ſuch as they are) relating to the forementionedmentioned treatiſe, with all that chearful compliance, and unreſerved openneſs, which may moſt emphatically beſpeak me, dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXV.

Weſton-Favell, Feb. 9. 1745-6.

THanks to you, dear Sir, for your kind wiſhes. Bleſſed be the divine providence, I am now able to inform you, that what you wiſh is accompliſhed. I have had one of the moſt agreeable loſſes I ever met with; I have loſt my indiſpoſition, and am, in a manner, well.

I ſend herewith the poem on Chriſtianity. The other books, which you have been pleaſed to lend me, will follow by the firſt opportunity. I read Mr *Hobſon*'s performance with eagerneſs and delight. What is wrote by a valuable friend, has a kind of ſecret unaccountable charm. It may not be preferable to other compoſitions, yet, methinks, it pleaſes more.

I congratulate you, Sir, and my country, on the good news received from the north. How do you like *Stackhouſe*'s hiſtory of the Bible? I am ſure he has one advantage, ſuperior to all the hiſtorians of the world; That the facts he relates are more venerable for their antiquity, more admirable for their grandeur, and more important on account of their univerſal uſefulneſs. I have often thought, that the ſcripture is finely calculated to furniſh out the moſt exquiſite entertainment to the imagination, from thoſe three principal ſources mentioned by Mr *Addiſon*, the *Great*, the *Beautiful*, and the *New*. But what is this compared with that infinitely-noble benefit, to impart which is their profeſſed deſign; the benefit of making us wiſe to ſalvation, of making us partakers of a divine nature?—I am, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

Dear Sir, Weſton-Favell, Feb. 11. 1745-6.

I Received your ticket ſome time ago, in which you deſire me to conſider ſome particular paſſages of ſcripture. After an afflictive indiſpoſition, which confined me to my room ſeveral days, I have examined the texts you allege. They relate, I find, to that grand queſtion, which has lately been the ſubject of our debate, the Divinity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.——I could have wiſhed, that the controverſy had been brought to a ſatisfactory and happy iſſue. Very unwilling to engage in it a ſecond time, I muſt beg leave to ſue for my *Bene deceſſit*, and reſign the management of ſo important a diſpute to incomparably more able hands.——However, in obedience to your requeſt, (*quid enim amicitiæ denegandum?*), I ſhall briefly lay before you my opinion concerning thoſe portions of inſpired wiſdom; and then proceed, in purſuance of my promiſe, to weigh, with calmneſs and impartiality, the moſt material of Mr *Tomkins*'s objections.

You obſerve, That the Father is never repreſented yielding obedience to Chriſt, or praying to Chriſt.——I acknowledge the truth of the remark, and aſſign this clear and obvious reaſon, becauſe it was the peculiar office of the ſecond perſon of the Trinity to humble himſelf, to unite himſelf to fleſh and blood, and to be made in all things like unto us, ſin only excepted. Had not the bleſſed Jeſus been clothed with our nature, and partook of our innocent infirmities, we ſhould never have heard any ſuch thing, as his yielding obedience, or praying to another, greater than himſelf.——This reſults not from his eſſential, but his aſſumed nature: nor is it at all repugnant to reaſon, to be inferior in one character, and at the ſame time abſolutely equal in another.——His Majeſty King *George* may be inferior to the Emperor, in the capacity of Elector of *Hanover*; he may be ſubject to the Imperial authority, as he is a prince of the *Germanic* body; and yet equal to the moſt illuſtrious monarchs, obnoxious to no earthly juriſdiction, in his nobler quality of King of *Great Britain*, *France*, and *Ireland*. This ſeems to be a very eaſy and natural ſolution of the difficulty: whereas, I think, I may venture to defy the niceſt metaphyſician, or the moſt acute chriſtiſt, to reconcile the notions of divinity and inferiority. As well may contradictions be made compatible. A God, who is inferior, is, to my apprehenſion, a perfect paradox. It is neceſſarily implied in the idea of God, That he be, as our old tranſlation of the *Pſalms* very emphatically and beautifully ſtyles him, The Moſt Higheſt. Therefore, our Saviour, who often aſſerts his claim to Divinity, declares, as an inſeparable conſequent of this high prerogative, All things which the Father hath, are mine. Is the Father's exiſtence inconceivable and eternal? the ſame alſo is the Son's.

Son's. Has the Father an unequalled abſolute ſupremacy? ſuch likewiſe hath the Son.

But I ſee you have ready at hand to object, *John* xiv. 28. My Father is greater than I.——Who are we to underſtand by the perſon I? Doubtleſs, that being who was capable of going and coming; who was ſometimes in one place, and ſometimes in another; now with the diſciples on earth, anon ſeparated from them by a tranſlation into heaven: and who can this be but the man Chriſt Jeſus; the human nature of our Redeemer?—The attribute of limited locality, determines this point with the utmoſt clearneſs; why then ſhould any one apply that property to the Godhead of our bleſſed Maſter, which he himſelf ſo plainly appropriates to his manhood?

This text very opportunely furniſhes us with a key, to enter into the true meaning of your next quotation, 1 *Cor.* xi. 3. The head of Chriſt is God. Only let St *John* be allowed to expound St *Paul*. I aſk this ſingle conceſſion from my worthy friend, (and ſure it is no unreaſonable one.) Let us agree to pay a greater deference to the beloved diſciple's comment, than to Mr *Pierce*'s paraphraſe, or the interpretation of the *Arian* creed; then the ſenſe will be as follows, The Deity is the head of the Mediator. As the members are conducted by the head, and ſubſervient to the head; ſo Chriſt Jeſus, in his human capacity, acted and acts in ſubordination to the Godhead; obeying the ſignifications of his will, and referring all his adminiſtrations to his glory. This expoſition I imagine, the context corroborates, and the ſcope of the apoſtle's arguing requires.

As for *Heb.* i. 8, 9. this text affirms, in the moſt expreſs terms, That Chriſt is God, ο θρονος σου ο ΘΕΟΣ. And what can be a ſtronger proof of his unrivalled ſupremacy and ſovereignty?—But, perhaps, this may be one of thoſe places, in which, we are informed by our objectors, the word GOD ſignifies no more than a king or ruler, conſequently, does not prove our Redeemer to be God in reality, and by nature; but only to be complimented with this appellation, in reſpect of his office and authority.——I believe, Sir, you will find, upon a more attentive inquiry, that this ſubtile diſtinction is contrary to the perpetual uſe of the ſcriptures. A very celebrated critic obſerves, that where-ever the name ELOHIM (tranſlated by the apoſtle ΘΕΟΣ) is taken in an abſolute ſenſe, and reſtrained to one particular perſon, (as it is in the paſſage before us,) it conſtantly denotes the true and only God. Magiſtrates are indeed ſaid to be Elohim, in relation to their office, but no one magiſtrate was ever ſo called; nor can it be ſaid, without blaſphemy, to any one of them, Thou art Elohim, or God. It is alſo recorded of *Moſes*, Thou ſhalt be Elohim; yet not abſolutely, but relatively only, a God to *Pharaoh*, and to *Aaron*, i. e. in God's ſtead, doing in the name of God what he commanded, and declaring what he revealed.—Beſides, does not the apoſtle, in this very chapter, verſe 10. addreſs the following acknowledgment to Chriſt, Thou, Lord, in the beginning, haſt laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. And is not the work of creation the unſhared prerogative and honour of the ſupreme God. This I am pretty ſure of, it is the prerogative of that God to whom the worſhip of the ſaints, under the Old Teſtament, is directed; of that God, who has declared himſelf jealous of his honour, and reſolves not to give his glory to another? *Melchiſedec* made this illuſtrious being the object of his adoration, Bleſſed be the moſt high God, poſſeſſor of heaven and earth: The day is thine, and the night is thine: thou haſt prepared the light and the ſun; was judged by the *pſalmiſt* one of the nobleſt aſcriptions of praiſe which could be made to the Deity. *Jonah* has left us a confeſſion of his faith, and an abſtract of his devotion, in the following words; I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who hath made the ſea, and the dry land. Yet St *Paul* aſſures us, that this great Creator and Proprietor of heaven and earth; this object of divine worſhip in all ages of the ancient church, is he——ος εστιν διαφερων παντων ευλογητος εις τους αιωνας αμην verſe 3.—Now, can we view the magnificent ſyſtem of the univerſe, the immenſity of its extent, the vaſt variety of its parts, the inimitable accuracy of its ſtructure, the perfect harmony of its motions, together with the aſtoniſhing energy and effects of its mechanic powers;—can we contemplate this world of wonders, and with-hold ourſelves a ſingle moment from aſcribing the glory of incomparable wiſdom, and matchleſs perfections to its Maker? Can we glance an eye, or ſtart a thought, through that ample field of miracles, which nature in all her ſcenes regularly exhibits, and ſtill conclude, that the Author of all takes too much upon him, when he advances the following claim?

——————*None I know*
Second to me, or like, equal much leſs. MILT.

Poſſibly, our ſceptical gentlemen are ready to reply, We are far from denying that Chriſt made the world; but we ſuppoſe, that he made it only as a miniſterial being; not by any ſufficiency of his own, but by a power delegated to him from the infinite Godhead.—But ſure the abettors of this opinion never conſidered that emphatical paſſage, παντα δι' αυτου και εις αυτον εκτισται *. By whatever artful evaſion they may think to elude the force of the former expreſſion, I cannot ſee what poſſible eſcape they can contrive from the latter. It is plain from the philoſophical principles of an apoſtle, that the univerſe was formed by Chriſt as the almighty Artificer, for Chriſt as its final end: and is not this a demonſtration, that Chriſt was not a mere inſtrument, but the grand, glorious, ſelf-ſufficient agent; the Alpha and Omega of all things?

After all that has been ſaid upon this text, will it be intimated, that I have been partial in my examination of it? that the ſentence, which moſt particularly favours your opinion, and looks with the moſt frowning aſpect on mine, is paſſed over without notice? namely, where it is taught, That God anointed Chriſt with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows †.——I reply, by owning, that theſe words moſt undeniably imply inferiority; they imply a ſtate of indigence, which wants ſomething it has not naturally; a ſtate of impotence, which receives from another, what it cannot convey to itſelf. Surely, then, this clauſe muſt, according to all the laws of juſt interpretation, be referred to that nature which admitted of ſuch wants, and was ſubject to ſuch infirmities. To aſcribe it to that nature, which is characterized as God, would be almoſt as affronting to reaſon, as it is to the Deity.——It is farther obſervable, that the very expreſſion limits the ſenſe to that capacity of our Redeemer, in which others ſtood related to him as his fellows. And can this be any other than the human?——Let me add one word more, before I diſmiſs this inquiry; ſuppoſe I was to ſhift ſides in the diſpute, and turn the tables upon the diſciples of *Arius*. Gentlemen, ſince you take ſo much pains to prove the inferiority of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, permit me to try, if I cannot outſhoot you in your own bow. I will undertake to ſhew, on your own principles, that he was inferior to millions of created beings; for this I have the poſitive and ſure evidence of ſcripture. We ſee Jeſus, who was made a little lower than the angels ‡.—Theſe gentlemen, I verily think, would have ſo much regard for the honour of a perſon on whom their everlaſting all depends, as to anſwer with ſome becoming ſpirit, You

* Col. i. 16.

† Heb. i. 9. ‡ Heb. ii. 9.

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are to diſtinguiſh between what our Saviour was made occaſionally, and what he was originally: Tho' his human nature was taken from a claſs of beings lower in dignity than the angels, yet his nobler and more exalted nature was greatly ſuperior to them all.—Now, Sir, as we muſt have recourſe ſometimes to this diſtinction, our adverſaries themſelves being our judges and our precedent, why ſhould we not carry it along with us continually? Without it, a multitude of texts appear perplexed in their meaning, and claſh with other ſcriptures; with it they drop their obſcurity, are diſentangled from their intricacy, and harmonize entirely with the whole tenor of ſacred writ.

1 *Cor.* xv. 28. is another ſcripture pointed out for conſideration. This, I confeſs, is a difficult, and admitting it was (to me at leaſt) an unintelligible paſſage, nay, directly repugnant to my hypotheſis,—what would be a rational procedure in this caſe? to renounce my faith, becauſe I cannot reconcile it with one ſcripture, though it ſtands ſupported by a copious multiplicity of others? If, in debating on any queſtion, there be five hundred ayes, and but one no, I appeal to the conduct of the Honourable houſe of Commons, whether it be reaſonable, that the point ſhould be carried by the ſingle negative, in oppoſition to ſo vaſt a majority of affirmatives? However, the ſtate of our doctrine is not ſo bad, nor this text ſo diametrically oppoſite to it, as to deſtroy all hopes of eſtabliſhing it with a *nemine contradicente*.—The apoſtle affirms, that, at the conſummation of terreſtrial things, when the ſtate of human probation ends, and the number of the elect is completed, then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him that put all things under him; that God may be all in all; *i. e.* according to my judgment, the Son, at the commencement of that grand revolution, will entirely reſign the adminiſtration of his mediatorial kingdom; he will no longer act as an advocate or interceſſor, becauſe the reaſons on which this office is founded, will ceaſe for ever; he will no longer, as a high prieſt, plead his atoning blood in behalf of ſinners, nor, as a king, diſpenſe the ſuccours of his ſanctifying grace, becauſe all guilt will be done away, and the actings of corruption be at an end: he will no longer be the medium of his people's acceſs to the knowledge and enjoyment of the Father, becauſe then they will ſtand perpetually in the beatific preſence, and ſee face to face, know even as they are known.——I may probably miſtake the meaning of the words; but whatever ſhall appear to be their preciſe ſignification, this, I think, is ſo clear as not to admit of any doubt, that it relates to an incarnate perſon; relates to him, who died for our ſins, was buried, and roſe again *. And can the ſurrender of all authority made by the man Jeſus Chriſt, be any bar to his unlimited equality as God?

You refer me to *Pſal.* viii. 5. & lxxxii. 1, 6. *Exod.* xxii. 28. and add, theſe texts prove that God ſignifies in ſome places king or ruler.—I acknowledge, that the word, Elohim, in the aforecited paſſages, ſignifies no more than angels, kings, or rulers. But is this a demonſtration, that the word Jehovah, the incommunicable name, ſignifies no more than an angel, a king, or a ruler? This is the concluſion our adverſaries are to infer: this the point they are to make good, otherwiſe, their attempts drop ſhort of the mark, fly wide from their purpoſe. Becauſe it is plain from inconteſtable authorities, that Jeſus is Jehovah. This was hinted in a former letter; and if you pleaſe to compare *Iſ.* vi. 3, with *John* xii. 41. you will find another convincing evidence, that the Jehovah of the *Jews* is the Jeſus of the *Chriſtians*.——Beſides, in all thoſe places, where the term God is uſed to denote ſome created being, inveſted with conſiderable authority, or poſſeſſed of conſiderable dignity, the connection is ſuch, as abſolutely to exclude the perſon, ſo denominated, from any title to a divine nature; whereas, when the name God is applied to the ſecond perſon of the Trinity, it is connected with ſuch conſequents or antecedents, as neceſſarily include the idea of divinity and ſupremacy. For inſtance, when the apoſtle recognizes the Deity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in thoſe remarkable words, *Rom.* ix. 5. Who is God? leſt this idle piece of ſophiſtry ſhould have any room for admittance, he adds a moſt determining clauſe, over all, bleſſed for ever.——I have called it idle ſophiſtry, for really it is nothing elſe. Only obſerve the proceſs of the pretended argument, and you yourſelf will allow it no better appellation. What is deſigned for the argument runs thus: Becauſe rulers of diſtinction have ſometimes the title of Elohim, therefore Jeſus, who has the title of Jehovah, is not very God, but only a ruler of diſtinction; or, the word God, when neceſſarily determined by the context to ſome ſubordinate being, ſignifies a ſubordinate being; therefore, the word God, when neceſſarily determined by the context to ſignify the ſupreme God, does not ſignify the ſupreme God, but only ſome ſubordinate being.——Theſe are the mighty reaſonings; ſuch the formidable artillery, with which the adherents of *Arius* attack the divinity and equality of our Saviour. May the arms of our foreign enemies, and inteſtine rebels, be made, in their kind, of ſuch metal, conſiſt of ſuch ſtrength! and I may venture to addreſs my countrymen in *David*'s encouraging language, Let no man's heart fail, becauſe of them.

I hope it will not be objected, that I have ſometimes miſtook the particular point to be diſcuſſed, and confounded the divinity of our Lord with his equality to the Father.—I own, I have not been ſcrupulouſly careful to preſerve any ſuch diſtinction, becauſe I am perſuaded it is perfectly chimerical. Whoever admits the former, grants the latter. The one cannot ſubſiſt without the other; or rather, they are one and the ſame thing. To be equal with the Father is to be divine; and to be divine, is to be equal with the Father.——An inferior deity, was a notion that paſſed current in the Heathen world; but we have not ſo learned the divine nature, as to adopt it into our creed. It is a propoſition that confutes itſelf. The predicate and ſubject are ſelf-contradictory. God certainly means a being of incomparable, unparalleled glory and perfection. No one will dare to give a lower definition of the Godhead. Yet this the firſt term of the ſentence affirms, the ſecond denies.—Whenever I hear the awful word God, I form an idea of a being poſſeſſed of abſolute ſupremacy. Inferiority is altogether as inconſiſtent with my apprehenſion of the Godhead, as a limited extenſion is with immenſity. The ſchoolmen's maxim is ſtrictly true when applied to the divine nature, that his properties and excellencies *non recipiunt magis aut minus*.——Beſides, Sir, is there not another apparent inconveniency, another inextricable difficulty, attending this ſuperfine diſtinction? Does it not ſuppoſe, inſtead of diſtinct perſons, diſtinct beings, diſtinct eſſences? That which is inferior cannot be the very ſame with its ſuperior. Identity in this caſe, conſiſts not with inequality. The conſequence of this tenet is polytheiſm.

For my part, I lay it down as an inconteſtable principle, ſuch as reaſon and ſcripture concur to eſtabliſh, that whatever, whoſoever is God, muſt be abſolutely ſupreme.——I then proceed to examine whether the divine names, attributes, honours; thoſe which are incommunicably divine, which flow from the divine eſſence, which cannot comport with a finite exiſtence, but are the ſole prerogative of the unequalled God,—whether theſe are in ſcripture clearly aſcribed to the ſacred perſon of the Son;—if they are, my reaſon requires me to believe that he is very God, and co-equal with the Father. My reaſon, in her ſedateſt moments, aſſures

* 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

assures me, that scripture cannot deceive, though I may be unable to conceive. My reason declares, that I shall be a rebel against her laws, if I do not submit to this determination of scripture, as decisive, as infallible.——I am, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, March,* 1745-6.

IN a former letter, I considered, whether the blessed Spirit is really a distinct person,—whether this person is truly and properly God. It appeared from a variety of scriptures, that both these questions were to be resolved in the affirmative.—These preliminaries being settled, I would hope, with some perspicuity of reason, and strength of argument; I now proceed, in consequence of my engagement, to examine Mr *Tomkins*'s objections against the received custom of addressing divine worship to this divine Being.

The author, I freely acknowledge, writes with a great appearance of integrity; with a calm and decent spirit of controversy; and with a very plausible air of truth. As the subject of his inquiry is of the highest dignity and importance, as his method of managing the debate is, to say the least, by no means contemptible, I cannot forbear expressing some surprise, that none of the ingenious dissenters, to whom the piece is particularly inscribed, have thought proper to interest themselves in the dispute, and either confute what is urged, or else (like persons of that inviolable attachment to the pure scriptural worship, which they profess) recede from the use of their allowed doxologies.

For my part, as I firmly believe it a proper practice to worship the Son, as we worship the Father, and to worship the Holy Ghost, as we worship the other persons of the undivided Trinity, I am so far from disapproving, that I admire our customary doxology, and think it a very noble and instructive part of our sacred service. Noble, because it exhibits one of the grand mysteries, and glorious peculiarities of the gospel; instructive, because it so frequently reminds the worshipper of a point which it so greatly concerns him to believe, and which is fitted to inspire the brightest, the strongest hopes, of final, of complete salvation.

But lest this persuasion should be deemed the crude production of early prejudice, rather than the mature fruit of sedate consideration, we will very readily hear whatever can be alleged against it; and not willingly secrete one objection, or misrepresent one argument, occurring in the Inquiry.

"Let it be supposed," says our author, that the Holy Spirit is one of the persons of the Godhead; I still query what warrant Christians have for a direct and distinct worship of this third person in the Godhead." (pag. 1.)—I should think, there can be no reasonable doubt, whether worship is to be paid to the Divinity. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, is a law of incontestable authority, and eternal obligation.——As for the circumstances of worship included in its being direct, this cannot alter the case, nor render the practice improper. According to my apprehension, all true and genuine worship is direct. If it be addressed to the divine object at second hand, it has more of the nature of idolatry, than worship. Such is the religious foppery of the Papists, who will not apply directly to the Father of everlasting compassions, but adore God as it were by proxy.—With regard to the distinctness of the worship, this depends entirely upon the scripture's distinguishing their persons. If this be clearly done, the distinctness of worship is properly authorised, and the fitness of it follows of course. If the inspired writers assure us, that the Father is God, this is a sufficient warrant to pay divine honours to the Father. If the inspired writers affirm, that the Son is God, this is a sufficient ground for ascribing divine honours to the Son. If the same inspired writers declare, that the Holy Ghost is God, we need no clearer warrant, nor can we have a louder call, to pay him our devoutest homage.——In a word, it is the voice of reason, it is the command of scripture, it is founded on the unalterable relations of things, that worship, direct worship, distinct worship, all worship, be rendered to the Deity.—So that the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, exclusive of any apostolical precept or example, is an incomparably better reason for ascribing divine honours to this sacred person, than the bare want of such precept or example, can be a reason to justify the omission, or condemn the performance of it.

I am no advocate for implicit faith in any human determination or opinion. Should I see whole sects, or whole churches, in a glaring error, such as I can prove from scripture to be palpably wrong, and of pernicious tendency, I would make no scruple to remonstrate, dissent, and enter my protest. But in a case, which Mr *Tomkins* himself (page 2. line 19.) allows to be of a dubious nature; where I have no positive proof from God's holy word, that the practice is unlawful, or improper; I cannot but apprehend, that it becomes a modest person, diffident of his own judgment, to acquiesce in the general, the long-continued usage of all the churches.—This is urged by an inspired writer as a forcible motive for rejecting a practice; and why should not I admit it as a motive of weight for adhering to a practice? We have no such custom, neither the churches of God *, was an apostolical argument. And, in an instance, where we are not precluded by any prohibition of scripture, I think, the reasoning is equally conclusive, if changed to the affirmative. We have such a custom, and the churches of God.—Was I to settle my opinion, and adjust my conduct, with regard to such a point, I should be inclined to argue in the following manner: I cannot bring one text from the sacred writings, which forbids the usage; and as it is unanimously practised by devout persons of almost every denomination; as it has been the received, the uninterrupted practice of the Christian church for more than a thousand years; who am I, that I should disturb the peace, or separate myself from the communion of the church, for a procedure, which such multitudes of excellent persons maintain to be consonant, and which I cannot prove to be contrary, to the sense of scripture? Who am I, that I should fancy myself to have more of the mind of God, than the whole united church of true believers, eminent saints, and illustrious martyrs?

"But there is no precept for this worship in scripture," (page 1.); and Dr *Owen* affirms, "That a divine command is the ground" (he means, I presume, the only ground, or else the quotation is nothing to our author's purpose) "of all worship." (page 25.)—— Dr *Owen*'s character, I own, is considerable, as well as his assertion peremptory; but yet I cannot prevail on myself to submit to his *ipse dixit* as an oracle, nor reverence his judgment as infallible.——I would ask the Doctor, What divine command the Heathens ever received to worship the blessed God? I know of no verbal or written precept. But they saw their warrant included in their wants, they perceived their obligation resulting from the divine attributes.——Will Dr *Owen* maintain, That no worship was expected from the Pagans? that they had been blameless, and acted according to the principles of their duty, if they had with-held all acts of veneration from the Deity? No, surely. St *Paul*, in declaring them faulty, for not worshipping the Almighty in such a rational

* 1 Cor. xi. 16.

manner, as was ſuitable to his pure and exalted nature, clearly intimates, that it was their duty both to worſhip, and to worſhip aright. It is not ſaid by the apoſtle, though it is the conſequence of the Doctor's poſition, that they ought to have refrained from all worſhip, and not have meddled with matters of devotion, till they received an authentic warrant from revelation. The inſpired caſuiſt grounds his duty, in this particular, upon the eternal power and Godhead (*Rom.* i. 20.) of the ſupreme Being, which were diſcoverable by the exercife of their underſtandings, and from a ſurvey of the creation.——In conformity to the apoſtle's ſentiments, I ſhould rather place the foundation of religious worſhip in the glories, the mercies, the unſearchable riches of the almighty Majeſty. Theſe, together with the relation which dependent creatures bear to this all-producing, all-ſuſtaining, infinitely-beneficent God, are the grand warrant to authoriſe addreſſes of adoration. Theſe are reaſons prior to all expreſs revelations, and would have ſubſiſted, if actual commands had never been given. If this be not true, what will become of all natural religion?—Scripture, indeed, has declared explicitly the binding nature of theſe motives; ſcripture, like a ſacred herald, has promulged what God fore-ordained, what reaſon had decreed, what neceſſarily flowed from the habitudes of perſons and things. Or, to repreſent the point in another light, the perfections of the Godhead are the original, the inviolable obligation to all expreſſions of homage and devotion; to ratify this obligation, and impart to it all poſſible ſolemnity and ſanction, ſcripture has added the broad ſeal of heaven.——If this be right reaſon, and if the Holy Ghoſt be really God, his all-ſufficient excellencies, and my ſtate of dependence, are a proper licence, or rather a virtual mandamus, for the applications of prayer, and the aſcriptions of praiſe. Grant this one propoſition, relating to the Divinity of the bleſſed Spirit, and admit that his eternal power and Godhead are a ſufficient ground for religious worſhip, and we ſhall find ourſelves unavoidably determined. We muſt rebel againſt our reaſon, muſt violate the dictates of our conſcience, muſt act in oppoſition, not to one particular text, but to the main tenor and ſcope of the whole ſcripture, if we do not render all the ſervice, yield all the reverence, due to a glorious Being, in whom we live, move, and exiſt.

But ſtill we are told, in various places, again and again we are told, "That there is no expreſs warrant." Prodigious ſtreſs is laid upon this word *expreſs*, the whole force of the objection ſeems to terminate on this point. There is no expreſs warrant, therefore it is an unwarrantable practice.——For my part, I have not diſcernment enough to perceive the concluſiveneſs of this arguing. I muſt beg leave to deny the conſequence of ſuch a ſyllogiſm. For if the ſenſe of various ſcriptures has made it a duty, this is warrant enough, though it be not particularly enjoined, or tolerated in form. This maxim our ingenious author will admit in other caſes, and why not in the preſent? There is no expreſs command to add any prayer at the celebration of baptiſm. When our Lord inſtituted the ordinance, he only delivers the form of initiation into the Chriſtian church, without any preſcription relating to concomitant prayer. When *Philip* adminiſtered this ſacrament to the eunuch, there is no mention of any addreſs to the Almighty, pertinent to the occaſion. I cannot recollect, that any of the holy writers either inform the world, that they practiſed ſuch a method themſelves, or ſo much as intimate, that they would adviſe others in ſucceeding ages, to accompany this ſolemnity with ſuitable devotions.——But though we have no poſitive injunction, we have the reaſonableneſs of the thing, for our plea. Other ſcriptures, that virtually, though not explicitly, recommend it, are our warrant. In every thing, ſays St *Paul*, let your requeſts be made known unto God; conſequently, in this ſacred and important thing.

I muſt again declare, that I can by no means aſſent to our author's grand *poſtulatum*, That nothing in the way of divine worſhip is allowable, but what has an expreſs warrant from ſcripture. Becauſe virtual warrants are warrants; conſequential warrants are warrants. Our objector muſt maintain this in ſome inſtances, and why ſhould he diſclaim it in others? To be conſiſtent in conduct, is ſurely eſſential to the character of an impartial inquirer after truth. Shall ſuch an one ſometimes reject an argument as weak and inſignificant, becauſe it happens to be illative only, and not direct; and at other times urge it as cogent and irrefragable? I will mention one very memorable particular of this nature; that is the caſe of the Lord's day. Why does Mr *Tomkins* transfer the ſanctification of a particular day from the ſeventh to the firſt? Has he any expreſs command in ſcripture, any expreſs warrant from ſcripture, for this alteration? If he has, let him produce it. I muſt own, I have none but conſequential warrants; warrants formed upon concluſions, and derived from ſome remarkable ſcriptures. But theſe not near ſo numerous, nor near ſo ponderous, as thoſe which concur to eſtabliſh the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt. Now, if an expreſs warrant be not needful in the one, why ſhould it be ſo rigorouſly inſiſted on in the other duty?——If then this leading principle of our author's be falſe or precarious, what truth, what certainty can there be in any, in all his deductions from it? If the ground-work be unſubſtantial, and the foundation fall, what ſolidity can there be in the ſuperſtructure? how can the building ſtand?

Poſſibly Mr *Tomkins* may reply, "The example of the primitive church determines this point." We find, it was the cuſtom of the earlieſt antiquity, to obſerve the Chriſtian Sabbath on the firſt day of the week; and therefore have very good reaſon to believe, that the uſage was eſtabliſhed by apoſtolical authority.——And may not I ſay the ſame, with regard to the cuſtom of aſcribing glory, and rendering adoration, to the third perſon of the Trinity? *Juſtin Martyr*, the moſt ancient and authentic apologiſt for Chriſtianity, who is next in ſucceſſion, and next in credit to the *patres apoſtolici*, he declares expreſsly, That it was the received cuſtom of the Chriſtian church, in his days, to worſhip the Holy Ghoſt. His words are, Πνευμα προφητικον, οτι μετα λογου τιμωμεν, αποδειξομεν. You perceive, he not only avows the thing, but vindicates its reaſonableneſs and propriety.——Perhaps, ſome captious critic may inſinuate, That it is matter of doubt, whether the word——τιμωμεν——implies divine honours.——I wave all attempts to prove this point from the original of the New Teſtament, becauſe, to obviate ſuch an objection, we have another paſſage to produce from the ſame ſaint, father, and martyr.—— Πνευμα προφητικον, σεβομεθα και προσκυνουμεν, *Apol.* 1. Can any expreſſions be imagined more forcible in their ſignification, or more appoſite to our purpoſe? They import the higheſt acts of adoration, and yet they deſcribe the regards which were paid by the pureſt antiquity to the Holy Ghoſt.——Will it ſtill be ſuggeſted, That *Juſtin* makes no mention of offering up prayers, or addreſſing praiſes? I anſwer, This he muſt certainly mean, becauſe no one can be ſaid——σεβεισθαι και προσκυνειν τον Θεον η το Πνευμα——who with-holds praiſe, or reſtrains prayer. Theſe particular inſtances are as neceſſarily implied in thoſe general terms, as the ſpecies is included in the genus.

You will pleaſe to obſerve, that this amounts to a great deal more than Mr *Tomkins*, (page 17.) not very ingenuouſly, ſuggeſts, *viz.* "a few hints that learned men have found, in the primitive ages, of the aſcription of praiſe to the Holy Ghoſt." It ſeems alſo entirely to overthrow what, in another place, he advances (page

(page 26.) not very conſiſtently with truth, *viz.* "That there is ſo little appearance of the obſervance of ſuch a cuſtom, for ſo many ages of the Chriſtian church."——Few hints and little appearance! Can a clear and determinate declaration, made by a writer of the moſt unqueſtionable veracity, concerning the unanimous, the univerſal practice of the ancient church,—can this evidence, with any fairneſs or equity, be rated at the diminutive degree of hints and little appearance?

As to what is remarked relating to the corruption of the early writers, the interpolations, or alterations made by careleſs tranſcribers, (page 17.) this ſeems to be a moſt empty and jejune inſinuation. It is what will ſerve any ſide of a debate. It is oppoſing hypotheſis to fact; precarious and unſupported hypotheſis, to clear and undeniable fact. This ſure is catching, not at a twig, but at a ſhadow.——I never could like Dr *Bentley's ſcitantia et hallucinatio librariorum*, even in his animadverſions on Heathen authors: becauſe it was an outcry fitted for any occaſion, a charge ever ready at hand, and equally ſuited to diſcountenance truth, or detect error. Much leſs can I think it ſufficient to overthrow the teſtimony, or invalidate the authenticity of our ancient Chriſtian writers.——Would a bare inuendo (and Mr *Tomkins's* is no more,) and that from an intereſted perſon, without any the leaſt ſhew of proof; would this be admitted, in a court of judicature, to ſuperſede the plain, the ſolemn depoſition of a credible witneſs? Superſede it? Quite the reverſe. It would convince the judge, and teach the jury, that the cauſe muſt be extremely wrong, utterly unſupportable, ſince artifices ſo weak and tranſparently fallacious were uſed in its defence.

But it is frequently objected, That no mention is made, no warrant is to be found for diſtinct worſhip. The aforecited writer, and the whole ſcripture is ſilent upon the article of diſtinct worſhip. And the reader is led to ſuppoſe, that there is ſome mighty difference between diſtinct, and I know not what other kind of worſhip.—Why does our author harp ſo inceſſantly upon this ſtring? whence ſuch irreconcileable averſion to this quality of worſhip? One would almoſt ſuſpect, he was conſcious, that ſome worſhip ſhould be paid, but could not digeſt the doctrine, nor ſubmit to the payment of diſtinct worſhip.—I muſt reply once for all, that if any worſhip be due, diſtinct worſhip cannot be improper; much more if all worſhip (which, I apprehend, is included in *Juſtin's* words, and follows from the Divinity of the bleſſed Spirit) be requiſite, diſtinct worſhip cannot be unwarrantable.

Another grand argument, urged by our inquirer, is "That the apoſtles, as far as appears, never practiſed this worſhip of the Holy Ghoſt themſelves, nor recommended it to others," (page 2.)——He ſhould, by all means, have printed *as far as appears* in Italics, or capitals; becauſe then the reader would have apprehended more eaſily the uncertain foundation on which the reaſoning is built. But though this particular, relating to the practice of the apoſtles, does not appear, one way or the other; yet our author in his 4th page, and elſewhere, concludes from it as aſſuredly as if it ſtood upon authentic record. "For," ſays he, "if we admit, that the reaſon of things is ſufficient to eſtabliſh "this practice, it will prove too much." It will, undoubtedly, if it proves any thing, prove it a duty to pay ſuch worſhip to the Holy Spirit; and, conſequently, that the apoſtles were defective, either in not ſeeing this reaſon of things as well as we, or not practiſing according to it. Does he not here ſuppoſe, the apoſtolical omiſſion an acknowledged, undoubted point? which, a few lines before, he had confeſſed to be dubious and unapparent.

However, not to inſiſt upon this little ſelf-contradicting ſlip, I would aſk, what reaſon has Mr *Tomkins* to conclude, that the apoſtles omitted this uſage, which the Chriſtian churches have adopted? Do they ever declare, or ſo much as hint, that they are determined to omit it? Do they ever caution their converts againſt it, as a dangerous error? Is there any ſuch memorial preſerved, or any ſuch caveat lodged in their ſacred writings?——Now, to argue in our author's ſtrain: If it was ſo unjuſtifiable a thing to addreſs praiſe, or put up prayer to the Holy Ghoſt, there could not be a more neceſſary precaution, than that the apoſtles, thoſe careful inſtructors, ſhould have warned their people of the miſtake; eſpecially ſince it was ſo extremely probable, ſo almoſt unavoidable, that they would fall into it. For I appeal to the whole world, whether a conſiderate perſon would not naturally judge it reaſonable, whether a devout perſon would not feel a forcible inclination, to worſhip that venerable name, into which he was baptized; and to praiſe that beneficent Being, who is the author of ſo many ineſtimable bleſſings. Yet though this is ſo apparently natural, ſuch as the apoſtles could not but foreſee was likely to happen, they ſay not a ſyllable, by way of prevention; they take no care to guard their converts againſt ſuch a practice. A pregnant ſign, that it is allowed by divine Wiſdom, and chargable neither with ſuperſtition nor idolatry.

But our author, to corroborate his argument, adds, "To ſuppoſe the apoſtles directed any explicit worſhip to the Holy Ghoſt, though we have no mention "of it in ſcripture, where yet we meet with frequent "doxologies of theirs, and addreſſes by way of prayer "or petition," would be an unreaſonable preſumption.——I cannot accede to this aſſertion. The doxologies and prayers of the apoſtles, recorded in ſcripture, are only occaſional and incidental; inſerted as the fervour of a devout ſpirit ſuggeſted, in the body of their doctrinal and exhortatory writings. Now, the omiſſion of ſuch a practice in writings, which were compoſed with a view of inſtructing mankind in the great fundamentals of Chriſtianity, which were never intended as a full and complete ſyſtem of devotions;—the omiſſion of this practice in ſuch writings, can be no fair or concluſive argument for its being omitted in their ſtated acts of public worſhip. If, indeed, the apoſtles had, in their epiſtolary correſpondence, drawn up a form of devotions; had declared that in them was comprized a perfect pattern of devotional addreſſes, proper to be offered to the Deity; that all acts of worſhip, which deviated a jot or tittle from that preſcribed form, were unwarrantable;——if ſuch a compoſition had been tranſmitted from the apoſtles, and we had found no ſuch addreſſes therein, as thoſe for which we are pleading, I ſhould then allow a good deal of force in the argument drawn from the apoſtolical omiſſion; though, at the ſame time, I could not be able to forbear wondering at the inconſiſtency of their doctrines, which teach us that the Holy Ghoſt is God, and of their worſhip, which refuſes him divine honours.——But, I think, as the caſe ſtands, no ſolid argument, nothing but a ſpecious cavil, can be formed from this circumſtance of its being unpractiſed in the writings of the apoſtles.

"It does not appear that the apoſtles addreſſed diſtinct worſhip to the bleſſed Spirit; therefore we conclude, that they actually addreſſed none."——As though fact and appearance were convertible terms.——I am ſurpriſed, that an author of Mr *Tomkins's* penetration can prevail upon himſelf to be ſatisfied, or ſhould offer to impoſe upon his readers, with a deduction ſo very illogical. Is the not appearing of a thing, a certain argument, or indeed any argument at all, for its not exiſting? It does not appear, that there are mountains, or groves, or rivers beneath our horizon: It does not appear, that there are any ſuch veſſels as lymphatics, any ſuch fluid as the chyle, in

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theſe living bodies of ours. But by comparing them with others that have been diſſected; and by reaſoning from indiſputable principles, relating to the animal œconomy, we aſſure ourſelves of the reality of both theſe particulars.——Conſider, Sir, into what unnumbered abſurdities, and evident falſehoods, this way of arguing would betray us, if purſued in all its conſequences. It will prove, if we once admit it as a teſt of truth, that nothing was tranſacted by ſcriptural men, but what is particularly recorded in ſcripture-hiſtory. I no where read *Iſaac* circumciſed his ſon *Jacob*, or inſtructed his houſehold after the example of his father *Abraham*.—— But ſhall we infer, from the ſilence of ſcripture, with regard to theſe matters, that he never conformed to the former inſtitution, nor performed the latter ſervice? I ſhould much rather believe, that, as he bears the character of a godly man, he walked in both theſe ſtatutes and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs. And, ſince the apoſtles uniformly agree in this grand premiſe, That the Holy Ghoſt is God, it ſeems much more reaſonable to conclude from hence, that they paid him direct worſhip, than from their bare ſilence to infer, that they neglected this practice.——I no where read in the ſacred writings, that St *Peter* ſuffered martyrdom, or ſealed the teſtimony of Chriſt with his blood. But muſt we, on this account, perſuade ourſelves, that he was not one of the noble army of martyrs? No, you will ſay; it is very ſuppoſable, that he laid down his life for his Saviour, even though this event is not expreſsly recorded, becauſe our Lord clearly predicts it, when he informs him, by what death he ſhould glorify God. And may not I reply, with parity of reaſon, it is very ſuppoſable, that the apoſtles, in their ſolemn devotions, addreſſed direct diſtinct worſhip to the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe their declaring their belief in his perſonality and divinity, was a ſtrong intimation that they ſhould, was a ſort of prediction that they ſhould, render all kind of homage and adoration to him.——Upon the whole, if this be a mere preſumption, no better than a *gratis dictum*, That the apoſtles did not worſhip the Holy Ghoſt, then all the ſpecious arguments, derived from hence, drop of courſe.

Our objector ſtill inſiſts, "That this is not a neceſſary "part of Chriſtian worſhip," (page 2.)——Be pleaſed to obſerve, how he departs from his firſt propoſal. His firſt inquiry, that which the title-page exhibits, was, Whether this be warrantable? then, with an evaſive dexterity, he ſlips into another topic, and maintains, that it cannot be neceſſary. Whether this be tergiverſation or inaccuracy, I ſhall not ſtay to examine; but muſt aſk Mr *Tomkins*, What reaſon he has for this poſitive determination, that it cannot be neceſſary?—Becauſe, on the contrary ſuppoſition, "we ſhall condemn the apoſtles, as guilty of a great omiſſion," (page 2.)——This argument the author uſes more than once, therefore I may be excuſed in replying to it once again: We can have no pretence to condemn the apoſtles, till we have undeniable proof that there was ſuch an omiſſion in their conduct. Who can aſſert, who dares maintain, that, when the apoſtles were met together in the holy congregation, for large, ſolemn, copious devotion, they never recognized the Divinity of the three ſacred perſons, never addreſſed diſtinct acts of praiſe or invocation to each reſpectively? This, Mr *Tomkins* may perſiſt in ſuppoſing; but, after all he can ſuggeſt in vindication of this principle, it will amount to no more than a bare ſuppoſal. I may, at leaſt, as fairly ſuppoſe the very reverſe; and, I think, have the ſuffrage of reaſon, the analogy of ſcripture, the conſent of the pureſt antiquity on my ſide.——However, in caſe Mr *Tomkins* had demonſtrated, by inconteſtable evidence, that the practice under conſideration cannot be neceſſary; does he confine himſelf, in every inſtance, to what is ſtrictly neceſſary? does he not allow himſelf in what is expedient? Could I not mention various particulars, which are not abſolutely neceſſary, but yet they are decent and uſeful; they contribute to the beauty and harmony of worſhip, to the comfort and edification of the worſhippers? Perhaps, it may not be neceſſary to particularize in our devotions the preſent diſtreſs of our nation, and to form particular petitions ſuitable to our national exigencies, or particular thankſgivings accommodated to our national deliverances. But ſince this is very expedient; ſince it tends to beget in all a more lively ſenſe of our dependence on divine Providence; ſince it is a moſt emphatical method of aſcribing to the ſupreme Diſpoſer the the glory of all our public mercies; this practice is very becoming, very proper, very uſeful. Should I plead, in oppoſition to this cuſtom, that is is not abſolutely neceſſary: Your prayers may be acceptable to God, and beneficial to your country, without ſuch particularizing: St *Paul* gives no expreſs command, ſets no explicit example of any ſuch uſage: there is no precedent from any of the apoſtles, where the affairs of the ſtate, under which they lived, are particularly diſplayed before God in humble ſupplication.——Would Mr *Tomkins* think this a ſufficient reaſon for him in his private, or for miniſters in their public devotions, to diſcontinue the practice? No, verily: the propriety, the expediency of the thing, would juſtify and aſcertain its uſe, even though no ſcriptural pattern had recommended, no ſcriptural precept enjoined it.

It is affirmed, (page 5.) That "the addreſſes of the New Teſtament are always made to the Father, or to the Son:" and it is added, (page 10.) "that there is neither rule nor example in it for worſhipping any other perſon whatever."——This point our author affirms with a very poſitive air, as though it were incapable of being controverted; and therefore often builds aſſertions on it, often makes deductions from it. Suppoſe it was an undeniable truth, I think, we have ſhewn, that it can be no ſatisfactory proof, that, in all the enlarged devotions of the apoſtles, no addreſſes were offered to the bleſſed Spirit, becauſe a few ſhort ejaculations made no explicit mention of him.——But this aſſertion, perhaps, upon a cloſer examination, may appear too bold and unjuſtifiable; ſomewhat like the poſition which has been advanced with regard to the ſentiments of the primitive writers, and practice of the primitive church. It might be proper to conſider, on this occaſion, 2 *Theſſ.* iii. 5. The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and patience of Chriſt. This you will allow to be a prayer of benediction. You will alſo obſerve, that here is particular mention of three perſons. The Lord, who is the object of the invocation, and beſtower of the bleſſing, is neither the Father, nor the Son. And who then can it be, but the Holy Ghoſt? whoſe amiable office it is, to ſhed abroad the love of God in our hearts *. ——It will not, I preſume, be intimated, that this is the only paſſage of the kind. For were it the only one, yet where the evidence is infallible, we need not the mouth of two or three witneſſes to eſtabliſh the matter in debate. However, for further ſatisfaction, we may conſult 1 *Theſſ.* iii. 11, 12, 13. 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 16. If we conſider theſe texts in conjunction with thoſe ſcriptures which ſpeak of the Holy Ghoſt as a diſtinct perſon, we ſhall perceive a beautiful propriety, and a particular emphaſis, in underſtanding the verſes as mentioning the ſacred perſons ſeverally. The latter text eſpecially, conſidered in this view, is extremely pertinent, has a very admirable propriety, and agreeably to a maxim laid down by a great maſter of correct writing:

Reddere perſonæ ſcit convenientia cuique.

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and God, and our

* Rom. v. 5.

Father,

Father, who hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work. Supposing the three persons implored in this supplication, every thing that is attributed to each, has a perfect conformity with that part, which each is represented as acting, in the blessed work of redemption; *e. g.* Our Father, who hath loved us; for God so loved the world, saith St *John*, that he gave his only-begotten Son. God, the Holy Ghost, who hath given us everlasting consolation; for it is the peculiar office of the blessed Spirit to administer comfort, called therefore the Paraclete. Jesus Christ, who hath given us good hope through grace; We have hope in Christ, saith the apostle to the *Corinthians*; and nothing is more frequently celebrated, by the apostolical writers, than the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.——Behold then a pertinency, a beauty, a significant distinction, and an exact harmony between all the parts of this verse, if taken in our sense; but a strange, confused, tautological kind of diction, if you disallow, that the three divine persons are distinctly applied to.

Page 6. it is suggested, "That we may incur the resentment of the other two persons, as shewing a neglect or disrespect to them, if, of our own heads, we should, in any peculiar and distinguishing form, worship the Father."—This, sure, is a most unworthy insinuation, as though the infinitely sublime and glorious persons of the Godhead were meanly ambitious, or weakly jealous. This is measuring the Deity, not by our reason, which is a very incompetent standard; not by our senses, which are still more inadequate judges; but even by our sordid and vile affections.——But not to insist upon this gross error; not to aggravate this affront offered to the adorable Trinity; this intimation, and others of the like strain, seem to be founded on a great mistake, with relation to the nature of the Godhead. The essence is one, though the persons are distinct. So that whatever honour is paid to any person, is paid to the one, undivided essence. If we call Jesus the Lord, St *Paul* assures us, it is to the glory of God the Father. Whoever sees the Son, our Saviour himself declares, sees the Father also. (*i. e.*) Whoever has a right understanding of the Son, and sees by faith his divine excellencies; that man sees, is acquainted with, the perfections of the Father also; and for this obvious reason, because the Father and Son are one. And will not this hold good with regard to the Holy Spirit?—If so, whatever honour is paid to one, is paid to all the three sacred persons: or rather whatever devout ascriptions of praise are addressed to either of the divine persons, they are addressed to the one living incomprehensible God.——I wish Mr *Tomkins* had attended to this consideration. It might have guarded him against some other unwary expressions, which imply the notion of Polytheism; particularly that in page 10, where he tells us, "That the scripture sets forth the Father and the Son as the objects of worship." I cannot find any such representation in scripture. The scripture is uniform, and consistent, and speaking of but one God, speaks of but one object of divine worship, *viz.* the infinite Deity, distinguished by a threefold personality. This may seem strange; but since we have the Saviour's word, and the apostle's evidence, to support the tenet, it should, methinks, be admitted as true. This may seem strange, but is it therefore to be rejected as false? At this rate, we must deny the existence of a thousand phænomena in nature; we must explode as impossibilities numberless apparent facts.

Page 7. the inquirer advances a very unaccountable proposition. "It should seem," says he, "that the Son of God had quitted for that time (during his humiliation) has claim to divine worship; though it should be granted that he did receive divine worship before."—I must ask with the *Jewish* ruler, How can these things be? Can God abandon his divinity? Can he cease to be supremely great and good? Is he not, I would not say by the necessity, but by the absolute perfection of his nature, to-day, and yesterday, and for ever the same? If so, it seems impossible, that creatures should, for so much as a single instant, be released from the duty of adoration; it seems impossible, with reverence be it spoken, that God should relinquish his claim to their profoundest homage. This would be to deny himself; which the apostle reckons among the ἀδυνατα, 2 *Tim.* ii. 13. αρνησασθαι εαυτον ου δυναται.——This tenet, I imagine, is contrary, not only to reason, but to scripture. I should be pleased to know, whether Mr *Tomkins*, when he was composing this paragraph, recollected that memorable saying of our Lord, *John* iii. 13. No man hath ascended into heaven, but he who came down from heaven, even the Son of man (ὁ ων, not ὁ ην, or ὁ ερομενος) who is in heaven. Is not this a manifest proof, that our Saviour was in heaven by his divine nature, even while his human nature was sojourning on earth, or confined within the limits of a scanty apartment? And if the divine Son, while holding, in his humanity, a conference with *Nicodemus*, was present by his Godhead in the heavenly regions, could the angels be insensible of his presence? and if sensible of his presence, could they with-hold their adoration?---*Credat Judæus Apella, non ego.*---Let *Socinians*, and men that are called infidels, believe such an absurdity. I cannot reconcile it to my apprehensions.——Our Lord emptied himself, it is true; because, when he appeared among mortals, he appeared without the pomp and splendor of his celestial majesty. He suffered no such glory to irradiate and adorn his person, as surrounded him on the mount of transfiguration, and will invest him when he comes to judge the world; but was, in all things, such as we are, sin only excepted. Thus he humbled himself, not by disrobing his eternal Godhead of its essential dignity, but by with-holding the manifestations of it, in that inferior nature, which he was pleased to assume.

Page 8. our author seems to mistake the meaning of that royal edict, issued out in the heavenly world, Let all the angels of God worship him *. He supposes this was a command to worship the Son in the sublime capacity of God over all. This, surely, could not be the sense of the words. Because a command of such an import, must be needless. This was the natural, the unchangeable, the indispensable duty of all creatures; and such as those superior intelligences could not but easily discern, such as those upright spirits could not but readily obey, without any particular injunction. The command, therefore, I apprehend, is rather referable to the humanity of our blessed Redeemer; to that nature in *Immanuel*, which purged away our sins, by becoming a propitiatory sacrifice. This was made higher than the angels. This had an illustrious name given it, to which every knee should bow. This was exalted into heaven, angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto the man Christ Jesus. If this remark be true, then our author's interpretation is erroneous; consequently, his round-about argument, derived from a mistaken principle, must fall to nothing.

Page 12. in the note our objector asks, "Did the people of *Israel*, upon hearing these words, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of *Egypt*, ever imagine, that there were three persons then speaking?"——This question, I suppose, is intended to invalidate the doctrine of the Trinity. But the great article stands upon a rock, too impenetrable to be undermined by such an interrogatory, too immoveable to be shaken by such a suggestion. I pretend not to give a categorical answer to the query;

* Heb. i. 6.

but only desire to observe, that the people of *Israel* have several intimations, in their sacred books, of a plurality of persons in the unity of the divine essence. They were accustomed to hear *Moses* speak in the plural number, when he relates the wonderful work of creation, Let us make man. Their inspired and royal preachers spoke of the almighty Maker of them, and of all things, in plural terms, Remember now thy Creator *, in the original Creators. The prophets acknowledged and teach this grand mystery, particularly the evangelical prophet *Isaiah*, chap. lxiii. 9. 10. So that, if the children of *Jacob* and *Joseph* were ignorant of this awful truth, it seems owing rather to the blindness of their understandings, than to the want of proper discoveries from above.—But be the case, as it is supposed, with regard to the *Jews*. Are we obliged to copy their ignorance? Must their sentiments be our guide? their imaginations the model of our creed? Surely, for a Christian to argue, or even to surmise, that there is no such thing, because the antient *Jews* were not acquainted with it, is altogether as unreasonable, as it would be unphilosophical to maintain, that there are no such places as *America*, or *Greenland*, because they were both unknown to the ancient inabitants of *Canaan*.——Mr *Tomkins* cannot but know, that it is the excellency of the evangelical dispensation, to take off the veil from the *Mosaical*. That we, by comparing their law with our gospel, by applying the interpretation of our apostles to the doctrines of their prophets, are able to see clearly what they perceived but dimly. Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, says St *Stephen*, as your fathers did, so do ye †. If this reproof be compared with the several narratives, recorded in the Old Testament, concerning the stiff-necked and refractory behaviour of the *Jews*, we shall gather by the clearest deduction, that the Holy Ghost is Jehovah. Perhaps, the *Israelites*, when they heard the *psalmist* playing upon his harp, and singing this congratulatory hymn of praise, Thou art ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even for thy enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them ‡;—the *Israelites*, I say, upon hearing these words, might not be aware, that the person who ascended up on high, was the blessed Jesus; and that the Lord God dwelling among, dwelling in depraved disobedient mortals, to renew and reclaim them, was the Holy Ghost. But we, by collating *Eph.* iv. 8. with the former part of the verse; and *John* xiv. 17. *Rom.* viii. 11. with the latter, are, to our exceeding great consolation, brought to the knowledge of these glorious doctrines,

Page 14. our author observes, "That Dr *Watts* would prove the propriety of paying divine worship to the Holy Ghost, from the form of administering baptism."—This argument he undertakes to invalidate. He proceeds in a very unexpected manner; springs a mine, of which we were not at all apprehensive. What if it should turn to the overthrow of his own tenet?—The Doctor maintains, "That baptism is a piece of worship." Our author replies, "That hearing the word, in the public assemblies, may also be reputed a piece of worship."—May it so? Then *ex ore tuo*—Your own concession confutes your opinion. For, if to hear the word with assiduity, with reverence, with an humble expectation of its becoming the instrument of our salvation;—if this be a species of worship, it is, doubtless, a worship paid to him, who is the author and giver of the word. Now, we are sure, that it was the Holy Ghost, who spake by the prophets, who spake by the apostles, who spake all the words of that life, which, in our religious congregations, are explained and enforced.

Page 15. Mr *Tomkins* urges the expression of St *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* x. 2. which I cannot forbear suspecting, notwithstanding all the remonstrances of charity, which thinketh no evil, he wilfully misunderstands. It is evident, on the very first glance, that *Moses*, in that place, cannot mean the man *Moses*; but the system of religion, the body of laws, moral, judicial, and ceremonial, which were, by him, delivered to the *Jews*. It is therefore a proof, that to be baptized into the name of the Holy Ghost is no act of worship to that divine person, because it was no act of worship to *Moses*, to have been baptized into an œconomy instituted by God, and only promulged by *Moses*?

For my part, I am stedfastly persuaded, that to be baptized into the name of the Holy Ghost, is a very noble and sublime kind of worship; not to say, an indispensable obligation to all other instances and degrees of worship.—It is coupled with that greatest of Christian duties, believing. Which I take to be a worship of the mind, far more important than any bodily homage; without which, all external expressions of adoration are mere formality. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.—I verily think, no one will deny, that baptism is, at least, equal in its import to circumcision; instead of which it seems to be substituted. Now, circumcision was evidently a token and ratification of the covenant of Jehovah. It was a visible attestation to the person circumcised, that the Lord was his God, engaged by covenant to protect, bless, and make him finally happy. It was a solemn declaration of an absolute self-surrender to the blessed God, to acknowledge him for the only Lord, to serve him in all dutiful obedience, to seek his glory, and to be resigned to his will. This seems to have been the meaning of that divinely-appointed rite, emphatically expressed in those words of the *Jewish* legislator, Thou hast this day avouched the Lord to be thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and to hearken unto his voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people *.—And can we imagine, that baptism, which has superseded circumcision, is inferior to it in significancy? Or can we imagine, that these solemn acts of recognizing the Lord for our only God, and consecrating ourselves to his honour, are no expressions of worship?

Though this dedication of ourselves to the service of the Holy Ghost should be implied in the ordinance of baptism, "still it must be granted," replies our author, "that this can be no other service of the Spirit, that what is enjoined in the New Testament," (page 15.)—Thereby insinuating, that it is somewhat different from the service we stand engaged to yield both to the Father and to the Son. But, according to all the allowed methods of speech, the baptized person is dedicated alike to each of the three sacred persons: he avows them all to be the object of his worship, and the author of his salvation. There is no manner of difference in the terms which specify the obligations; and since divine wisdom has made them the same, why should we presume to pronounce them diverse?—How unaccountably-strange would the baptismal form be, on our objector's interpretation; I baptize thee into an obligation to adore, to obey, to worship the Father and the Son; but not to pay the same reverential and devout regards to the Holy Ghost? What writer of ingenuity, in order to support a singular hypothesis, would do such apparent violence to the meaning of the sacred text? What reader of discernment would become a convert to an opinion, which must darken and pervert the most evident sense of scripture, in order to acquire an air of plausibility?——Suppose a person should, in making his last will, express himself in the following style: I constitute A, B, and C, my joint executors; I give and bequeath to them, whatever remains of my estate and goods, when my legacies are paid, and my debts cleared. Would it not be a most extravagant and unreasonable pretence, if a cap-

* Eccl. xii. 1.

† Acts vii. 51.

‡ Psal. lxviii. 18.

* Deut. xxvi. 17. 18.

tious

tious neighbour ſhould maintain, that C is not veſted with an equal power, has not a right to an equal dividend with A and B? If a gentleman of the long robe ſhould offer to give this for law, would he not forfeit his character either of ſagacity or integrity?——If none of theſe obſervations will convince Mr *Tomkins*, that he has miſrepreſented the tenor and extent of the baptiſmal engagement, we will, in order to bring the matter, if poſſible, to an amicable accommodation, accede even to his own aſſertion. He argues, "That no other ſervice of the Spirit can be meant, but ſuch as is enjoined in the New Teſtament."——Agreed; let us join iſſue on this footing.—Let us reſt the cauſe on this bottom. As it is Mr *Tomkins*'s own motion, I hope, he will acquieſce in the reſult of ſuch a trial. Now, the New Teſtament, both virtually and explicitly, requires us to acknowledge the Holy Ghoſt to be God and Lord; and what ſervice is payable, according to the preſcriptions of the New Teſtament, to ſuch a Being? This, and no other, I would render myſelf; this, and no other is rendered by all the churches. I do not ſo much as attempt to be an advocate for any other worſhip to be addreſſed to the Divine Spirit, than what the evangelical ſcriptures direct us to offer unto that majeſtic and venerable, that tremendous and amiable name, The Lord our God. If therefore the New Teſtament demands all honour and adoration, as the inviolable due of this moſt exalted Being, then Mr *Tomkins* muſt either flatly deny the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt, muſt contradict the expreſs declaration of the inſpired writers on this head, or elſe confeſs, that his notion ſtands condemned even on his own principles.

What is alleged from 1 *Cor.* i. 13. this ſeems to corroborate our ſentiments, rather than to ſupport his. St *Paul* aſks, with warmth, and a ſort of holy indignation —εις το ονομα Παυλε εβαπτισθητε; he ſpeaks of it as an abſurd and ſhocking thing. Now, what could render this ſo odious and monſtrous a practice; ſuch as the apoſtle diſclaims and rejects with abhorrence? Nothing, that I can apprehend, but the horrid evil it would imply. The evil of aſcribing divine honours to *Paul*, making *Paul* an object of worſhip, and conſecrating perſons to a creature, who ought to be conſecrated only to the Creator, God bleſſed for ever. So that I muſt declare, I think this text a ſtrong intimation, that baptiſm is really a ſacred ſervice or divine worſhip, which it is utterly unallowable for any creature to aſſume or admit. Therefore, the good apoſtle renounces it, with a noble kind of deteſtation? much like the angel, who, when *John* offered to fall at his feet, and do him homage, cries, Ορα μη· τω Θεω προσκυνησον *.

The apoſtolical benediction is another paſſage uſually and deſervedly produced, in juſtification of our practice. Mr *Tomkins* alledges, "That this is very different from a direct addreſs by way of prayer to the Spirit," (page 17.)——It ſeems to me to be an undoubted prayer, and to have the very ſame force as if it had been expreſſed in the more common precatory form; O Lord Jeſus Chriſt, vouchſafe them thy grace; O God of goodneſs, grant them thy love; O eternal Spirit, accompany them with thy comfortable preſence. That this is the purport of the words, is undeniable; and where is the extraordinary difference, whether they be introduced by an *eſto*, or a *fac*?—I believe, all will allow the form ordained by God (*Numb.* vi. 24, 25, 26.) for the uſe of the *Jewiſh* prieſts, was a real prayer: The Lord bleſs thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face to ſhine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace! If this was an addreſs to the Almighty, the apoſtolical benediction is exactly of the ſame nature. To ſay, that it was only a kind of wiſh, and not deſigned for a devout aſpiration to Jehovah, muſt greatly debaſe and enervate it: not to hint, that this ſacerdotal bleſſing contained a recognition of three divine perſons, which might be obſcure in that age, but has been fully illuſtrated by the apoſtles: not to hint, the great probability, that St *Paul* had this very paſſage in his eye, when he breathed out his benedictive prayer, and purpoſely intended to explain it in the evangelical ſenſe.—Beſides, I would deſire to know, whether any miniſter could, with a ſafe conſcience, uſe the following benediction? The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the fellowſhip of the Virgin *Mary*, be with you all, amen! Why ſhould a conſcientious miniſter be afraid of uſing ſuch a form, if it be no prayer? if it be not a virtual aſcription of omniſcience, omnipreſence, and omnipotence to the Virgin, and, in conſequence of thoſe attributes, a ſupplicatory addreſs to her? ——Still we are encountered with another objection, "If I ſhould ſay to a friend, May the good angels attend you; ſhall this be called a praying to the angels?"——Mr *Tomkins* himſelf muſt own, if he will deal fairly, that the caſe is by no means parallel. The elect angels diſavow all divine worſhip, but does the Holy Ghoſt do this? The elect angels are miniſtering ſpirits, but of the Holy Ghoſt it is ſaid, The Lord is that Spirit. The angels are confeſſedly created and finite beings, ſo that it would be abſurdity and blaſphemy to invocate them; but the Holy Ghoſt is poſſeſſed of the perfections, performs the works, and is called by the incommunicable name of God, ſo that it is wiſdom and piety to pray to him. For which reaſons, I make no doubt, but that whenever the apoſtles put up ſuch an ejaculation, η κοινωνια τε αγιε Πνευματος μετα παντων υμων, they accompanied it with a devout mental addreſs to the uncreated Spirit: becauſe it would be a piece of irreverence and of folly, barely to wiſh the mercy, and not apply to that ever-preſent Being for its accompliſhment.

As for the other arguments which Dr *Watts* advances, in order to vindicate the cuſtom of aſcribing praiſe to the Holy Ghoſt, *viz.* "That it may be expedient to practiſe it frequently in ſome churches, where it has been long uſed, leſt great offence ſhould be given."—"That it may be proper to uſe it ſometimes, on purpoſe to hold forth the doctrine of the Trinity in times of error, and to take away all ſuſpicion of hereſy from the public worſhip."——Theſe conſiderations I leave to the Doctor. I have no inclination to try my ſkill at ſuch weapons, but chuſe to act with regard to them, as *David* acted in relation to *Saul*'s armour; becauſe, I really think, that they rather encumber than uphold the cauſe: They are ſo unwarily worded, that they repreſent the practice, not as a noble eſſential piece of divine worſhip, founded on the ſtrongeſt and moſt invariable principles, always ſuitable to our neceſſities, and always correſpondent to the nature of the bleſſed Spirit; but as an occaſional and time-ſerving expedient; to be uſed, not conſtantly, but now and then only; and that, to anſwer a turn, none of the moſt important, to avoid not any real deficiency in worſhip, but only a ſuſpicion of hereſy. Where-ever I am ſolicitous to ſecure the concluſion, I would by no means offer to deduce it from ſuch unſolid and precarious premiſes.

I have now examined the moſt conſiderable objections, urged by Mr *Tomkins*, againſt the unanimous practice of Chriſtian congregations, whether they conform or diſſent. I ſhall only beg the continuance of your candour and patience, while I touch upon another particular or two, which may farther corroborate our cuſtom, and prove it to be ſomewhat more than warrantable.

Suppoſe we produce a command of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; will this be ſufficient to aſcertain the practice?

* Rev. xxii. 9.

tice? Does not our Saviour give this charge to his apoſtles? Pray ye the Lord of the harveſt, that he would ſend forth labourers into his harveſt *. Now, I would humbly aſk, Who the Lord of this ſpiritual harveſt is? Shall we refer ourſelves to ſcripture for ſatisfaction? Will Mr *Tomkins* abide by the determination of ſcripture? will he honeſtly acknowledge, that, if the ſcripture declares the Holy Ghoſt to be the Lord of the harveſt, we have then a clear commiſſion, a poſitive command, to addreſs ourſelves by way of prayer to the Holy Ghoſt?——It is the Holy Ghoſt who appoints the labourers that are to be employed in this harveſt: The Holy Ghoſt ſaid, Separate me *Barnabas* and *Saul*, for the work whereunto I have called them †. It is the Holy Ghoſt who qualifies the workmen, that are to diſpatch this momentous buſineſs, with wiſdom, with knowledge, with utterance, and with all miraculous abilities, 1 *Cor.* xii. 8, 9, 10, 11. It is the Holy Ghoſt who makes theſe labours effectual, and crowns them with ample ſucceſs, *Acts* x. 44. 1 *Theſſ.* i. 5.——From theſe ſcriptures, and their teſtimonies concerning the bleſſed Spirit, it ſeems indiſputably plain, that he is Lord of the harveſt. Can we have a more forcible motive to pray unto him, than the conſideration of his ſuperintending, conducting, and proſpering the progreſs of (that beſt of bleſſings) the everlaſting goſpel? Need we a better warrant to offer our devouteſt applications to him, than our Lord's expreſs injunction, viewed in connection with theſe remarkable texts?

Suppoſe I prove farther, that the heavenly beings pay divine worſhip to the Holy Ghoſt; ſuppoſe I ſhew you angels and archangels in poſtures of profound adoration at the throne of the eternal Spirit, and glorifying him in ſtrains of the moſt ſublime devotion. Will this be allowed a proper precedent for our practice? will any one be ſo bold as to affirm, that he is unfit to receive the worſhip of mortals on earth, if it appear that he is the object of angelical worſhip in the heaven of heavens? In the ſixth chapter of *Iſaiah*, we meet with one of the grandeſt repreſentations imaginable: Jehovah exhibits himſelf to the entranced prophet, ſeated on a lofty and auguſt throne; before him ſtood the immortal hoſts of ſeraphim; they veiled their faces in token of deepeſt ſelf-abaſement; they lifted up their voices with a rapturous fervour, and uttered this magnificent acclamation, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hoſts; the whole earth is full of his glory. The triſagium of the ſeraphic armies ſeems to intimate, that they addreſſed their praiſes to the one Jehovah in a trinity of perſons. If you look forward to verſe 8. you will find another circumſtance confirming this remark; for the glorious Majeſty ſpeaks of himſelf, in the plural number, Who will go for us? But the proof I chiefly depend on, the proof which is abſolutely inconteſtable; which none can deny, without ſuppoſing themſelves better judges of the ſenſe of ſcripture, than the apoſtles; this proof is found in *Acts* xxviii. 25. where St *Paul* evidently applies the words, ſpoke by this majeſtic and divine Being, to the Holy Ghoſt, Well ſpake the Holy Ghoſt, ſaying. And if he attributes the words to his ſacred perſon, who dares ſeparate the honours? Since all muſt allow, that the perſon who gives the commiſſion to the prophet, and the perſon whom the celeſtial legions adore, is one and the ſame——Since therefore the angels addreſs the Holy Ghoſt with ſolemn acts of praiſe; ſince they bear united teſtimony, that the whole earth is full of his glory; Mr *Tomkins* ſhould conſider, whether he acts a becoming part, in endeavouring to exclude his glory from any Chriſtian congregation by his example, and from every Chriſtian congregation by his writings.

If Mr *Tomkins* ſhould ſtill think his own opinion ſufficient to over-rule all theſe allegations of ſcripture, of greater weight than the practice of St *Paul* to the *Theſſalonians*; more unexceptionable, and fitter to be admitted as our pattern, than the example of the angelic hoſt; I cannot but imagine, that the propriety of our cuſtom is apparent even on the tenor of his own favourite notions. Page 12. he quotes that grand and fundamental law of revealed religion, "Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve." He proceeds to conſider, who this Lord our God is, whom we are to ſerve. He then informs us, "It appears from the whole current of ſcripture, in the New Teſtament as well as the Old, that it is he, who, in times paſt, ſpake unto the Fathers by the prophets." Rightly judged. We make no appeal from this verdict, but acquieſce in it, though it is his own. Only taking along with us St *Peter*'s declaration, Prophecy came not in old time (rather at any time, *unquam*, not *olim*, ποτε, not παλαι) by the will of man, but holy men of God ſpake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt *. Mr *Tomkins* himſelf maintains, that the genuine and undoubted object of divine worſhip, is that infinitely wiſe and gracious Being, who ſpake to our fathers by the prophets; and St *Peter*, in the moſt expreſs manner poſſible, aſſerts, that this infinitely wiſe and gracious Being, who ſpake by the prophets, is the Holy Ghoſt. Can demonſtration itſelf be plainer? Sure, then, Mr *Tomkins* muſt either retract his poſition, or diſallow the apoſtle's application of it, or elſe give us leave to adhere inviolably to our practice, and to look upon it as juſtifiable beyond all reaſonable exception, and, what ſhould carry ſome peculiar weight with our author, juſtifiable on principles of his own.

May I urge this point a little farther?—I ſhould be glad to know, what is the ſcriptural meaning of being converted unto the Lord? Is it not, to renounce every lying vanity, to forſake every evil way, and turn to the Lord with all our heart? that we may fear him, love him, put our whole truſt in him, and ſerve him truly all the days of our life. Does not this include ſome, rather is it not comprehenſive of all worſhip? So that if it is certain from ſcripture, that ſinners are to be converted to the Holy Ghoſt; then it is equally certain, that ſinners are to pay not ſome only, but all worſhip, to that bleſſed Being, who is the centre of their ſouls, and the ſource of their happineſs. Be pleaſed to read attentively 2 *Cor.* iii. 16, 17. and we dare venture to ſtand by your deciſion.

Let me add one more conſideration, and I have done.——The bleſſed Spirit is to help our infirmities in prayer, *Rom.* viii. 26. The Spirit is to ſubdue our iniquities, and mortify the deeds of the body, *Rom.* viii. 13. The Spirit is to ſhed abroad the love of God in our hearts, *Rom.* v. 5. The Spirit is to ſanctify us wholly, in all our faculties, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 23. The Spirit is to tranſform us into the divine image, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. The Spirit is to ſeal us unto the day of redemption, *Eph.* iv. 30. and to be the earneſt of an incorruptible inheritance, *Eph.* i. 14. In a word, from the Spirit we are humbly to expect all the fruits of goodneſs, righteouſneſs, and truth, *Eph.* v. 9.——Now, what a comfortable proſpect riſes before us, if this Spirit be the all-ſufficient, the infinite God, to whom nothing is impoſſible; who is able to do for us exceedingly abundantly even above all that we can aſk or think! But how languid muſt be our hopes, how ſcanty our expectations, if he be not the divine Being, but only ſome finite exiſtence! And, in another ſtate of things, to whom will righteous ſouls acknowledge themſelves inexpreſſibly indebted, to whom will they return their ardent thanks, and addreſs the moſt joyful praiſes, but to the author of all theſe ineſtimable bleſſings? If this then is likely to be the employ and the delight of heaven, ſhould it not be begun on earth?

Upon

* Matth. ix. 38. Luke x. 2.

† Acts xiii. 2. & xx. 28.

* 2 Pet. i. 21.

Upon the whole; Since the cuſtom of offering prayer, and addreſſing praiſe, to the Holy Ghoſt, is contrary to no text of ſcripture, is founded upon his divine nature, and reſults from the indiſpenſable obligation of creatures to worſhip the Godhead:—Since it was undeniably the practice of the Chriſtian church, in its pureſt days, and has been received, by unanimous approbation, for many hundreds of preceding years:—Since it is probable, if we will allow their doctrines and conduct to be conſiſtent, it is certain, if we will prefer the moſt accurate and unembarraſſed interpretation of their epiſtles, that the apoſtles uſed this method of worſhip:—Since the analogy of the whole ſcripture juſtifies it, and the innumerable benefits, which are communicated to us from the bleſſed Spirit, demand it:—Since angels aſcribe glory to his awful Majeſty, and our Saviour directs us to put up prayers to his almighty goodneſs:—Theſe, and other conſiderations, determine me to join, without the leaſt ſcruple, with full aſſurance of its propriety, in that ancient noble doxology.——Glory be to the Father, who hath loved us with an everlaſting love,—and to the Son, who hath waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood,—and to the Holy Ghoſt, who applies theſe bleſſings of redeeming grace to our corrupt hearts; to this great, eternal, incomprehenſible Trinity be rendered undivided honours, and immortal praiſe!

Having been ſo very prolix already, I ſhall not render myſelf more tedious by making any apology, but ſhall only add, what no conſideration can induce me to omit, that I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged friend, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, March,* 1745-6.

YOU have ſet me a taſk, which I ſhould be glad to execute, if I was able. God forbid, that I ſhould be backward to plead for the intereſts of that Redeemer on earth, who, I truſt, is making perpetual interceſſion for me in heaven. But my fear is, leſt the noble cauſe ſhould ſuffer, by the unſkilfulneſs of its defendant. It is for this reaſon, purely for this reaſon, I wiſh to decline accepting the challenge you ſeem to give me in your letter. For this once, however, I will enter the liſts, and venture to try the ſtrength, not of your arm, but of your arguments.

I do not wonder, that you have objections to make againſt Chriſtianity. I know ſome eminent Chriſtians who were formerly warm and zealous in the oppoſition: yet they have frankly owned that their minds were then either very inconſiderate, or elſe immerſed in other ſpeculation, and that they had no leiſure, or no inclination to weigh the evidences, and examine the nature of the evangelical doctrine. Since they have applied themſelves to conſider theſe points, with a ſerioufneſs and attention, becoming an inquiry of the laſt importance; an inquiry, in which their very ſouls and all their eternal intereſts were embarked, they are thoroughly convinced, that their former ſentiments were wrong. They are fully perſuaded, that the goſpel-inſtitution is of divine extract; that it is a ſyſtem, noble and ſublime, benevolent and gracious, every way ſuitable to the majeſty of God, and admirably calculated for the comfort, the improvement, and the happineſs of mankind.

Methinks you will reply, and very reaſonably, "that "all ſuch ſhould be able to account for the change of "their opinions."——I dare ſay they can.——But as you call on me ſo particularly to vindicate the religious principles, which I have from my fancy embraced; I will now attempt to vindicate them from the various charges, of which they ſtand arraigned in your letter.

Be pleaſed then, dear Sir, to obſerve, that the Chriſtian doctrine teaches, that when God brought man into being, he bleſſed him with a ſtate perfectly holy and happy. If you read the Bible, the authentic narrative of our fall, as well as the only guide to our recovery, you will find it an avowed truth, That God made man upright. If, therefore, man corrupted himſelf, and (as it is impoſſible to bring a clean thing out of an unclean) polluted his offſpring; where is the harſhneſs, where the injuſtice of the divine procedure in adjudging him worthy of death? Let God be juſtified, and let mortals bear the blame.

You think it very odd, that this tragical cataſtrophe ſhould be occaſioned by eating an apple.—So ſhould I too, was there nothing more in the caſe, than barely eating an apple. But this was a wilful and preſumptuous breach of a moſt poſitive command, of the only command, which the almighty Lawgiver enjoined. And the ſmaller the matter of the prohibition, the more inexcuſable was the fault of not complying with it. In this act of diſobedience was implied, the moſt perverſe diſcontent in the happieſt circumſtances imaginable; the moſt ſhameful ingratitude for the moſt ineſtimable favours; pride and arrogance, even to an unſufferable degree; implicit blaſphemy, making God a liar, and hearkening to the ſuggeſtions of the devil, in preference to the ſolemn declarations of truth itſelf. Indeed, this tranſgreſſion was a complication of iniquities; and, though repreſented under the extenuating terms of eating an apple, was really the moſt horrid provocation that was ever committed.

But that the tranſgreſſion of *Adam* ſhould faſten guilt, or tranſmit corruption to his lateſt poſterity, this, you imagine, is all a chimera.—If then you was created in a perfect ſtate; if you ſuffered nothing by the original lapſe, why is your heart prone to numberleſs evils? why do you tread in the ſteps of an apoſtate anceſtor? why do you violate the law of an infinitely-pure God, and too often delight in that abominable and accurſed thing which he hateth, ſin? You are too honeſt and ingenuous to deny the truth of theſe expoſtulations. And if ſo, you muſt allow, that your nature was depraved in *Adam*, or, which ſeems to be more culpable, that you have corrupted yourſelf. Then, there is no ſuch great cauſe to find fault with the ſupreme Diſpoſer of things, for including you in *Adam*'s treſpaſs, ſince you yourſelf do the ſame things.

Is it conſiſtent, you aſk, with the character of an infinitely-good Being, to make this reſolve, That he would, on account of this ſingle crime, bring into exiſtence almoſt innumerable millions of creatures, ſo ſpoiled by himſelf, that they ſhould all deſerve eternal damnation?—I anſwer, This is entirely a miſrepreſentation of the Chriſtian ſcheme. It was not in conſequence of the original crime, that God determined to bring the human race into being; but in purſuance of his own eternal purpoſes, which are always the iſſue of conſummate wiſdom, of unbounded benevolence, and will, unleſs his creatures ſtubbornly reject the overtures of his love, terminate in their unſpeakable felicity.—Neither was the human race ſpoiled by the Creator, but by themſelves.—To ſuppoſe, that the Author of all excellence ſhould deprave the work of his own hands, is doubtleſs a ſhocking thought, and ſuch as we utterly diſavow. So far was he from being the ſole operator, that he was not ſo much as acceſſary in any degree to their miſery: but warned them of their danger; charged them to beware; and planted the barrier of his own tremendous threatenings between them and ruin.

You are diſpleaſed, that everlaſting happineſs ſhould never be attainable by any of theſe creatures, but by thoſe few to whom God gives his effectual free grace. ——If the propoſition be ſet in another light, which is really the true method of ſtating it; if we ſay, That, though all have forfeited, yet all may recover everlaſting happineſs, becauſe effectual grace is freely offered to all; what can a man of candour object to ſuch a diſpenſation? Will he not acknowledge the goodneſs of the divine procedure, and inveigh againſt the perverſeneſs of mortals; the moſt unreaſonable perverſeneſs of all thoſe, who are too proud to be ſenſible of their want of grace, or too careleſs to trouble their heads about it? Will he not be conſtrained to declare them ſuicides, and that they are chargeable, if they periſh, with their own deſtruction? If we preſcribe a medicine of ſovereign efficacy, and the ſick is ſo ſelf-willed as to refuſe the recipe, who is to be blamed, in caſe of a miſcarriage, the phyſician or the patient?

When therefore you talk of perſons being unavoidably damned, you quite miſconceive the tenor of our moſt merciful and benign inſtitution; which offers forgiveneſs to all, though ever ſo profligate, through the Saviour's atonement; which makes a tender of grace to all, though ever ſo abandoned, through the Saviour's mediation. The language, the moſt compaſſionate language of which, is, Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will you die? And becauſe the ſinner, enſlaved to vice, is unable to ſhake off the fetters, it farther ſays, Aſk, and ye ſhall receive; ſeek, and ye ſhall find, grace ſufficient for you.

As to the meaning of the term *grace*, I apprehend, it ſignifies the pardon of obnoxious, and the acceptance of unworthy perſons, on account of the expiation and merits of their Redeemer. It imports alſo a communication of knowledge and ſtrength to ignorant and impotent creatures, that they may diſcern their Creator's will, and diſcerning, may be enabled to perform it. And in forming theſe ideas, I can ſee nothing ſtupid; in expecting theſe bleſſings, nothing fooliſh.

But ſtill, perhaps, you think it ſcarce reconcileable with the wiſdom, the juſtice, the mercy of God, to ſuffer mankind to fall. That he foreſaw it, and could have prevented it, is undeniable. He foreſaw it, or elſe he could not be omniſcient: he was able to have prevented it, otherwiſe he could not be omnipotent.—— But what if the eternal maker knew, that this would give occaſion to the moſt ample and glorious manifeſtation of thoſe very attributes, which you ſuſpect are eclipſed hereby? Would this conciliate your approbation? would this incline you to acquieſce in the œconomy of the goſpel?

Certainly it is a moſt ſtupendous diſcovery of wiſdom to find out a method, whereby the ſeemingly-jarring attributes of juſtice and mercy may be reconciled;—— whereby the ſinner may be ſaved, without any injury to the inviolable holineſs of his laws, or any derogation to the honour of his juſt and righteous government. It was impoſſible to give ſuch an amazing proof of his infinite kindneſs for poor mortals, as by delivering his own Son to take their inferior nature, and bear all their guilt. Nor can there be ſo ſignal an exertion of juſtice, as to puniſh this moſt excellent perſon, when he ſtood in the place of offenders; or of mercy, as to divert the vengeance from their obnoxious to his immaculate and innocent head.

As from the ſcheme of redemption, the higheſt glory redounds to the divine Majeſty, ſo the richeſt conſolation is derived from hence to frail creatures. The happineſs of men conſiſts in the favour of God. His love is better than life. To be graciouſly regarded by that adorable Being, who ſtretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; to be the objects of his complacency, whoſe ſmile conſtitutes heaven, and whoſe frown is worſe than deſtruction;—this, this is human felicity. And how could God almighty give us a brighter evidence, a more pregnant proof of his inconceivably-tender concern for us, than by ſurrendering his only Son to condemnation and death for our ſake? Tranſporting thought! big with a delight, which man could never have known, had not *Adam* fallen. This obviates an objection, on which you ſtrongly inſiſt, That you and others never conſented to make *Adam* your repreſentative. For if this method of ordering things be productive of a ſuperior felicity to all that are willing to be happy, then it can be no wrong to the world in general, or to any individual perſon in particular. No more than it is a wrong to the minor, for his guardians to procure intereſt for his money, and improve his eſtate, againſt the time of his coming to age.

Upon the whole; There is no reaſon to quarrel with that ſovereign will of God, which permitted us to fall in *Adam*, from thence to contract guilt, to derive pollution, and, conſequently, to deſerve damnation. But rather there is abundant cauſe to admire, to adore, to bleſs his holy name, for providing a Redeemer; a Redeemer of unknown dignity, and unutterable perfections; a Redeemer, by whom all the evils of the fall may be more than redreſſed; a Redeemer, in whom all the awful and amiable attributes of the Deity are moſt illuſtriouſly diſplayed; a Redeemer, through whom the moſt wicked and moſt unfortunate of our race may find mercy, and arrive at happineſs; a Redeemer, who moſt compaſſionately invites all, all that are weary and heavy laden, to come to him, and moſt aſſuredly declares, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.——And is it not ſtrange,—very ſtrange,—hardly credible, ſure, that any ſhould reject ſo great ſalvation, and chuſe death rather than life?

Let me beg of you, Sir, to conſider theſe points with calmneſs and impartiality. You cannot but be ſenſible, that many learned, many wiſe, many excellent perſons, moſt cordially believe them; receive their chief ſatisfactions from them, and would rather die, than renounce them.—— Since it is poſſible, at leaſt, that they may be in the right; ſince you do not pretend to be infallible in your judgment; and ſince you acknowledge a God of unerring wiſdom, and everlaſting goodneſs, let me beſeech you to implore his guidance in your ſearch, and his direction in your determination. For I am not aſhamed to own, or rather I am bold to maintain, that this wiſdom cometh from above; this wiſdom is the gift of God; and prayer is altogether as neceſſary to its attainment, as ſagacity of mind, or the accompliſhments of learning.

LETTER XXIX.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, April* 1, 1746.

IF you can ſpare the *Night-Thoughts*, the bearer of this ticket will bring them ſafely to *Weſton*. I propoſe to read them, when buſineſs is done, and the day is fled; ſo that the time may correſpond with the ſubject.

I hope, the bookſeller has, before this time, waited on you with the little volume, which deſires your acceptance. Was it to paſs through my hands before it was preſented, I ſhould almoſt be induced to inſcribe it with that pretty line in *Virgil*,

Munera parva quidem, at magnum teſtantur amorem.

Pray, do you think that paſſage, *Luke* vi. 38. δωσουσιν εις τον κολπον υμων, is rightly rendered by our tranſlators, Shall

Shall men give into your bosom? Is the idea of men necessarily implied in the original? Or can fact and experience justify the translators in giving this sense to the original? God, and conscience, and a future state will amply recompense the beneficent; but whether men, the generality of men in this world are thus generous and grateful, seems to be a point that wants confirmation. This remark was suggested in perusing the place, but I submit it to your judgment, and remain, Dear Sir, &c.

LETTER XXX.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, Nov.* 1, 1746.

THIS morning I received your favour. The day lours, and threatens rain, which debars me from the pleasure of paying you my thanks in person.

Mr *Huygens* I hope to read very carefully. But, I believe, it will be proper to take heed of adopting into my plan any notions that are difficult and abstruse. I would have every thing so perspicuous, that the dimmest understanding may apprehend my meaning; so obvious, that he who runs, may read.——Let me lay before you a little sketch of my design, with a request, that you would alter the general order, and make retrenchments, or additions of particular incidents, as you shall think most expedient.

A contemplative walk.——The approach of evening, and gradual extinction of light.——The advantages of solitude.—The stillness of the universe.—The coolness of the atmosphere.——Darkness, and its usefulness to mankind.—Sleep, and its beneficial effects.——Dreams, and their extravagance.——A glow-worm glimmering.——An owl shrieking.——A nightingale singing.——The very different circumstances of mankind; some revelling and carousing; some agonizing and dying.—A knell sounding.——The notion of ghosts walking.—The moon, with its various appearances, and serviceableness to our globe,—the heavenly bodies,—their number,—size,—courses,—distances,—display many of the glorious attributes of their Creator,—some of which are specified.——They teach nothing of redemption,—this the peculiar prerogative of revelation.—Christ the day-star from on high, that points out, and makes clear the way of salvation.

These are some of the subjects which, I imagined, might be admitted into the composition of a Night-piece. If others occur to your mind more pleasing, or more striking, be pleased to suggest them.

I am glad to find by the quotation from Mr *Locke*, that your esteem and veneration for the scriptures, are on the increasing hand. May we be persuaded, ever more and more, of the incomparable excellency of those sacred volumes. This one consideration, that they are the book of God, is a higher recommendation of them, than could be displayed in ten thousand panegyric orations. For my part, I purpose to addict myself with more incessant assiduity to this delightful and divine study. Away, my *Homer*; I have no more need of being entertained by you, since *Job* and the prophets furnish me with images much more magnificent, and lessons infinitely more important. Away, my *Horace*; nor shall I suffer any loss by your absence, while the sweet singer of *Israel* tunes his lyre, and charms me with the finest flights of fancy, and inspirits me with the noblest strains of devotion. And even my prime favourite, my *Virgil*, may withdraw; since in *Isaiah* I enjoy all his majesty of sentiment, all his correctness of judgment, all his beautiful propriety of diction, and—But I must have done. The messenger waits; he can stay no longer, than barely to allow me leisure to subscribe myself,

Dear Sir, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, Nov.* 22, 1746.

AS I cannot attend the infirmary this day, permit me to take this opportunity of acknowledging the favour of your last.

The sermon you was pleased to lend me, I admire. Christ the great propitiation is, with me, a most favourite subject; and, I think, the author has been so happy as to treat it in a clear, nervous, pathetic manner.—I am delighted with his reply, and rejoice to observe, that it has passed a second edition. I hope the antidote will operate, and spread as wide as the poison.——This writer has another recommendation. His conciseness, added to perspicuity, renders his arguments easy to be apprehended, and not difficult to be remembered.——I am so much charmed with his performance, that I beg leave to keep it a few days longer; and should take it as a favour, if, in the mean time, you would give the bookseller an order to send for one of the sermons for me.

I heartily applaud the zeal you shew for the spiritual welfare of the patients. The infirmary would be an inestimable blessing, if, by the grace of God, it might be productive of a reformation in the persons, whom it admits and discharges. As distressed objects will in all probability resort to it from all parts of the county, a change wrought in their hearts, and a renewal begun in their lives, might be a happy means of diffusing religion far and near.——I hope the clergy concerned in the management of the infirmary will, with delight and assiduity, concur in the prosecution of so desirable an end. I can promise for one, so far as God shall give him ability.——I wish some proper scheme were contrived for the execution of this design, in which I might bear some little part, without giving umbrage to my brethren, or alarming their jealousy.——I have sometimes thought of offering to give the patients a kind of lecture or exhortation once a-week, formed upon some or other of those scriptures, which are the standing memento's of their wards*. But, sometimes doubtful whether such a proposal would meet with acceptance, sometimes checked by the infirmities of my constitution, I have hitherto neglected to mention the affair; however, I now venture to submit it to your consideration. To this, or any other more advisable method, I should very readily contribute the best of my assistance.

"Are you inclined, dear Sir, to give the poor creatures all the instruction in the Christian religion you are capable of?"——We take you at your word; and henceforward look upon you as an associate in our great work. In a warfare of such unspeakable importance, we are glad to strengthen our force by the accession of every ally; much more of such an auxiliary, as will be regarded by the patients with an uncommon degree of attention and pleasure. Nor can I think it any wise inconsistent with the office of a physician, or any derogation from the dignity of his character, to feel the pulse of the soul, to examine into the symptoms of spiritual maladies, to ask exploring questions concerning the habit of the mind, and prescribe accordingly, either for the purging off the peccant humours of vice, or corroborating the relaxed powers of grace.

May that infinitely condescending and compassionate Being, who disdained not in his own sacred person to take our sicknesses, and bear our infirmities, both direct your counsels, and prosper your endeavours, in this momentous affair.

I purpose to wait upon you some afternoon in the

* Texts of scripture in the *Northampton*, *Winchester*, and several other infirmaries, are written on the walls, and consequently are very useful, if seriously reflected on.

next

next week, and cannot think of a more agreeable topic of converſation, than that of concerting meaſures for the proper exertion of this labour of love, and encouraging each other to abound in the work of the Lord. I am, Dear Sir, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Nov.* 29, 1746.

HAVING taken cold, and got a hoarſeneſs, I am afraid to venture abroad; leſt I ſhould loſe my voice, and be incapable of performing the duty of the morrow.

If any method is agreed upon by the committee for endeavouring, in ſome more effectual a manner, to promote the ſpiritual recovery, and everlaſting welfare of the infirmary-patients, I wiſh you would be ſo kind as to inform me of it, in a letter: that if any part of this generous undertaking ſhould fall to my ſhare, I may addreſs myſelf to the proſecution of it, with all the ability which the divine goodneſs ſhall vouchſafe to communicate. Or, if there be no need of my concurrence, that I may accompany it with my beſt wiſhes, and, at leaſt, further it with my prayers;

Who am, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

My very dear friend,

YOUR laſt found me on the recovering hand, getting ſtrength and ſpirits, though by ſlow degrees.

Soon after I received your favour, a meſſenger came from *London*, bringing us the alarming news, that my youngeſt brother was extremely ill. My father's bowels yearned, and his heart bled; but the infirmities of age, and an unwieldy conſtitution, hindered him from taking the journey. Upon me, therefore, the office fell. Feeble and languid as I was, there was no rejecting ſuch a call. Accordingly, I took coach, and in two days arrived ſafe at *London*; where I found my poor brother (the packer) ſeized with a moſt violent fever. He was attended by two eminent phyſicians; but they proved vain helpers, and miſerable comforters. For a conſiderable time, his ſtout conſtitution ſtruggled with the diſeaſe, but at laſt was forced to yield, was forced to drop in the dreadful combat. After attending his ſick bed for ſeveral days, I had the melancholy taſk of cloſing his dear eyes, and reſigning him to death.

Oh! the uncertainty of mortal things! What is health, but a glimmering taper, that expires while it ſhines; and is liable to be extinguiſhed by every motion of the air? What is ſtrength, but a tender bloſſom, that is often withered in its fulleſt bloom; often blaſted, even before it is blown? Who could have thought, that I ſhould ſurvive my brother, and follow him to the grave? I ſickly and enervated, he always lively and vigorous. In flouriſhing circumſtances, and bleſſed with proſperity in his buſineſs; but now removed to the dark, inactive, ſilent tomb. Lately married to a beautiful and blooming bride; but now everlaſtingly divorced, and a companion for creeping things.

Scarce was I returned to *Weſton*, but another awful providence fetched me from home: My very worthy phyſician, Dr *Stonhouſe*, who lives and practiſes at *Northampton*, had the misfortune to loſe an amiable and excellent wife. She alſo was ſnatched away in the morning of life (aged 25,) and dead, before I ſo much as heard of her being diſordered. At this valuable friend's houſe, I was deſired to abide ſome time, in order to aſſiſt in writing letters for him, and diſpatching his neceſſary affairs; in comforting him concerning the deceaſed; and (if the will of God be ſo) in endeavouring to improve the awakening viſitation to our mutual good.

You will ſurely ſay, when you read this account, that I have been in deaths oft. Once upon the borders of it myſelf, and more than once a ſpectator of its victory over others.——However, my dear friends, let us not be diſmayed. Let no man's, at leaſt no believer's heart fail, becauſe of this king of terrors. Though thouſands fall beſide us, though ten thouſands expire at our right hand, and though we ourſelves muſt quickly give up the ghoſt; yet the word is gone out of our great Redeemer's mouth, and it ſhall not return unfulfilled, I will ſwallow up death in victory. He ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth; he ſhall ſay to the grave, Give up; and to the ſea, Keep not back; releaſe my ſons from your dark confinement, and reſtore my daughters to their everlaſting Father's arms.——Then ſhall we lead him captive, whoſe captives we were, and triumph eternally over this laſt enemy. In the mean time, let us lay all our help, all our guilt, upon the divine Author of our faith, and Captain of our ſalvation. So ſhall we no longer be in bondage, through fear of death; but, with the ſaints of old, overcome through the blood of the Lamb; overcome the dread, even while we ſink beneath the ſtroke of this our mortal foe.

What I wrote concerning a firm faith in God's moſt precious promiſes, and an humble truſt, that we are the objects of his tender love, is what I deſire to feel, rather than what I actually experience. Conſiderations they are, with which I would ply my own heart, in hopes that they may be effectually ſet home by divine grace, in hopes that they may become the happy means of making me ſtrong in faith, and enabling me thereby to give glory to God.

Your remarks on this important point are exceedingly judicious, and perfectly right. After which, it will be inſignificant to my friend, and look like arrogance in his correſpondent, to add, that they exactly coincide with my ſentiments.

I do not doubt, but there are many dear children of the bleſſed God, who are in a much better condition, with regard to his favour, than they can eaſily be perſuaded to believe. Many ſincerely righteous, for whom light is ſown; many true hearted, for whom joyful gladneſs is prepared: which, though latent in the furrows of inward tribulation, or oppreſſed under the clods of miſgiving fears, ſhall, in another world, ſpring up with infinite increaſe, and yield an everlaſting harveſt.

That humble hope, mixed with trembling, you have very pathetically deſcribed, in the breathings of a renewed ſoul, panting after God; languiſhing for the tokens of his love; ardently deſiring the final enjoyment of him in his heavenly kingdom; and relying wholly on the meritorious paſſion, pleading nothing but the perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.——Happy, without all peradventure, happy the heart, in which ſuch affections habitually prevail. They are the beginning of heaven, and will certainly be completed in glory. They conſtitute a ſignal part of that meetneſs for the inheritance of ſaints in light, concerning which the apoſtle ſpeaks, and which is one of the ſureſt evidences of our deſignation to that purchaſed poſſeſſion. Chriſt will in no wiſe, on no conſideration of paſt provocation, or preſent corruption, either for weakneſs of faith, or want of confidence, caſt out ſuch a one. Let not ſuch a one queſtion, but he who has begun the good work, will accompliſh it even unto the end.

We ſhould, however, as you moſt pertinently obſerve, lament all the remains of unbelief, as a miſery; repent

repent of them, as a sin; and labour to obtain a more assured faith, both as our duty, and our felicity.——The direction for prayer, you know, is, that we draw near in full assurance of faith; and, Whatsoever things ye ask in prayer, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.——The *Thessalonians* are commended for receiving the gospel, with much assurance of faith. Receiving the gospel.——What is meant by that expression? believing, that the apostles were no impostors; that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah; and that his doctrine came from heaven?—This, and abundantly more. I apprehend, it implies,—That Christ died, not for sins only in general, but for their sins in particular; that he bore all their iniquities, in his own bleeding body, and agonizing soul, on the cursed tree; that, all their crimes being fully expiated, the most rigorous justice would not demand a double payment for the same debt; and consequently, that there remained no condemnation for them.——This is the glad tidings, which they not only attended to, and credited with a speculative assent; but with a personal application of it, each to his particular case. And why should not we do the very same?—I shall only subjoin further on this head, what I take to be a very clear and accurate explanation of the apostle's celebrated definition of faith.——Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; putting us into a kind of present possession of the promises, and setting divine truths before the mind in all the light and power of demonstration. For this beautiful illustration of the inspired writer, I am obliged to an excellent clergyman of this neighbourhood; who lately favoured us with an admirable visitation-sermon, and, for the good of the public, was prevailed on to print it.——You will give me leave to close the topic with a distinction, which I have somewhere read, or on some occasion heard; A distinction, which, I think, properly adjusts the case under consideration; and settles it, neither on a precarious, nor a discouraging issue.—Many have the faith which bringeth salvation, who have not that faith which produceth assurance; but none have the former, who do not aspire after, and endeavour to possess the latter.

On the whole, I heartily beseech the adorable and infinitely-gracious Giver of every perfect gift, to establish, strengthen, settle us in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ: that he would fulfil in us all the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with power. And, I dare say, we shall often lift up our hearts to our heavenly Father, and breathe out that ardent petition, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!—If we have such frequent recourse to the overflowing and inexhaustible fountain of all good; if we add to our prayers meditation on the merits of Jesus, and on the sure word of promise; our faith will grow; the grain of mustard-seed will be quickened, and shoot up into a tree; the little drop will become a stream, and the stream spread into a river. The waters that issued from the sanctuary were, at first, deep to the ancles only; then they arose to the knees; soon they reached the loins; and were afterwards water to swim in.

The *Contemplations* you are pleased to inquire after, are, after long delays, or a very slow procedure of the press, launched into the world. What may be their fate, I dare not conjecture. Whether, by the general disapprobation, they may be unfortunately becalmed; or, by the severity of critics, may split on the rocks of censure; or, foundering through their own unworthiness, may sink in oblivion; or, blessed be a gracious providence, may gain the haven of public acceptance, and import those most valuable commodities, pleasure, which improves, and improvement, which delights. When they reach your parts, be so good, dear Sir, as to peruse them, first with the humble child-like spirit of a Christian, who seeks religious advantage in all that he reads. Next, with the candid rigour of a friend, saying, as you proceed, Here his thoughts are redundant, and want the pruning-knife; there they are deficient, and call for the grafter's hand; here the language is obscure, and perspicuity is the only remedy; there it is inexpressive, and must be rendered more nervous, in order to reach the judgment, or strike the passions.——Above all, let me beg of you to implore a blessing from the most high God, both upon the author and his piece; that the one may be a monument of divine mercy, the other a polished shaft in the great *Immanuel*'s quiver.

Should not a sense of his love make us more ardently desirous of bringing others to partake of that everlasting bliss, which we humbly expect as our final portion; and of which some foretastes have been indulged, even in our present state? Should we not be stirred up, with greater assiduity and love, to warn every man, and exhort every man, that they also may be presented perfect in Christ, and live for ever in the light of his countenance?—The book I mentioned formerly and took leave to recommend, shall be sent. I have set it apart as a present for my dear friend; and whether my life be prolonged, or my death hastened, neither of these circumstances shall make any alteration in my design. Only let me desire you, in your next, to give me once more the proper directions for conveying it to you. For, some way or other, in my late unsettled state, I have mislaid your letter. Please to present my thanks to Mrs *** for her kind wishes; and tell her, that they are, and shall be most cordially returned by her and your most faithful and affectionate friend, *&c.*

LETTER XXXIV.

Dear Sir, *Weston Favell, Feb.* 28, 1747.

I Have read the ingenious gentleman's letter attentively. Though he says the strongest things that can be urged upon the point, I still adhere to my sentiments; and not because they are mine, but the scriptures, and supportable. I am persuaded by a variety of texts from the oracles of truth.——I beg leave to wave the prosecution of the controversy. Controversy is what I naturally dislike, and what I have seldom found advantageous. I know his opinion, and he has given me an opportunity of declaring mine; and would only add, that if in any thing we be otherwise minded (than is consistent with the gospel of grace), God (upon a diligent application to his word, and humble prayer for the teaching of his Spirit) will reveal this unto us. Phil. iii. 15.

I have been reading Mr *Baxter*'s *Saints Everlasting Rest*, and admire the copiousness, the justness, and the devotion of his thoughts. How happy the soul, that while reading them, can make them his own! May this be always the prevailing desire; and, in due time, the heaven vouchsafed portion of the worthy owner of the book, and of his

Most affectionate friend, *&c.*

LETTER XXXV.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, Feb.* 1747.

I Have heard nothing from my printer, during all this interval. What can be the reason of his long silence, and great negligence, I cannot imagine. But this week it occurred to my mind, that if he delays the second edition at this rate, I may possibly be able to prepare the third letter to accompany it. Accordingly, I have postponed other business, and applied wholly to this work. I have transcribed some part of the intended piece, and send it for your perusal.

pray be ſo good as to examine it narrowly, and favour me with your remarks and improvements, on a ſeparate paper. There are, I fear, beſides more material faults, ſeveral miſtakes in the copy, owing to my want of leiſure to review it. I ſuppoſe, the remainder of my deſign, when completed, will conſiſt of about the ſame number of pages.

If I live till *Monday*, I propoſe to viſit my patient at the infirmary; and, if company happens to be agreeable, will take the pleaſure of ſpending an hour with a certain valuable and very much eſteemed friend at *Northampton*. If you are not able to gueſs the perſon I mean, you ſhall ſoon be informed by, dear Sir, yours, &c.

Vir bonus et prudens verſus reprehendet inertes,
Culpabit duros, incomptis allinet atrum
Tranſverſo calamo ſignum, ambitioſa recidet
Ornamenta, parum claris lucem dare coget,
Arguet ambigue dictum, mutanda notabit. HOR.

This I tranſcribe, not to inform you of the critic's office, but only to apprize you of what I wiſh, and what I humbly requeſt.

LETTER XXXVI.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, April* 12, 1747.

I Have folded down a corner of the leaf at the place where your peruſal left off. There is a note or two ſubjoined to the preceding pages, which I wiſh you would pleaſe to examine. My humble ſervice to Dr ***. I deſire he will write his remarks and corrections on a ſeparate paper. What think you of the following lines for a motto?

Night opes the nobleſt ſcenes, and ſheds an awe,
Which gives thoſe venerable ſcenes full weight,
And deep impreſſion on th' intender'd heart.
Night-Thoughts.

——— *Si quid noviſti rectius iſtis,*
Candidus imperti.

Your plan for forming a Chriſtian ſociety, and regulating our interviews, I greatly approve. It ſeems to me to be complete. I ſee nothing that ſhould be taken from it, nor can think of any thing to be added to it. I heartily wiſh to have it carried into execution, and hope it will be productive of conſiderable comfort and advantage to the members; and not to them only, but, by rendering them more uſeful in their reſpective ſtations, to many others.

A cold, and hoarſeneſs on my voice, make me ſomewhat fearful of coming to *** this day.——I hope you have peruſed the remainder of the manuſcript; and cannot but wiſh, you would give the whole a ſecond reading. The unknown importance of what we print, inclines me to urge this requeſt. Who can tell how long it may continue, and into what hands it may come? I almoſt tremble at ſuch a thought, leſt I ſhould write unadviſedly with my pen; and injure, inſtead of ſerving, the beſt of cauſes.

If you have put my little piece into the hands of my *Ariſtarchus*, Dr *** I mean, deſire him to be particularly attentive to the redundancies, and lop them off with a plentiful hand.

I ſhall ſoon create you a ſecond taſk, by tranſmitting for your correction, twenty folio pages of remarks on the ſtars, and ſerious improvements.—Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

My dear Friend, *Weſton-Favell, June* 27, 1747.

COming home this evening, I could not forbear muſing on the various topics, which furniſhed matter for our diſcourſe; and now I am all thoughtful and retired, I cannot forbear taking notice of ſome particulars relating to our converſation. To be ſilent in ſuch a caſe, would, I am perſuaded, be more diſpleaſing to a gentleman of your diſcernment and generoſity, than to uſe the utmoſt freedom of ſpeech.

Was it you, dear Sir, or I, that when a certain paſſage in ſcripture happened to be mentioned, treated it, not indeed with a contemptuous diſdain, but with too ludicrous an air? deſcanted on it, in a ſportive and frolicſome manner, in order to create a little pleaſantry. If I was the perſon that indulged this improper levity, I beſeech you to rebuke me, and ſeverely too. Though my deſign might be innocent, my conduct was apparently wrong. That infinitely precious and important book, ſhould be always held in the higheſt veneration. Whatever the divine Spirit vouchſafes to dictate, ſhould be thought and ſpoke of by mortals, with gratitude, dutifulneſs, and awe. It is the character of a religious man, that he trembles at God's word; and it is ſaid of the great Jehovah, that he has magnified his name and his word, above all things.

Who was it, dear Sir, that lent to our valuable friend that vile book, *Le Sopha*, and yet wrote by *Crebillon*, with an enchanting ſpirit of elegance; which muſt render the miſchief palatable, and the bane even delicious? I wonder, that your kind and benevolent heart could recommend arſenic for a regale. It puts me in mind of the empoiſoned ſhirt preſented to *Hercules*. I am ſure you did not think on it, or elſe you would no more have tranſmitted ſuch a peſtilent treatiſe to the peruſal of a friend, than you would tranſmit to him a packet of goods from a country depopulated by the plague. If that polluting *French* book ſtill remains in your ſtudy, let me beg of you to make it perform quarentine in the flames.

The laſt particular relates to attendance on the public worſhip of God. Let us not neglect the aſſembling of ourſelves together. This was the advice of the beſt and greateſt caſuiſt in the world; not to ſay, the injunction of the Maker of all things, and Judge of all men. ——Would we be aſſured of our love to God? This is one evidence of that moſt noble and happy temper; Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy houſe, and the place where thy honour dwelleth.—Would we glorify the Lord? Then let us appear in his courts, fall low on our knees before his footſtool, and in this public manner avow him for our God, recognize him for our King, and acknowledge him to be our ſupreme good.—Would we follow the example of our devout and bleſſed Maſter? Let us remember how it is written, Jeſus went into the ſynagogue, as his cuſtom was. And, if we take due care to get our hearts prepared, by a little previous meditation, and earneſt prayer, I dare anſwer for it, our attendance will not be in vain in the Lord. God will, according to his promiſe, meet us in his ordinances; make us joyful in his houſe of prayer; and we ſhall experience what, (if I remember aright) that brighteſt ornament of the court of judicature, Judge *Hales* declared, That he never ſat under the preaching even of the meaneſt ſermon, but he found ſome word of edification, exhortation, or comfort.

Dear Sir, beſtow a thought on theſe things. If the remonſtrances are wrong, I willingly retract them; if right, you will not pronounce me impertinent. Love and friendſhip dictate what I write; and the only end I have in view is the holineſs, the uſefulneſs, the happineſs, the final ſalvation of my much eſteemed friend. It is for this, this only I have now taken my pen in hand, and for this I ſhall often bend my knees before God, and thereby prove myſelf to be, Dear Sir, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, July* 18, 1747.

I Deſire you to accept my thanks for the variety of beautiful lines, which you ſent me, to chuſe a motto

motto from. They are all elegant, but not sufficiently expressive of the design of the piece. Therefore I imagined the following quotation from Dr *Young*, somewhat more suitable;

Night is fair virtue's immemorial friend;
The conscious moon, through ev'ry distant age,
Has held a lamp to wisdom.

You advised me to add a sort of note to the passage objected to by Mr ****, relating to the spark's being visible. In pursuance of your direction, I subjoined the following.

"I beg leave to inform the young gentleman, whose name dignifies my dedication; that this was a remark of his worthy father, when we rode together, and conversed in a dusky evening. I mention this circumstance, partly to secure the paragraph from contempt, partly to give him, and the world, an idea of that eminently-serious taste, which distinguished my worthy friend. The less obvious the reflection, the more clearly it discovers a turn of mind remarkably spiritual, which would suffer nothing to escape without yielding some spiritual improvement. And the meaner the incident, the more admirable was that fertility of imagination, which could deduce the noblest truths from the most trivial occurrences!"

Will not this be looked upon as a sly underhand artifice, whereby the author extols himself?

Does the famous *Dutch* philosopher, *Newentit* (I think is his name) treat of the heavenly bodies? If he does, be so good, in case he dwells in your study, to send him on a week's visit to me. Dr *Watts*'s *Treatise on astronomy*, I should be glad to peruse.

The *Hymn to the moon*, whoever is meant by *Scriblerus Decimus Maximus*, is very poetical. I durst not venture to add what is wanting to render it a complete address, lest it should become like the visionary image, whose head was of gold, his feet of iron and clay.

My transient remarks on Dr *Rymer*'s *Representation of revealed religion*, are lost. I must desire leave to postpone my observations on the other books.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, Aug.* 8, 1747.

AFTER my thanks for what passed in yesterday's interview, give me leave to add my acknowledgments for the perusal of your poem, entitled, *The Deity*. It is a noble piece, quite poetical, truly evangelical, and admirably fitted to alarm and comfort the heart, to delight and improve the reader. I must desire to read it again.

I visited the poor condemned malefactor, found him an ignorant person; aimed chiefly at these two grand points, to convince him of the heinousness of his sin, and shew him the all-sufficiency of the Saviour, to obtain pardon even for the very vilest of offenders. To preach and teach Jesus Christ, is our office; to make the doctrine effectual, God's great prerogative. Nothing more occurs, but that I am, &c.

LETTER XL.

Dearest Mr **, *Weston-Favell, Aug.* 8, 1747.

I Ought to take shame to myself, for suffering so kind a letter, received from so valuable a friend, to remain so long unanswered. Upon no other consideration, than that of my enfeebled and languishing constitution, can I excuse myself, or hope for your pardon. My health is continually upon the decline, and the springs of life are all relaxing. Mine age is departing, and removing from me as a shepherd's tent. Medicine is baffled; and my physician Dr *Stonhouse*, who is a dear friend to his patient, and a lover of the Lord Jesus, pities, but cannot succour me. This blessing, however, together with a multitude of others, the divine goodness vouchsafes, to gild the gloom of decaying nature, That I am racked with no pain, and enjoy the free undisturbed exercise of my understanding.

I am much obliged to you for carrying my message to the abbey with so much speed, and conveying to me, with equal dispatch, a satisfactory answer. When you visit the worthy family again, be pleased, after presenting my affectionate compliments, and most cordial good wishes, to inform Mrs ***, that the piece is sent to the press, and after some corrections made in the dedication, addressed to my godson. It is my humble request to him, and my earnest prayer to God, that he may regard it, not merely as a complimentary form, but as the serious and pathetic advice of his father's intimate acquaintance, and his soul's sincere friend; who, in all probability, will be cut off from every other opportunity of fulfilling his sacred engagements, and admonishing him of whatever a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health.

I forgot, whether I told you, that the last work will be divided into two parts; will be full as large as the two first letters; and therefore the whole will be disposed in two small pocket-volumes, on a very neat paper, with an elegant type, in duodecimo. But a convenient number of the new essays will be printed in the octavo size and character, for the satisfaction of those who purchased the former edition, and may possibly be willing to complete their book.——It was a considerable time, before I could think of a title for the last pieces, that suited their nature, and expressed their design. At length, I have determined to style them, *Contemplations on the night*, and *Contemplations on the starry heavens*.

Now I apprehend myself to be near the close of life, and stand, as it were, on the brink of the grave, with eternity full in my view, perhaps, my dear friend would be willing to know my sentiments of things in this awful situation. At such a juncture, the mind is most unprejudiced, and the judgment not so liable to be dazzled by the glitter of worldly objects.

I think then, dear Sir, that we are extremely mistaken, and sustain a mighty loss in our most important interests, by reading so much, and praying so little. Was I to enjoy *Hezekiah*'s grant, and have fifteen years added to my life, I would be much more frequent in my applications to the throne of grace. I have read of a person, who was often retired and on his knees, was remarkable for his frequency and fervency in devotion; being asked the reason of this so singular a behaviour, he replied, Because I am sensible I must die. I assure you, dear Mr ***, I feel the weight of this answer, I see the wisdom of this procedure; and, was my span to be lengthened, would endeavour always to remember the one, and daily to imitate the other.

I think also, we fail in our duty, and thwart our comfort, by studying God's holy word no more. I have, for my part, been too fond of reading every thing elegant and valuable, that has been penned in our own language; and been particularly charmed with the historians, orators, and poets of antiquity. But was I to renew my studies, I would take my leave of those accomplished trifles. I would resign the delights of modern wit, amusement, and eloquence, and devote my attention to the scriptures of truth. I would sit with much greater assiduity, at my divine Master's feet, and desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. This wisdom, whose fruits are peace in life, consolation in death, and everlasting salvation after death; this I would trace, this I would seek, this I would explore, through

through the ſpacious and delightful fields of the Old and New Teſtament. In ſhort, I would adopt the apoſtle's reſolution, and give myſelf * (προσκαρτερειν) to prayer, and to the word.

With regard to my public miniſtry, my chief aim ſhould be, to beget in my people's minds a deep ſenſe of their depraved, guilty, undone condition; and a clear believing conviction of the all-ſufficiency of Chriſt, by his blood, his righteouſneſs, his interceſſion, and his Spirit to ſave them to the uttermoſt. I would always obſerve, to labour for them in my cloſet, as well as in the pulpit; and wreſtle in ſecret ſupplication, as well as to exert myſelf in public preaching, for their ſpiritual and eternal welfare. For unleſs God take this work into his own hand, what mortal is ſufficient for theſe things?

Now, perhaps, if you ſat at my right hand, you would aſk, What is my hope with regard to my future and immortal ſtate? Truly, my hope, my whole hope, is even in the Lord Redeemer. Should the king of terrors threaten, I fly to the wounds of the ſlaughtered Lamb, as the trembling dove to the clefts of the rock. Should Satan accuſe, I plead the Surety of the coveriant, who took my guilt upon himſelf, and bore my ſins in his own body on the tree. Should the law denounce a curſe, I appeal to him who hung on the accurſed tree, on purpoſe that all the nations of the earth might be bleſſed. Should hell open its jaws, and demand its prey, I look up to that gracious Being, who ſays, Deliver him from going down into the pit, for I have found a ranſom. Should it be ſaid, No unclean thing can enter into heaven; my anſwer is, The blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin; though my ſins be as ſcarlet, through this blood they ſhall be as white as ſnow. Should it be added, None can ſit down at the ſupper of the Lamb, without a wedding-garment, and your righteouſneſſes, what are they before the pure law, and piercing eye of God, but filthy rags? Theſe I renounce, and ſeek to be found in Chriſt Jeſus, who is the Lord my righteouſneſs. It is written in the word that is to judge the world at the laſt day, By his obedience ſhall many be made righteous.

So that Jeſus, the dear and adorable Jeſus, is all my truſt. His merits are my ſtaff, when I paſs through the valley of the ſhadow of death. His merits are my anchor, when I launch into the boundleſs ocean of eternity. His merits are the only riches which my poor ſoul, when ſtript of its body, deſires to carry into the inviſible world. If the God of glory pleaſes to take notice of any mean endeavours to honour his holy name, it will be infinite condeſcenſion and grace; but his Son, his righteous and ſuffering Son, is all my hope, and all my ſalvation. Dear Sir, pray for me, that the weaker I grow in body, the ſtronger I may become in this precious faith. May the choiceſt bleſſings attend you and yours. A letter would revive yours, &c.

P. S. "Though the days are come upon me, in "which I have reaſon to ſay of worldly things, I have "no pleaſure in them; yet I find a ſecret ſatisfaction in "this conſideration, that to you, my dear friend, and "to others of my candid acquaintance, I may be permitted, even when dead, to ſpeak in my little treatiſes. "May they, when the author is gone hence, never to "be ſeen in theſe regions below, Oh! may they teſtify with ſome ſmall degree of efficacy, concerning "Jeſus, that juſt one; may they fan the flame of love "to his perſon, and ſtrengthen the principle of faith in "his merits!——Once more, dear Sir, adieu."

* Acts vi. 4.

LETTER XLII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Aug.* 22, 1747.

HAVING read Dr *Middleton*'s introductory diſcourſe, I hardly know what to think of his bold aſſertion, That all the miracles ſuppoſed to be wrought after the apoſtolic age, are abſurd and fictitious. I muſt ſuſpend my opinion concerning this point, till I find it either confirmed by the ſilence, or confuted by the arguments, of the advocates for eccleſiaſtical antiquity. In the main, I approve of his deſign, which is to ſettle the proofs of our holy religion on the baſis of the inſpired writings, and to deduce its doctrines from the ſame ſacred ſource. The ſcriptures, as our friend *H*— beautifully expreſſes himſelf, are the armoury of God, from whence we may draw weapons of a divine temper, wherewith to engage all that oppoſe the truth, or hold the ſame in unrighteouſneſs.

Does not this ingenious writer bear a little too hard upon the religious character, and exemplary behaviour, of the primitive fathers? I cannot but think, they had, at leaſt in this reſpect, a very evident ſuperiority over moſt of their ſucceſſors.——How flowing, perſpicuous, and elegant is the doctor's ſtyle; and how ſtiff, obſcure, and bombaſt the language of the archdeacon? I dare ſay, you could not forbear ſmiling at his,—blazing out moſt faſtidious hypercritics; reproaching (not virulently, but) tartly; laſhing (not ſeverely, but) ſupercilioufly; and penetrating the very vitals of the dead languages.

If your *Matho* is not lent out of town, I wiſh you would be ſo good as to ſend for it, and favour me with a ſight of it by the bearer. The reaſon of my requeſting this is, that Mr *** informs me by my brother, if he has not the laſt piece by the middle of next week, his preſs muſt ſtand ſtill. And methinks, I would gladly peruſe *Matho*, before I ſuffer my laſt eſſay to depart. ——When can you afford me your converſation for an hour or two, in order to examine Mr ***'s remarks, and beſtow the finiſhing touches on the piece? Shall I wait upon you on *Monday* morning early?——When this buſineſs is diſpatched, your book, and my thanks, ſhall be returned together.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XLII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, October* 31, 1747.

WITH thanks, I return Colonel *Gardiner*'s life.—The worthy author has preſented me with a copy, which, I hope, will ſerve to humble and animate me, ſo long as I live.

Abernethy on the *Divine Attributes*, I will ſoon reſtore. In the mean time, ſhall I beg the favour of borrowing *Pliny*'s *Natural Hiſtory*?

You remember, who is to call upon you (*Deo volente*) on *Monday* morning. I muſt devote the greateſt part of this day to prepare my tranſlatory quota of *Dickſon*'s *Therapeutica Sacra*.——The thoughts of our little ſociety bring to my mind a pleaſing circumſtance, which I obſerved, when we were at our laſt interview. My very valuable friend Dr *S*—— told a ſtory, in which he had occaſion to refer to ſome profane and execrable language. Inſtead of defiling his lips with a repetition of the helliſh jargon, he was ſo truly diſcreet, as only to mention it under the general title of *horrid oaths*. A delicacy this, which I thought highly becoming both the Chriſtian and the gentleman.——I have ſometimes took the freedom, to obſerve, in the moſt reſpectful manner, upon ſome little inadvertencies in my worthy friend's conduct: but now it is with the higheſt pleaſure that I congratulate him, upon a moſt amiable piece of religious decorum, introduced into his diſcourſe.——I am, &c.

LETTER XLIII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Dec.* 2, 1747.

THE ſurpriſe which your letter gives me, is inexpreſſible, and the grief equal. I will haſten, as ſoon as poſſible, to my worthy and afflicted friend. O! that

that I could bring with me ſome healing balm for his wounded heart! It would be no ſmall alleviation of my own ſorrows, if I might be inſtrumental to make his leſs.——A long-continued cold, and an unexpected journey, have unfitted me from following your preſcriptions. I am obliged to your candour for aſcribing my neglect to this cauſe, and not to any diſregard of your advice. For I am perſuaded,

——*Si qua potuiſſent Pergama* dextra
Defendi, etiam hac defenſa fuiſſent.

I will ſtay the meſſenger no longer; and, I hope, I ſhall not ſtay long before I ſet out myſelf. It is owing wholly to an accident, that I do not accompany the bearer, with a view, and a hope of adminiſtering ſome conſolation to Dr S***.——I am, &c.

LETTER XLIV.

Dear and worthy Sir, *Northampton, Dec.* 5, 1747.

YOU will wonder to ſee a name which you have but lately known, at the bottom of this paper. But how,—oh! how will you be ſurpriſed, how grieved, to read the occaſion?—It is ſo afflicting, almoſt ſo inſupportable to our valuable friend,—that he is unable to give you the narrative; therefore has committed the office (*triſte miniſterium!*) to my pen.——And muſt I tell you? can you bear to hear it?—Mrs S—— is dead; that amiable and excellent lady is dead.——She was ſafely delivered of a daughter, the very day on which Dr S*** wrote to you laſt; was as well as could be expected or wiſhed on *Sunday* morning; and departed this life on *Tueſday* evening.——On *Sunday* in the evening our common friend perceived her to be attended with ſome alarming, and, as he apprehended, fatal ſymptoms.——Dr K— was immediately ſent for, who gave ſome encouragement. On *Monday* came Dr J— through a very deep ſnow, and moſt terrible weather, but urged by friendſhip and compaſſion. The moment that ſagacious practitioner beheld her, he confirmed Dr S—'s firſt ſentiments, that the caſe was irrecoverable; and added, that the great change was at the very door, and would probably take place in twenty-four hours; which came to paſs accordingly.

Your own tender and ſenſible heart will naturally conclude Dr S— is ſo oppreſſed with ſorrow, as not to be capable, at preſent, of anſwering his moſt valued correſpondents:

Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes ſtupent.

But he intends, when time has ſomewhat alleviated his grief; and religion has more reconciled him to the awful diſpenſation, to make a particular reply to the whole of your epiſtolary favour. You will, I do not queſtion, recommend our diſtreſſed friend to the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. May we all lay this awakening ſtroke of Providence to heart, and give all diligence to have our ſins pardoned through redeeming blood, our ſouls renewed by ſanctifying grace; that whether we live, we may live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we may die unto the Lord; ſo that, living or dying, we may be the Lord's.

The ſecond edition of my *Meditations*, with the addition of another volume, is at laſt publiſhed. I have given directions to my bookſeller, to ſend you a copy; and beg of you to accept it, as a ſmall, but the moſt ſpeaking and eloquent expreſſion I am able to form of that great, that growing eſteem I have conceived for Dr *Swan*, ever ſince our firſt interview at *Weſton*. Be pleaſed, dear Sir, to read it with the utmoſt, or rather with your own candour; and ſometimes dart up a ſhort petition for the author, that, whatever is the fate of his book, himſelf may live over his writings, and be, what he deſcribes.——I am, &c.

LETTER XLV.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell*, 1747.

MR H—— delivered your meſſage. Upon a repeated peruſal of your rules and orders, I find nothing to add, nor any thing to alter. I think it is a finely-calculated ſcheme, and ſeems very likely (——) to be productive of conſiderable good.

When the diſciples were together, after their Maſter's reſurrection, they had the honour, the comfort, and advantage of his divine preſence. And why may not we, when aſſociated on ſuch a plan, and converſing with ſuch views, reaſonably hope for the ſame bleſſing?

I ſhall return all your books by the firſt opportunity; only the firſt volume of the *Hiſtory of the Bible*, I beg to keep a little longer. The Bible, I intend, for the future, to make the principal object of my ſtudy. What beautiful and important exhortation ſhall be my ruling directory, ὁ λογος του Χριστου ενοικειτω εν ημιν πλουσιως.

Perhaps, Dr *W—ll* will be ſo obliging as to anſwer my letter. And if ſo, I think, it will be proper to defer writing to Mr *R—n*, and ſending the draught, till I hear the doctor's ſentiments.——I beg of you to accept the cordial compliments, as you have always the beſt wiſhes, and frequently the earneſt prayers of,

Dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER XLVI.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Dec.* 12, 1747.

THIS, I hope, will find you perfectly recovered from your indiſpoſition, and thoroughly reconciled to God's holy will. Afflictions, when ſanctified, are real bleſſings; they work humility, and wean from the world; they teach us to pour out, not our words only, but our very ſouls, before God in prayer; and create an ardent deſire after that inheritance in heaven, which is incorruptible and immortal; after thoſe manſions of peace, where ſorrow and ſighing flee away. May this be the effect of that awful ſtroke, which has made ſo deplorable a breach on my friend's domeſtic comfort!

Next week *Abernethy* will return to your ſtudy; and I only wiſh, that he might bring with him a little more of the everlaſting and glorious goſpel. With my compliments to Mrs ***,

I am, &c.

LETTER XLVII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton, Dec.* 17, 1747.

I Truly commiſerate your variegated calamity; and heartily wiſh I could ſuggeſt any thing, which might be the means of adminiſtering ſome eaſe to your afflicted mind, and of aſſiſting you to reap ample benefit from your diſtreſſed ſituation.

You well know, that all afflictions of what kind ſoever, proceed from God. I form the light, and create darkneſs; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all theſe things. (*Iſaiah* xlv. 7.) They ſpring not from the duſt; are not the effects of a random chance,

but the appointment of an all-wise, all-foreseeing God, who intends them all for the good of his creatures.——This, I think, is the fundamental argument for resignation, and the grand source of comfort. This should be our first reflection, and our sovereign support.——He that gave me my being, and gave his own Son for my redemption, he has assigned me this suffering.—What he ordains who is boundless love, must be good: what he ordains who is unerring wisdom, must be proper.

This reconciled *Eli* to the severest doom that ever was denounced.——It is the Lord; and though grievous to human nature, much more grievous to parental affection, yet it is unquestionably the best, therefore I humbly acquiesce, I kiss the awful decree, and say from my very soul, Let him do what seemeth him good. (1 *Sam.* iii. 18.)

This calmed the sorrows of *Job*, under all his unparalleled distresses; The Lord gave my affluence and prosperity; the Lord has taken all away: rapacious hands and warring elements were only his instruments; therefore I submit, I adore, I bless his holy name.

This consolation fortified the man Christ Jesus, at the approach of his inconceivably-bitter agonies; The cup, which, not my implacable enemies, but my Father, by their administration, has given me, shall I not drink it?—It is your Father, dear Sir, your heavenly Father, who loves you with an everlasting love, that has mingled some gall with your portion in life.——Sensible of the beneficent hand, from which the visitation comes, may you always bow your head in patient submission; and acknowledge with the excellent, but afflicted monarch *Hezekiah*, Good is the word of the Lord concerning me, 2 *Kings* xx. 19.

All afflictions are designed for blessings;—to do us good at the latter end, however they may cross our desires, or disquiet our minds at present.——Happy (says the Spirit of inspiration, and not wretched!) is the man whom God correcteth. (*Job* v. 17.) and for this reason, because his merciful chastenings, though not joyous but grievous, yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby. (*Heb.* xii. 11.) God's ways are not as our ways. The children whom we love, we are apt to treat with all the soft blandishments, and fond caresses of profuse indulgence; and too, too often cocker them to their hurt, if not to their ruin.——But the Father of spirits is wise in his love, and out of kindness severe. Therefore it is said, Whom he loveth, he chasteneth, scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (*Heb.* xii. 6.) Would you not, dear Sir, be a child of that everlasting Father, whose favour is better than life? Affliction is one sign of your adoption to this inestimable relation.—Would you not be an "heir of the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away?"——Affliction is your path to this blissful patrimony. Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven, *Acts* xiv. 22. Would you not be made like your ever-blessed and amiable Redeemer? He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and every disciple must expect to be as his master.

Perhaps, you may think your affliction peculiary calamitous; and that if it had been of some other kind, you could more chearfully submit, more easily bear it. But you are in the hands of an all-wise Physician, who joins to the bowels of infinite love, the discernment of infinite wisdom. He cannot mistake your case. He sees into the remotest events; and though he varies his remedies, always prescribes with the exactest propriety to every one's particular state. Assure yourself, therefore, the visitation which he appoints, is the very properest recipe in the dispensatory of heaven. Any other would have been less fit to convey saving health to your immortal part, and less subservient to your enjoyment of the temporal blessings, which may, perhaps, be yet in store for you.

Should you inquire what benefits accrue from afflictions?—Many and precious.——They tend to wean us from the world.——When our paths are strewed with roses, when nothing but music and odours float around, how apt are we to be enamoured with our present condition, and forget the crown of glory, forget Jesus and everlasting ages?—But affliction, with a faithful tho' harsh voice, rouses us from the sweet delusion.——Affliction warns our hearts to rise and depart from these inferior delights, because here is not our rest. True and lasting joys are not here to be found. The sweeping tempest and the beating surge, teach the mariner to prize the haven, where undisturbed repose waits his arrival. In like manner disappointments, vexations, anxieties, crosses, teach us to long for those happy mansions, where all tears will be wiped away from the eyes, (*Rev.* xxi. 4.) all anguish banished from the mind; and nothing, nothing subsist, but the fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

Afflictions tend to bring us to Christ.——Christ has unspeakable and everlasting blessings to bestow;—such as the world can neither give, nor take away; such as are sufficient to pour that oil of gladness into our souls, which will swim above the waves of any earthly tribulation.—But are we not, dear Sir, are we not most unhappily indolent and inattentive to these blessings, in the gay hours of an uninterrupted prosperity? It is very observable, that scarce any made application to our divine Redeemer, in the days of his abode with us, but the children of affliction. The same spirit of supineness still possesses mankind. We undervalue, we disregard the Lord Jesus, and the unspeakable privileges of his gospel, while all proceeds smoothly, and nothing occurs to discompose the tenour of our tranquillity.—But when misfortunes harass our circumstances, or sorrows oppress our minds; then we are willing, we are glad, we are earnest, to find rest in Christ.

In Christ Jesus there is pardon of sins.—Sin is a burthen, incomparably sorer than any other distress.——Sin would sink us into the depths of eternal ruin, and transfix us with the agonies of endless despair. But Christ has, at the price of his very life, purchased pardon for all that fly to him. He has bore the guilt of their sins in his own body on the tree, (1 *Pet.* ii. 24.) Have they deserved condemnation? He has sustained it in their stead.—Are they obnoxious to the wrath of God? He has endured it, as their substitute; he has made satisfaction, complete satisfaction for all their iniquities, (*Rom.* iii. 25, 26.) So that justice itself, the most rigorous justice, can demand no more. Oh! that distresses may prompt us to prize this mercy! may incite us to desire ardently this blessedness! then it will be good for us to have been afflicted, (*Psal.* cxix. 71.)

Christ has obtained for us the gift of the Holy Spirit, (*Gal.* iii. 2.) to sanctify our hearts, and renew our natures.——An unrenewed carnal mind, is ten thousand times more to be lamented, more to be dreaded, than any external calamities. And nothing can cure us of this most deadly disease, but the sanctification of the Spirit. This divine Spirit alone is able to put the fear of God in our souls, and awaken the love of God in our hearts, (*Jer.* xxxii. 40.) His influences suggest such awful and amiable thoughts to our minds, as will be productive of these Christian graces. This sacred principle subdues our corruptions, and conforms us to our blessed Redeemer's image.——How is this best gift of heaven disesteemed by the darlings of the world, who have nothing to vex them? But how precious is it, how desirable, to the heirs of sorrow?—They breathe after it, as the thirsty hart panteth after the water-brooks.——They cannot be satisfied without its enlightening, purifying, cheering communications. This is all their request, and all their relief, "that the Spirit of Christ may dwell in their hearts," (*Rom.* viii. 9.); may enable them to possess their souls in patience, (*Luke* xxi. 19.), and derive never-ending good from momentary evils. Before

fore I close these lines, permit me to recommend one expedient, which yet is not mine, but the advice of an inspired apostle. If any be afflicted, let him pray.—Dear Sir, fly to God in all your adversity, point out your complaints before in humble supplication, and shew him your trouble, (*Psal.* cxlii. 2.)—When I am in heaviness, says a holy sufferer, I will think upon God, (*Psal.* lxi. 2.); his omnipotent power, his unbounded goodness, whose ear is ever, ever open to receive the cry of the afflicted.—When the *psalmist* was distressed on every side, without were fightings, within were fears, the throne of grace was the place of his refuge; I give myself to prayer (*Psal.* cix. 3), was his declaration.—This method, we read, *Hannah* took, and you cannot but remember the happy issue, (1 *Sam.* i. 10.) Let me intreat you to imitate these excellent examples; frequently bend your knees, and more frequently lift up your heart, to the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation; not doubting, but that through the merits of his dear Son, through the intercession of your compassionate High Priest, he will hear your petitions, will comfort you under all your tribulations, and make them all work together for your infinite and eternal good.

In the mean time I shall not cease to pray, that the God of all power and grace may vouchsafe to bless THESE CONSIDERATIONS, and render them as balm to your aching heart, and as food to the divine life in your mind. I am, dear Sir, with much esteem, compassion, and respect,

Your very sincere wellwisher, &c.

LETTER XLVIII.

My dear Friend, *Weston-Favell, Dec. 5, 1747.*

I Assure you, I am extremely concerned for the death of your most excellent wife, as indeed, indeed I think she has left few equals behind her.—"Take her "all in all, I shall never see her like again *."—But, my dear friend, you must not give way to excessive sorrow.—All proper allowances I tenderly do and ought to make, as such will be made both by God and man; but yet our sorrows must not be immoderate, or inconsistent with the will of God, and resignation to his providence.—Give me leave to present you with, and recommend to you, on this melancholy occasion, a repeated perusal of Dr *Grosvenor*'s *Mourner*, or *the Afflicted relieved*.—'Tis a most valuable gem; and as 'tis wrote in numbers like the *Spectators*, it will not weary your attention. I am sure you stand in need of the consolations and helps there suggested. I am never without some of these little books to give away to my acquaintance under affliction, especially for the loss of dear relations or valuable friends. I think it, for these purposes, one of the most judicious and universally useful books extant; and it well deserves to be translated into the language of every nation where Christianity is professed.

Don't you often recollect, in this season of distress, the discourse, the prayers, the amiable, the rejoicing, and the heavenly spirit of our dear friend, who was with us last month? Blessed be God for making him such a lovely example, and such a zealous promoter of pure and undefiled religion.——Blessed be God for promising us the same divine Spirit; and giving us the same glorious hopes, which have had such a quickening and ennobling influence on his heart.——The rich goodness of the Lord exercised to others, should encourage our expectations, should strengthen our faith.—Let it then, let it be so.—Adieu! my dear friend!—I will come to you again very soon.——In the mean time I shall not cease to pray for you; as I am, with great compassion and great esteem, most tenderly, most sincerely yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

* *Shakespear's Hamlet.*

LETTER XLIX.

My dear friend, *Weston-Favell, Jan. 12, 1748.*

LOath to make your servant stay, and loath to trespass too much upon the patience of our family, who wait for me, I write in the utmost hurry.——After so great an opinion as that of the judicious Dr * * *, I hardly dare venture to deliver my sentiments; yet I must confess myself strongly inclined to prefer your intended motto.

Is it a vulgarism? Rather the simplicity of the gospel, accommodated to the lowest capacity, suited to strike ordinary readers; who are the persons most likely to be impressed. Or, if it is a vulgarism, let this be for the illiterate, the poetry for the polite.

Is it Puritanical? Be not ashamed of the name. They (the Puritans) were the soundest preachers, and I believe the truest followers of Jesus Christ. If such an imputation is a bugbear, we shall not act like gallant soldiers of Christ. Is it not the most important truth in the whole book of God? the surest, easiest, most compendious means of overcoming the dread of death? If so,—I need not make the conclusion.

Will censure ensue? Dear Sir, dread it not. Be bold for once to despise ridicule; or rather, if it must needs fall upon you, to glory in this;—*Dedecus haud indecorum.*

Pardon my freedom. Only just think on my reasons. Reject them, and welcome. I shall be glad to be overruled for the better.

Yours, &c.

LETTER L.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, Feb. 4, 1748.*

I Sincerely thank you for taking the trouble of correcting my marks for Italics.——I am glad you did not erase Mrs S——'s name. I assure you, Doctor, I shall always esteem it a real honour to be reckoned in the number of your friends; and shall look upon it, as one of the satisfactions accruing from my book, that it tells it, in so pertinent a manner, to the world; tho', with regard to your truly-amiable deceased lady, I fear, it will be an instance of the arrogance of my heart, and a reproach upon the impotence of my pen, or else I would say,

——*Si quid mea scriptula possunt,*
Nulla dies unquam memori illam eximet ævo.

Yours, &c.

LETTER LI.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, March, 1748.*

I Am very much obliged for the present of your franks; they could never be more wanted, or more welcome.——If you have not so much as your with, to relieve the necessities of the poor, distribute from my stock. I am cloystered up in my chamber, and unacquainted with the distresses of my brethren. Lend me therefore

therefore, your eye to discover proper objects, and your hand, to deal about my little fund for charity. Do not forbid me to send a guinea, in my next, for this purpose; do not deny me the pleasure of becoming, thro' your means, an instrument of some little comfort to my afflicted fellow-creatures; and (what is a far more endearing consideration) to the friends, the brethren, the members of him who died for my sins. If you have any other friend, to whose taste it may be agreeable, and in whose hands useful, I will impower you to make the present.——Herewith comes the *Descant* enlarged. I hope, you will be able to read it, and not a little to improve it. Can you engage Dr * * * to run it over? to grant—*postremum hoc munus?*

I must write it over again, so fear not to erase and blot. I have not seen, where or how I can handsomely introduce that fine quotation from Mr *Dyer's Ruins of Rome*; but will still consider it, because you desire it. I am, dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER LII.

April, 1748.

FY upon you, dear Dr * * *.——I had been endeavouring all the day long to fix my admiration on that most exalted, that most amiable Being, who, though possessed of excellencies which the very angels contemplate with rapture and adoration, yet humbled himself to death, the death of the cross, for my friend and me; when your praises, kind indeed, but alas! perniciously kind, fetched my thoughts from their proper element, and proper object, to grovel on a creature, and that the meanest of creatures, self. I could wish myself, on such occasions, like the deaf adder, which stoppeth her ears, and refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so sweetly. Praise is most enchanting music to the human ear; shall I rather say, most delicious poison to the human taste. From strangers, or complimentary correspondents, we must expect a touch upon this string, a sprinkling of this spice. But among friends, bosom-friends, Christian friends, it must not be so.——You and I, dear Sir, will teach one another's heart to rise in wonder, and glow with love, at the consideration of that ever-blessed Sovereign, who is higher than the kings of the earth, higher than the potentates of heaven, and yet lay in darkness and the shadow of death, that he might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life.——Pardon my excursions on this subject.——A letter from my father is enough to cast contempt upon created things. It informs me, that my poor sister is reduced very low; so low, that my father cannot hear her speak. He seems to look upon her life to be in very great danger. May the Father of compassions restore her health; that she may live to the honour of her dying Master, and be a comfort to her afflicted parents!—Glad I am, that my dear friend can relish the writings of that shining and burning light, Mr * * *. Our disesteem of such gospel-doctrines as he teaches, generally arises from ignorance of ourselves. Therefore I heartily join with the *Grecian* sage, in saying, *E cælo descendit γνῶθι σεαυτόν.*

I am affectionately yours, &c.

LETTER LIII.

Dear Sir, Weston-Favell, May 6, 1748.

I Have given directions to my bookseller to present you with the new edition of my *Meditations*; which I desire you to accept, and to look upon as a small but unfeigned expression of my most affectionate esteem. The pleasure of your company I cannot expect often to enjoy; let me, therefore, dear Sir, by means of my little treatise, converse with you now and then, as it were by proxy; with a view of familiarizing to our minds those sublime subjects, which will be the study and the delight of a glorious eternity.

Another set I have sent for Mr * * *; which I beg of you to render acceptable, by presenting. That worthy minister stands entitled to my grateful acknowledgments, for his judicious and excellent letter. How much I was pleased with it, and how free I have made with it, he will see from the motto, prefixed to the *Winter-Piece*. His candid and weighty observations have induced me to alter the exceptionable passage in the book; and will, I hope, incite me to cultivate in my heart that amiable spirit of charity, which hopeth all things.

What I accidentally hinted to Dr * * *, who favoured me with a sight of Mrs * * *'s letter, I never imagined would have been communicated to her, or any person living. Had I suspected any such consequence, I should certainly have with-held my pen, and concealed what I might happen to think. Because I neither relish controversy; nor have strength of mind, or solidity of judgment, sufficient to conduct the procedure of an argument. All my aim, all my desire, is, to quicken in my own heart the seeds of practical faith, and vital holiness. If to this, I might be enabled to cherish the same sacred principles, in the hearts of some of my serious and humble acquaintance, I should wish for no other fruits of my labours.—However, as Mrs * * *'s objections are advanced, and are now before me, it would be a failure of respect to her, and a desertion of my divine Master's honour, if I did not attempt, at least, to satisfy her scruples, and vindicate his conduct. I shall, therefore, with all freedom, but with sincere good-will, transmit my sentiments on every article of her letter.

And first,—with regard to the little assistance which I have contributed, and which Mrs * * * thinks worthy of her acknowledgments; I beg of her to observe, that it is owing, wholly owing, to her adored Redeemer. To him, to him alone, she is obliged (if there be an obligation in the case) for this friendly donation. He has been pleased to command this instance of my gratitude, for his unspeakably-tender mercies to my soul. He has been pleased to declare, that he will look upon such a piece of kindness as done to his own most blessed self. This makes me, this makes all believers, glad to embrace every such occasion, of shewing our thankfulness to our infinitely-condescending, gracious Lord.—The action, which Mrs * * *'s grateful pen calls generous, does not arise, as she expresses it, from any innate nobleness of mind. I remember the time, when this heart was hard as the flint, and these hands tenacious even to avarice. But it is Jesus the quickening spirit, and the lover of souls, who has made your friend to differ from his natural self. If the flinty bowels are melted into compassion, they are melted by a believing consideration of his most precious blood. If the avaricious hands are opened, and made ready to distribute, willing to communicate, they are made so by the free grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore not unto me, not unto me, but unto the great and good Redeemer, are all the returns of gratitude due.

"It is utterly inconsistent," says Mrs ——, "with my way of thinking, that the Son of God should be present at a wedding at all."——But why should it be thought utterly, why in any degree, inconsistent with his dignity or wisdom, to be present at the solemnization of an ordinance, which he himself instituted; instituted in the state of innocency itself; instituted, for promoting the happiness of our nature, and for perpetuating, with regularity and purity, its very existence?——

If

If our Lord opened his commiſſion, and ſhewed his divine credentials at a bridal-feſtivity, it was, in my humble opinion, with a very peculiar propriety. Becauſe it was a ſignificant intimation of the benign and amiable genius of his religion, that he came, not in the auſtere and recluſe ſpirit of the Baptiſt; came not to forbid, but to ſanctify, the lawful and truly valuable comforts of our preſent being.——If Mrs *** pleaſes to conſult the office of matrimony, as it is celebrated by our church, ſhe will find a ſubſtantial reaſon aſſigned, for our Saviour's gracing this ſolemnity with his preſence, and working his firſt miracle on this occaſion. And the more attentively ſhe reads the ſcriptures, ſhe will find, in various places, how the Son of God delights to honour this ſacred inſtitution: ſince he calls himſelf the Bridegroom of true believers; and declares, that he will betroth them to himſelf in righteouſneſs: ſince he ſhadows forth their ſpiritual union with his bleſſed ſelf, by that moſt endearing, moſt indiſſoluble of ties, the nuptial; and figures out the ſatisfaction reſulting from his goſpel, and even the ſublime enjoyments of his heavenly kingdom, by a marriage feaſt. When theſe things are taken into conſideration, I hope, it will appear, that our holy Redeemer acted entirely in character, and conformably to the whole tenor of his revelation, by ennobling, by bleſſing, the matrimonial feſtival with his preſence.

But "ſuch a ſort of feaſt is in general a ſcene of revelling."——It is, I muſt acknowledge, too frequently ſo in our nation, and in our age. But was it alſo a ſcene of revelling, offenſive to modeſty, or contrary to ſobriety, in earlier times, and among the *Jewiſh* people? There ſeems to be a hint in this very narrative, that they were particularly careful to prevent all manner of indecency, or diſſolute indulgence. For this reaſon they appointed a governor of the feaſt; a principal part of whoſe office was, to ſee that no irregularities were committed; but that all was conducted with decorum, as well as œconomy.——Beſides, if ſome of thoſe feſtivities are perverted, will it follow, that all are abuſed? Might not there be ſome ſerious ſet of neighbours, who knew how to be merry after a godly ſort, and fulfil the old *Moſaical* rule of rejoicing before the Lord their God? I myſelf have been preſent at the celebration of a wedding between Chriſtian parties, and among Chriſtian friends, where heavenly converſation, and joyful thankſgiving to the adorable Author of all our comforts, made the chief and the choiceſt part of our entertainment.——And is there not very evident cauſe to ſuppoſe, that the nuptials in queſtion were conſummated between perſons of ſuch a character? The holy Jeſus, his devout mother, and ſerious diſciples, would ſcarcely have been invited, or would hardly have accepted the invitation, if it was an irreligious couple, or a wanton aſſembly of gueſts.

But "in ſuch a mixed multitude, it is hardly ſuppoſable, that all ſhould be ſerious in their diſpoſitions, or innocent in their converſation."——Would not then the preſence of ſo venerable and divine a perſon ſtrike an awe upon the moſt looſe inclination? Could not his eternal power and Godhead control the moſt abandoned temper, and ungovernable tongue? He that intimidated the ſacrilegious rabble, when they profaned the temple, and drove them before his ſingle ſcourge; he that ſtruck proſtrate to the ground a whole band of armed men, only with his word; he who had all hearts in his hand, and could turn them whitherſoever he pleaſed;—he would, doubtleſs, prohibit, at this juncture, whatever might carry the appearance of an immodeſt or intemperate freedom. So that Mrs *** need not queſtion, but that, if any of the company was diſſolutely diſpoſed, the authority of our Lord's character, and much more the agency of his Spirit on their minds, did moſt effectually reſtrain all licentiouſneſs.

"One would think," it is farther obſerved, "he might have improved ſome occurrence or other, to their information and advantage."——That this was not done, is taken for granted; I ſuppoſe, becauſe the evangeliſt does not expreſsly record it. But is this a fair deduction, or a ſatisfactory reaſon? Are there not many mighty works, which Jeſus performed, many edifying conferences which Jeſus held, profeſſedly omitted by the inſpired penman?—Was not our Lord's tongue a fountain of wiſdom, ever flowing; and a well of life, never exhauſted? When did that good Shepherd let ſlip an opportunity of feeding the flock? He went to feaſts, in the ſame ſpirit, and for the ſame purpoſe, as he came into the world; to turn poor mankind from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. The ſun might as well forbear ſhining, as this Sun of righteouſneſs neglect to diffuſe healing rays, and heavenly knowledge all around.——God's great deſign, in ſending his Son into the world, was, that ignorant and ſinful men might be reclaimed from the error of their ways, and be made wiſe unto ſalvation. And our Saviour ſolemnly declares, that he always did the will of him that ſent him. If therefore this declaration be true, and if our Lord's conduct was uniform, we cannot but conclude, that at *Cana*, as well as throughout all *Galilee*, his mouth was exerciſed in wiſdom, and his tongue talking of judgment: that the words, which dropped from his gracious, his inſtructive lips, were much ſweeter than the richeſt dainties which the table yielded; much more reviving than even that generous wine, produced by a miracle, which his divine power, on this diſtinguiſhed occaſion, wrought.——This reminds me of another objection, couched in the following words.

"It is harder yet to reconcile his behaviour when there.——To increaſe the wine, when the gueſts had well drunk, could tend to no other end, than to promote and encourage intemperance."——Perhaps Mrs *** does not ſufficiently attend to the narration of the evangeliſt. I do not find it aſſerted, that theſe gueſts had well drunk. The expreſſion is uſed, but applied to other perſons, and the cuſtom uſual at other ceremonies of this nature. I once was acquainted with a worthy gentleman, who frequently invited to his table the young perſons of his neighbourhood; and would take a pleaſure in cultivating, by his diſcourſe, the principles of ſobriety, induſtry, and piety, in their minds. Now, in caſe he had ſaid, after ſupper was removed, "I know very well, my honeſt neighbours, it is cuſtomary with ſome perſons of fortune, to pleaſe and to pride themſelves in making their viſitants drunk. They puſh the glaſs briſkly round, and preſs one bumper upon another, till they ſend their gueſts ſtaggering to bed." But—now would any one infer, from ſuch a remark on the practice of others, that this was alſo the practice at my friend's houſe? To form any concluſion injurious to the ſobriety of thoſe gueſts, ſeems to be much the ſame illogical and unreaſonable arguing.——But, ſuppoſing the expreſſion applied to the gueſts then preſent; what is its ſignification? The original word ſometimes ſignifies no more than to drink with ſo moderate an indulgence, as innocently to exhilarate the ſpirits. It is uſed concerning *Joſeph*'s brethren, when they were treated in his palace, and had portions ſent from his table, *Gen.* xliii. 34. Now, can any one, who is at all acquainted with the character of that exemplary patriarch, imagine that he would permit his brethren, in his own preſence, to tranſgreſs the rules of temperance? Much leſs can any one, who really believes in Jeſus, and ſeriouſly conſiders the deſign of his coming into the world, allow himſelf to ſuſpect, that he would furniſh freſh wine for thoſe, who (in the obnoxious ſenſe of the world) had well drank already. Could he, who is our ſanctification, the Lord our purifier, adminiſter to our inordinate gratifications?

"Yes," ſays Mrs ***, "becauſe this increaſe of the wine could tend to no other end, than to promote and encourge intemperance."——Mrs *** poſſibly for-

gers, that the *Jewish* feſtivals were prolonged for ſeveral days; that a freſh ſucceſſion of gueſts might be expected; that, very probably, a much greater reſort of company than was provided for, might be occaſioned by our Lord's illuſtrious preſence; that the miraculous ſupply might be intended for their accommodation; or, that it might not be all ſpent on that occaſion, but reſerved for the future accommodation of the married couple *. We read, *John* xxi. that the diſciples took, at one caſt, a vaſt multitude of great fiſhes. But did they eat them all immediately? Then they would have been gluttons indeed. They uſed for themſelves what was neceſſary to ſatisfy their hunger, and ſold the remainder, to procure a livelihood. And why ſhould we not conclude, that the bridegroom alſo, after a chearful, but temperate refreſhment of his viſitants, preſerved the remainder of that fine wine for future exigencies? This I take to be the caſe; and that our divine Maſter, by this means, rewarded him for his hoſpitality to himſelf and his followers. At the ſame time, giving a moſt conſpicuous proof, that, as he and his diſciples were henceforth to have neither ſtore-houſe, nor barn, but to ſubſiſt on the charity of others, none ſhould be loſers by entertaining him and his friends; that every ſuch kindneſs ſhould meet with a full recompence of reward.

"I muſt not omit the rough anſwer which he makes to his mother upon this occaſion; which, I think, ſtands in need of an excuſe, though we find none in the evangeliſt for it."——I do not wonder, that Mrs *** is ſomewhat offended at this expreſſion. She is a lady of refined taſte, and delicate addreſs; and as ſhe is not acquainted with the original language, nor aware how the phraſe ſounded in oriental ears, her remark is not to be looked upon as a cenſorious reflection, but as a proof of the politeneſs of her own ſentiments. However, when ſhe has an opportunity of conſulting the ancient writers, ſhe will find that their language had leſs of compliment, and more of ſincerity, than ours. It was ſo plain and artleſs, that perſons of the beſt breeding have addreſſed ladies of the higheſt quality by this very name; and without intending any ſlight, or giving the leaſt affront.——She may remember, that the eleven brethren, when pleading before the governor of *Egypt*, pleading for their liberties, or even their very lives; when, if ever, their expreſſions would be moſt carefully guarded, and full of the utmoſt reverence, yet uſe this (to modern ears) uncourtly ſtyle, the man; meaning the viceroy himſelf, *Gen.* xliv. 26.——Surely, Mrs *** cannot forget, that our Lord, in his laſt moments, calls his mother by the very ſame appellation. Much leſs can ſhe ſuſpect, that he could be wanting in reſpect and tenderneſs, when his concern for the parent of his fleſh triumphed over the agonies of the croſs.

Perhaps, the ſubſtance of the reply may be thought ſomewhat unkind. I believe, it ſhould be tranſlated, Woman, what haſt thou to do with me? *i. e.* in ſuch inſtances as this; wherein my Deity is concerned, and an interpoſition of my omnipotence is requiſite. I would have thee to know, once for all, that, in affairs of this nature, thou haſt no authority over me, neither does it become thee to direct me.——She was overforward; ſhe took too much upon her; and the anſwer was intended for a plain and ſerious rebuke. Accordingly, the humble mother, like one ſenſible of her miſconduct, acquieſces with ſilent ſubmiſſion; and never offers (throughout the whole courſe of the hiſtory) to interfere in ſuch a manner any more; but leaves it to his wiſdom to determine, both when his divine power ſhould be exerted, and what it ſhould effect.

* Many commentators are of opinion, that the water was not turned into wine in the water-pots, but as it ran into the cup, and the liquor in the water-pots remained water ſtill. If ſo, which interpretation, without the leaſt force, the text will very well bear, the lady's objection will appear to have leſs ſtrength yet.

"I do not know how it happens," ſays Mrs *** "but the more nearly I examine matters of faith, the further I am from aſſenting to them."——Will it be acceptable to my dear friend's ***, or will it be diſguſtful, if I attempt to tell her, how this, in the general, happens? She ſeems to be poſſeſſed of great ingenuity of temper, and equal penetration of mind; therefore I cannot think ſhe will take amiſs, what I only offer to her impartial conſideration, without any application to herſelf.——It happens, becauſe people are unrenewed by the ſanctifying influences of divine grace. This is not my precarious conjecture, but the infallible declaration of the great Searcher of hearts. The carnal man, ſays the wiſdom of heaven, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. This was the caſe with *Nicodemus*. Our Lord's diſcourſe was a riddle, was quite unintelligible to him, becauſe he was not born of the Spirit, had not experienced that ſacred change on his heart.——Sometimes it happens, becauſe perſons are wiſe in their own eyes; depending more upon the ſagacity of their own judgment, than upon the enlightening grace of God. I thank thee, O Father, ſays our bleſſed Redeemer, that whereas thou haſt hid theſe things from (ſuffered them to lie hid, to eſcape the diſcernment of) the wiſe and prudent; thou haſt revealed them unto babes. But who are they that are wiſe in their own conceits? I anſwer, they who ſtudy much, but pray little; who are often at their deſk, but ſeldom on their knees; often exerciſe their minds in contemplations, but ſeldom lift up their hearts in earneſt ſupplications to the Father of lights.——But I muſt not enlarge. I ſhall be unſufferably tedious. I muſt cordially commiſerate Mrs ***'s afflicted condition. I beg of her to be more frequent, more importunate in her devout addreſſes to the gracious God. This is proper, peculiarly proper for her diſtreſſed circumſtances. If any be afflicted, let him pray, is a recipe preſcribed from heaven; but more eſpecially needful, for the unſettled ſtate of her mind. For let me ſay, and let it not be looked upon as an unfriendly ſaying, I cannot but fear, that ſoul is ſadly unſettled, far from being fixed on that Rock of ages, that only Foundation Jeſus Chriſt, who can ſuppoſe the bleſſed Redeemer chargeable with ſuch great indecencies of ſpeech, and ſtill groſſer improprieties of conduct. Can a mind, which admits ſuch unworthy apprehenſions of the great *Immanuel*, rely on him as its all-ſatisfying atonement, its complete righteouſneſs, as the only anchor of its final, eternal hopes?——May the God of all goodneſs reveal his dear Son in her heart, and in mine; that to us it may be given, to know the myſtery of his goſpel; that we may ſee it to be the wiſdom of God, and feel it to be the power of God to our ſalvation. You will, I dare ſay, heartily join your Amen to this important requeſt.——If any freſh difficulties are ſtarted, I beg leave to decline the province of attempting their ſolution; and would remit all future inquiries to the much clearer judgment, and abler pen, of our valuable friend Mr ***.——Dear Sir, pardon my prolixity; pray for my little piece and its author; and aſſure yourſelf of a willing and hearty return of this kindneſs, from

Your truly, &c.

LETTER LIV.

Weſton-Favell, May, 1748.

I Send my dear friend the letter, which by his inſtigation I write. I ſend it this night, that if he diſcerns any thing in it very improper, it may be returned by the bearer, and the needful alterations made.——Methinks,

thinks, it gives a perſon a taſteful ſatisfaction to find favour with judicious and excellent men. What a tranſport of delight muſt it create, to meet with the acceptance of the great Judge, the eternal King, the fountain of all perfection? To be admitted into his immediate preſence;—to be favoured with the brighteſt manifeſtations of his divine attributes;—to love him with all our ſouls, and to be infinitely more beloved by him;—to be conformed to his glorious, his moſt amiable image, and ſo much the more, as ages in an endleſs ſucceſſion roll on ages;—this is life,—this is bleſſedneſs,—this is heaven. And this life is in his Son;—this bleſſedneſs is purchaſed for us ſinners by the obedience of Chriſt;—to this heaven Chriſt is the way,—the door,—the paſſport. O! let us not doubt, but he will make us meet by his Spirit, for the inheritance which he has obtained by his blood.

Ever yours, &c.

LETTER LV.

My very dear Friend, *Weſton-Favell, Aug.* 18, 1748.

I Received your letter, full of tenderneſs, and full of piety, laſt night. The very firſt thing I apply myſelf to, this morning, is to acknowledge your favour, and confeſs my own negligence.——But your affectionate heart will pity, rather than blame me, when I inform you, that a relapſe into the diſorder, of which I was never thoroughly cured, has brought me very low. Inſomuch that I am unable, either to diſcharge the duties of life, or to anſwer the demands of friendſhip. I have not been capable of preaching, for ſeveral *Sundays*. *Pyrmont* water, aſſes milk, and ſuch kind of reſtoratives, I try, but try in vain.——A great while ago, I had begun a very long letter to my ever-eſteemed Mr * * *. In this I propoſed candidly to repreſent the reaſons of my belief, with regard to the final perſeverance of the true believer. But weakneſs of ſpirits, and its never-failing concomitant, imbecillity of thought, obliged me to deſiſt. In the new edition of my *Meditations*, a note is added on this ſubject, declaring, That I am far from maintaining it, as eſſential to Chriſtianity, or neceſſary to ſalvation, &c.——Where I ſay, What infidels are we in fact? my meaning is, that we are all, in ſome meaſure, chargeable with practical infidelity; as we are all in ſome degree carnal, in ſome degree ſinful, while we continue in this mortal body. Conſidering the infinite veracity, and unchangeable faithfulneſs of the bleſſed God, the moſt exalted ſaints have too much cauſe to lament their deficiency in point of faith, and evermore to cry out, Lord, help our unbelief!

An humble, well-grounded aſſurance of our reconciliation to God, is an unſpeakably-precious bleſſing. It is what all ſhould ſeek, and many have attained. A gentleman told me, a few days ago, That though he was often ſolicited to ſin, often defiled with corruption, yet he had no manner of doubt concerning his everlaſting ſalvation, for theſe twenty years. On trying occaſions, that ſeemed to endanger his final happineſs, he fled, I preſume to the fountain opened for ſin and uncleanneſs. He viewed, by faith, the infinite, (O! tranſporting truth!), the infinite ſatisfaction, made by the bleeding Immanuel; and could not but conſide, that a divine expiation was more powerful to ſave, than all paſt ſins or preſent infirmities to deſtroy. This is the white ſtone, of which *Job* was happily poſſeſſed; I know that my Redeemer liveth; and this ſweet confidence ſupported him under all his tribulations. This is that earneſt of the Spirit in our hearts, of which St *Paul* makes mention, and with which he was endued: We know, that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle be diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And, in the full aſſurance of this bleſſed hope, may you, my dear friend, be every day more and more eſtabliſhed, ſtrengthened, ſettled!

If, at any time, I am favoured with this heavenly gift, it is derived from ſuch comfortable ſcriptures: The Son of the Moſt High came unto the world, to ſave ſinners: He died, the juſt for the unjuſt: He poured out his ſoul for tranſgreſſors. And ſince you and I know ourſelves to be ſinners, unjuſt, tranſgreſſors, why ſhould we not take to ourſelves the comfort here offered for our acceptance? why ſhould we not make uſe of the privilege, here conſigned over to our enjoyment, and claim the legacy, in theſe clauſes of our dying Maſter's teſtament, moſt evidently bequeathed to our ſouls? To found our expectations on this bottom, will be a means both of humbling and exalting us; of filling us with ſhame, and filling us with hope; that we may abhor ourſelves, and yet rejoice in God our Saviour.—— Many build their hopes upon their religious duties, and righteous deeds; ſuch a building muſt unavoidably be ſhaken by every temptation, and ſapped by every working of corruption. Theſe are, in no wiſe, the foundation, but evidences rather that we are fixed on it. For my part, when I can exerciſe a grace, or perform a duty, that is debaſed by no imperfection, mingled with no corruption, then I will truſt on ſelf-righteouſneſs. But till then, I muſt be very unreaſonable, if I do not rely on my illuſtrious Surety; fly to the ark of his wounds, and make mention of his righteouſneſs only. This is all-ſufficient; and never, never faileth thoſe that truſt in it.

You are not ignorant of my ſentiments, with regard to our diſſenting brethren. Are we not all devoted to the ſame ſupreme Lord? Do we not all rely on the merits of the ſame glorious Redeemer? By profeſſing the ſame faith, the ſame doctrine which is according to godlineſs, we are incorporated into the ſame myſtical body. And how ſtrange, how unnatural would it be, if the head ſhould be averſe to the breaſt, or the hands inveterately prejudiced againſt the feet, only becauſe the one is habited ſomewhat differently from the other: Though I am ſteady in my attachment to the eſtabliſhed church, I would have a right hand of fellowſhip, and a heart of love, ever ready, ever open, for all the upright evangelical diſſenters.—I thank you for the news you ſent; it is impoſſible for me to pay in kind.—— Make my moſt reſpectful compliments acceptable to worthy Mr * * *. I had agreed to wait upon him, when I was in town; but my brother's illneſs growing worſe, and ſoon proving fatal, deprived me of this pleaſure, and ſent me home to attend his corpſe with ſorrow to the grave.—I hope, you will be pleaſed with Archbiſhop *Leighton*'s works; and I heartily pray, that they may be abundantly bleſſed to both our ſouls.——I ſincerely commiſerate poor Miſs *D* * *'s* caſe. Deſpair is indeed a fiery dart of the devil; but, bleſſed be ſovereign goodneſs, there is a remedy againſt this malady. The *Iſraelites*, though wounded by the deadly ſerpents, looked to the brazen type hung upon the pole, and found a certain cure. And though we are ſtung by a ſenſe of guilt, and almoſt periſhing in extreme deſpondency; yet let us turn our eye to him, who was lifted up on the croſs, and we ſhall be whole. He, who was gaſhed with wounds, and covered with blood; was pierced with irons, and ſtabbed to the heart; he is our medicine, our recovery, our life. By his ſtripes we are healed. O! let us look unto him,—from the depths of diſtreſs, as well as from the ends of the earth, look unto him, and be ſaved.—My paper admoniſhes me to have done; but I cannot conclude, without aſſuring you, that I love you moſt affectionately;—ſo long as life and underſtanding laſt, ſhall pray for you among my chiefeſt friends;—and hope, when this tranſitory ſcene of

of things is at an end, to be, in bonds of nobler friendſhip, and tenderer endearment,

Ever, ever, yours, &c.

LETTER LVI.

Weſton-Favell, June 3, 1749.

SO, my dear Sir, the phyſicians upon the whole have given your friend no great hopes of a cure.——The apothecary's ſhop, the aſſes dugs, and the mineral waters may, they apprehend, palliate the diſorder; but that even a palliation, it ſeems, is not to be expected, without keeping the mind quiet and chearful;—and that this important end may moſt effectually be anſwered, the doctors have recommended diverſions, travelling, and company; giving a caution at the ſame time, I am told, againſt retirement, ſo much praying, and poring over religious books.

Now, if chearfulneſs be the grand, the fundamental, the only recipe adequate even to the mitigation of this diſeaſe, I may venture to aſſert, that ſuch recipe is to be found—(poſſibly what I declare may be wondered at); but I aver it is to be found in the Bible.——It may be ſeen wrote at length, and it well deſerves conſideration, in *Prov.* xvii. 22. *A merry heart doth good like a medicine: but a broken ſpirit drieth the bones.*

That a ſatisfied, a ſerene, and chearful ſtate of mind, will in this caſe be more beneficial than all manner of reſtoratives for decayed nature, or cordials for the ſinking ſpirits, I can eaſily believe; nay, I am farther convinced, that whatever can be contrived by the moſt ſolicitous care of the phyſicians, will probably be rendered ineffectual, without this prime preparative, this moſt ſovereign preſcript.——It is indiſpenſably neceſſary, that all poſſible endeavours ſhould be exerted to have the thoughts calm, placid, and eaſy.———Every thing muſt be ſacrificed to this moſt deſirable end.—Nothing can be more pernicious, in ſuch circumſtances, than the contrary ſituation of mind.——But here will ariſe a queſtion, How this inward tranquillity may moſt eaſily be attained, and moſt ſurely eſtabliſhed? By company, by travelling, by diverſions, the doctors and ſome others will reply.———I am far, very far from being an enemy to diverſions, when properly choſe, and uſed with moderation. Travelling may beguile the ſenſe of woe, and palliate for a while the malady. Company, when chearful and improving, is an excellent ſource of comfort: when innocent only and entertaining, is of ſome preſent ſervice, and ought to be allowed (at intervals) admittance. But theſe will no more reach the caſe now under conſideration,—are no more able to create a ſettled tranquillity in the breaſt, than the gentle motions of a fan are ſufficient to impel a wind-bound fleet. If they ingroſs our time, and leave no leiſure for nobler methods of conſolation, they will certainly prove like heavy, louring clouds, and, inſtead of diffuſing, will intercept the rays of heart-felt ſatisfaction. But what, may it be aſked, would I ſubſtitute inſtead of theſe expedients?—I would beg leave (unpolite as it may ſeem, and in a manner exploded) to recommend prayer to God, and the daily reading of the ſcriptures. If kind and friendly converſation be judged proper, why ſhould prayer be diſapproved?—Prayer is an humble, but delightful intercourſe, with the beſt, the greateſt, the everlaſting friend.—And has any earthly friend exerciſed more loving-kindneſs? is any earthly friend more able to adminiſter relief, than the bleſſed God? If there be ſuch friends, let them be our whole dependance, and let omnipotent goodneſs be ſecluded from any regard.

God has ſo loved us, that he gave his own Son, dearer to himſelf than all angels, and all worlds, to die for our ſalvation. Rather than we ſhould periſh for ever, he ſent his infinitely-glorious Son to take upon him our nature, and ſuffer the unknown agonies of crucifixion,——To ſhew his readineſs to ſuccour us in any diſtreſs he ſtyles himſelf the Father of mercies, and God (not of ſome, but) of all comfort, (2 *Cor.* i. 3.)——And where is the perſon, from whom we may more reaſonably expect to receive tender and compaſſionate ſuccours, than from this all-gracious God?——Is he not as powerful as he is gracious?—What *Job* ſaid of his companions is, in a degree, true of every human aid: Impotent and miſerable comforters are ye all.—But the God of heaven is able to give ſongs in the night of diſtreſs; to make the bones, that ſorrow and anguiſh have broken, to rejoice. If he ſpeak peace, who ſhall cauſe diſquietude, or what ſhall deſtroy our tranquillity?—Indeed if we apply for comfort to any thing lower than heaven, or by any ſuch means as exclude frequent prayer, we neglect the fountain of living waters, and hew to ourſelves ciſterns, broken ciſterns, that can hold no water. The ſcriptures (and believe me, as I ſpeak from daily experience) are a treaſury of comfort.—One who had drank deep of the cup of ſorrow declares, that they rejoice the heart;—and that for his own part, if his delight had not been in the divine law, he ſhould have periſhed in his trouble, (ſee Bible, *Pſal.* cxix. 92.)——Theſe things, ſays the favourite diſciple, write we unto you, (not barely that you may have joy, but) that your joy may be full, (*John* xv. 11.)——And St *Paul* adds, that whatever things are written by the Spirit of inſpiration, are written for our benefit; that we, through patience and comfort of the ſcriptures, might have hope, (*Rom.* xv. 4.), that bleſſed hope of eternal life, which is an anchor to the ſoul, in all the ſtorms of adverſity; which is the oil of gladneſs, ſwimming above all the waves of affliction.—By having recourſe to diverſions and amuſements, in preference to the ſtrong conſolations ſuggeſted in the Bible, we act as injudiciouſly, we ſhall be deceived as certainly, as if, amidſt the ſultry heats of ſummer, we ſhould ſeek cooling refreſhment from a painted tree, and ſhun the embowering ſhady covert of a real grove.

If we are afflicted, the ſcriptures acquaint us, that our afflictions are the chaſtiſements of a father, not the ſcourges of an enemy. They give us aſſurance, that the all-diſpoſing providence will not ſuffer us to be afflicted, above what we are able to bear, (ſee 1 *Cor.* x. 13.)———That they ſhall turn to our good, and bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs;—that they are light; are only for a moment, and yet ſhall work out for us a weight, an eternal weight of glory.——Can all the volumes of Heathen morality ſuggeſt, or all the recreations in the world afford, ſuch rational and ſolid conſolation?——Without theſe conſolations, afflictions will be like a latent ſore, ſmarting and rankling in the heart;—will produce diſcontent with our condition, and repining at providence;—a melancholy temper, and a fretful carriage.———Trifling company, and worldly pleaſures, will ſerve only to aggravate the miſery, and make us inwardly mourn, that while others are in the elevations of mirth, we are preſſed with a weight of calamity.——— Whereas, by means of theſe ſovereign conſolations, afflictions may be improved to the health of the mind, and become a moſt ſalutary expedient for furthering our ſpiritual happineſs.

Can any thing be more (or equally comfortable) than the privileges recorded in that charter of our ſalvation, the ſcriptures?——There we are told, that as many as truly believe in Jeſus Chriſt, are children of the Almighty;—that the Lord who commandeth the waters, the glorious God who maketh the thunder, the everlaſting King, who ruleth all things in heaven and earth, is their Father: he pities them as a father pities his own children, (*Pſal.* ciii. 13.)——and that a mother may ſooner forget her ſucking child, than he can remit his tender care, for their preſent welfare and endleſs felicity, (*Iſ.* xlix. 15.)——That, becauſe we are ſinners,

Chriſt

Chriſt Jeſus, with infinitely more than parental tenderneſs, bore our ſins, and expiated all our guilt, in his own bleeding body upon the tree, (1 *Pet.* ii. 24.)——Becauſe we frequently offend, and always fail, our merciful High Prieſt ever liveth to make interceſſion for us, and to plead his divine merits in our behalf, (*Heb.* vii. 25.)——Becauſe we have many corruptions within, and are aſſaulted by various temptations without, we have a promiſe of the bleſſed Spirit to ſubdue our corruptions, (*Gal.* iii. 14. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 27.) and renew us after the image of him who created us, (*Col.* iii. 10.)——Becauſe we are liable to manifold misfortunes, and viſited with a variety of ſorrows, the ſame Holy Spirit is promiſed, under the amiable character of a comforter, (*John* xv. 7. *Luke* xi. 13.)——Becauſe all fleſh is graſs, and all the godlineſs thereof (the youth, the beauty, the wealth, all mortal accompliſhments, and every worldly enjoyment) is withering, and tranſient as the flower of the field, *Iſ.* xl. 6. the ſcriptures direct our view, and conſign over to our faith, a moſt incomparable, reverſionary inheritance; an inheritance reſerved in heaven for us, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, (1 *Pet.* i. 4.)

Are theſe things, I would aſk the phyſicians, likely to deject the mind, or oppreſs it with heavineſs?——Need their patients fear an aggravation of diſtreſſes from the offer, from the enjoyment of ſuch bleſſings?——Much more reaſonably might the bleeding wound fly from the lenient hand, dread the healing balm, and court its cure from the viper's envenomed tooth.——Have theſe truths a tendency to engender gloomy apprehenſions, as the medical gentlemen are too apt to imagine, or do theſe increaſe the load which galls an afflicted mind?——Rather, what heart (that attends to, and believes ſuch glad tidings) can forbear even leaping for joy? Theſe are calculated to put off our ſackcloth, and gird us with gladneſs; are enough to turn the groans of grief, into the ſongs of gratitude.

Cheared by theſe reviving conſiderations, ſupported by this bleſſed hope, the ancient Chriſtians were more than conquerors over all their calamities; they even gloried in tribulations, becauſe theſe were the appointed way to the kingdom of heaven, *Acts* xiv. 22. They took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, knowing, that they had, in the world above, a better and more enduring ſubſtance, *Heb.* x. 34.—They perceived with complacency, the decay of their earthly tabernacle; becauſe there remained for them, after their diſſolution, a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, 2 *Cor.* v. 1.——Perhaps we may not arrive at ſuch heights of heroic and triumphant exultation; but ſurely we ſhould try thoſe remedies, which in their caſe were ſo ſurpriſingly and happily ſucceſsful.

Upon the whole; a peaceful compoſure of mind, and calm reſignation to the all-wiſe will of God;—a holy joy in the merits of our ever-bleſſed Redeemer, and a well-grounded hope of unutterable and immortal bliſs, in a better world; theſe, theſe are more abſolutely needful for a caſe like this, and will do more towards relief, than all the drugs that nature produces.——And very ſure I am, that theſe noble anodynes are diſpenſed no where but in the ſcriptures; are to be procured no otherwiſe than by prayer.——Other methods may ſtupefy for a moment, but will not remove the pain, much leſs introduce permanent eaſe.

I ſpeak not this from mere ſpeculation, or conjectural probability.——I have myſelf experienced the efficacy of the preceding expedients for theſe deſirable purpoſes.—Having been a ſort of *veteran* in affliction, I have been under a neceſſity of applying theſe conſolations; and have the utmoſt reaſon to bear witneſs, that there are none like them.——The ſcriptures are the treaſury of joy and peace, and the truly religious are generally the moſt uniformly chearful.

If you apprehend what I have here advanced on the means of obtaining true chearfulneſs and ſolid peace of mind, may be in any meaſure inſtrumental to the comfort of your friend, you would do well perhaps to communicate it, as I preſume you are not aſhamed of appearing in the recommendation of the Bible.——The phyſicians would probably ſneer at ſuch ſort of advice, but the arguments will not be the leſs valid on that account;—and if their patient be ſeriouſly diſpoſed, ſuch ſneers would have little or no effect.

Do you recollect Dr *Young*'s lines * in the eighth night?

——*Wouldſt thou not laugh,*
This counſel ſtrange, ſhould I preſume to give?
Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay.
There truths abound of ſov'reign aid to peace.
But theſe thou think'ſt are gloomy paths to joy:
Falſe joys indeed are born from want of thought;
True joy from thought's full bent and energy:
And this demands a mind in equal poiſe,
Remote from gloomy grief, and glaring joy.
Much joy not only ſpeaks ſmall happineſs;
But happineſs, that ſhortly muſt expire.
Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, ſtand?
Can ſuch a joy meet accidents unſhock'd?
Or talk with threat'ning death, and not turn pale?

Though my letter is much longer than I at firſt intended, and ſtands in need of an apology for its prolixity, I cannot conclude without giving you a freſh aſſurance, that amongſt the great number of thoſe who eſteem and reſpect you, there is not one of them who more ſincerely regards you than, good Sir,

Your moſt obedient, and
very humble ſervant,
JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LVII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, July* 23, 1749.

THE favour you have done me, in preſenting me with Mr *Moſes Browne*'s works, was far from my expectation. Pleaſe to accept my beſt thanks for the gift, which, I dare ſay, will, in the peruſal, prove perfectly agreeable, and not a little uſeful.

I hope the divine Providence will give his *Sunday-Thoughts* an extenſive ſpread, and make them an inſtrument of diffuſing the ſavour of true religion. Seldom, if ever, have I ſeen a treatiſe, that preſents the reader with ſo full, yet conciſe a view; ſo agreeable, yet ſtriking a picture of true Chriſtianity in its moſt important articles, and moſt diſtinguiſhing peculiarities. Though I am utterly unacquainted with the author, I aſſure myſelf he is no novice in the ſacred ſchool, and has more than a ſpeculative knowledge of the goſpel; every page diſcovers traces of an excellent heart, that has itſelf experienced what the muſe ſings.——I am, *&c.*

LETTER LVIII.

Weſton-Favell, July 29, 1749.

THANKS to my dear friend, for his welcome letter. It imparted joy to my heart; and having com-

* See Letter CLX.

municated pleasure to our family, is gone (part of it I mean) to make glad your children and your friends at *Northampton*.——I must confess, I never was so much disheartend at your disorder, as many others were, even though the physicians themselves had given you over; and though I have been often accosted by some of your cordial wellwishers, with such saddening addresses; "I "am sorry, Sir, to hear that Dr *S*—— is gone to *Bristol*, "without any likelihood of returning alive."——I really believe, that God has some signal work for you to do. He that has snatched the brand from the fire, and made it a polished shaft in his quiver, will not, I persuade myself, so soon cast it away, or break it to pieces. I have a strong presage, that almighty goodness will continue you, as an instrument to glorify his Son Jesus Christ, and to turn many to righteousness, years and years after I am gone hence, and seen no more.——And I bless, together with you, his holy name, for confirming so far my apprehensions, as to begin the work of your recovery from so deplorable an illness.——May he do in this case, as he will in the more important affair of our eternal salvation, thoroughly accomplish what he has graciously begun!

Your family is in prosperity: your olive-plants thrive, and are glossy with health. I asked *Sally*, Where her papa was, and how he did? and her pretty little lips lisped, Very bad, and gone to *Bristol*. Think, my friend, when you remember those sweet and engaging children, —think on that delightful promise in scripture; Can a mother forget her sucking child? yea, she may forget, yet will not I forget thee, *Is.* xlix. 15.

From my heart I pity your sufferings: but if I pity your distress, with what infinitely more tender compassion are you regarded by your heavenly Father! by him, who said in the multitude of his mercies,—"My "Son shall bleed; that you may be healed. My only "Son shall die, that you may live for evermore. May "this blood, thus shed for you, preserve your body and "soul to everlasting life."——I hope, you will be enabled to cast your burden upon the Lord, and resign yourself wholly to his wise disposal; and, doubtless, you will experience to your comfort, that he has the bowels of a Father to commiserate, and the arm of Omnipotence to succour.

A passage in the epistle to the *Colossians*, which I read this very day, (*viz.* chap. i. ver. 11.) is extremely pertinent to your case, and what I shall frequently pray, may be fulfilled to your great consolation:—That you may be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience, and long-suffering, with joyfulness.——If you should live to give me an hour's conversation, this verse, and the preceding, would furnish us with a most pleasing and improving subject of discourse. The conciseness, the propriety, the energy of the inspired supplications, is admirable. But I must wave such remarks, lest I send you a preachment, instead of an epistle.

I heard you condemned the other day, in a large company, and indeed treated with a malignant severity, about an affair, in which, to my certain knowledge, you had acted with great generosity. I explained, to the confusion of the relator, all those circumstances, which he had so grossly misrepresented; and then I quoted the remark of Mr *Richardson*, in his *Clarissa*, viz. "That difficult situations (like yours) make seeming oc-"casions of censure unavoidable; and that where the "reputation of another (especially of a man of charac-"ter) is concerned, we should never be in haste to cen-"sure, or to judge peremptorily on first surmises." *Audi alteram partem*, is always my rule. It is our duty to use circumspection; and to be upon our guard, to cut off occasion from those, who seek occasion to misrepresent and injure us: after this precaution, we should not be too solicitous about the clamours of the malevolent; and the unthinking.——May the God of wisdom give us that prudence, which is profitable to direct! And then

Consela meæ recti famæ mendacia ridet.

This was the Heathens cure for the wounds of defamation; this their armour against those keenest of arrows, bitter words. But see in this, as well as in every other instance, the noble superiority of the Christian scheme! Being defamed, we bless, says the apostle. Pray for them that despitefully use you, says his divine Master. This not only baffles, but more than triumphs over the efforts of malice; and brings an increase of virtue, consequently of happiness, even from the poison of malignity, and the gall of misery.

The Bishop has been at *Northampton*, and his charge turned upon the study of the scriptures; which he affectionately recommended, and forcibly urged. There was something omitted, which I could not but wish had been represented, and enforced; however, in the main, it was excellent, and what I should rejoice to have reduced to universal practice. Our dear friend, Mr ***, spied the defect I hint at; and when his mealy-mouthed companion would not indeed have concealed it, but rather have enlarged upon what was valuable,—— "Truly," says he, "I do not see, why we should not "speak boldly; and bear our testimony, though it "make the ears of the hearers to tingle." He is cut out for a champion in the cause of our blessed Lord; very sensible, and much of the gentleman; bold too as a lion, he breathes defiance against the world and hell. Confiding in his almighty Master, he fears neither the scourge of the tongue, nor the pomp of power.

Please to present my affectionate compliments to Mr *C**** and to Mr *G****. I need not solicit a place in their or your daily intercessions, because I am persuaded neither of you can with-hold so needful a piece of charity. Accept my best wishes, to which I join my earnest prayers, for your health, your comfort and happiness; and believe me, as I am, my dear Doctor,

Your truly affectionate friend,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LIX.

Weston-Favell, Aug. 30, 1749.

WE have seen marvellous things to-day, said the people of old; and I may truly say, I have read marvellous tidings this evening. What! is *** become a serious and zealous preacher? He that so often filled the scorner's chair, is he transformed into a strenuous advocate for the gospel, and a devoted champion of Christ? Never, surely, was the prophet's exclamation more seasonable, Grace! grace! *Zech.* iv. 7. How sovereign its power! how superabundant its riches!

I heartily congratulate you, my dear friend, my very dear brother, I must call you now, on this change. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, that he hath counted you faithful, putting you into the ministry.—I think the hand of Providence, in conducting this affair, is very visible, and much to be regarded. Which must give you no small satisfaction, and tend to work, not the spirit of fear, but of love, and of faith, and of a sound mind.

How honourable is your new office! to be an envoy from the King of heaven!—How delightful your province! to be continually conversant in the glorious truths of the gospel, and the unsearchable riches of Christ!——How truly gainful your business! to win souls;

souls; this is indeed——an everlasting possession.——And how illustrious the reward, promised to your faithful service! When the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away.

May we clearly discern, and never forget, what a Master we serve!—so glorious, that all the angels of light adore him:—so gracious, that he spilt his blood, even for his enemies:—so mighty, that he has all power in heaven and on earth:—so faithful, that heaven and earth may pass away, much sooner than one jot or tittle of his word fail. And what is his word, what his engagement to his ministers? LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS. I write it in capitals, because I wish it may be written in our hearts.——Go forth, my dear friend, in the strength of this word; and, verily, you shall not be confounded. Plead with your great Lord, plead for the accomplishment of this word, and the gospel shall prosper in your hand. In every exercise of your ministerial duty, act an humble faith on this wonderful word, and the heart of stone shall feel, the powers of hell fall.—Would to God I had health and strength, I would earnestly pray for grace, that I might join, vigorously join, in this good warfare. But you know, I am like a bleeding, disabled soldier, and only not slain. I hope, however, I shall rejoice to see my comrades routing the foe, and reaping their laurels; rejoice to see them go on, conquering and to conquer; though no longer able to share, either in the toils or the triumphs of the day.

I believe, it will be no very easy matter to procure a curate, such as you will like; at least, no such offers to my observation.——I heartily wish your valuable friend Mr ***, that faith in the all-atoning blood of the Lamb, and that comfort in the communications of his Spirit, which may sweetly outbalance the weight of any sorrow, and enable him to rejoice in tribulation!

Remember, now you are a minister of God, that your tongue is to be a well of life: you are to believe in Christ, daily to cherish your faith in Jesus, that out of your heart may flow rivers of living waters; such tides of heavenly and healing truths, as may refresh the fainting soul, and animate its feeble graces.

Please to present my affectionate compliments to Mr *C*——, and Mr *S*——; engage their prayers to the Father of compassions in my behalf; and when you yourself draw near to the throne, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, fail not to remember,

Dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

Yours unalterably,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LX.

My dear Friend, *Weston-Favell, Sat. evening.*

THIS morning I received your parcel, with a ticket full of the affection of your heart, and sprightliness of your temper.—My health languishes, but it is a singular mercy that it is not tortured away by racking pains.——I would do any thing to repair my constitution, and prolong my life; that, if it should please the divine Providence to renew my strength, I might devote it wholly to his service, and be less unprofitable in my generation. But from what I feel, and yet cannot describe, I have no expectation of this kind.

I am highly delighted with *Witsius de Oeconomia Fœderum*; he is an author exactly suited to my taste; so perspicuous, so elegant, so orthodox.—I wish such a treasure had fallen into my hands, when I studied at the university.

I like Mr ***'s spirit, only wish it was a little more evangelical. Let us so act our parts, as, *&c.* Might not *Tully* have said the same? has not *Seneca* said as much? Why should not Christ Jesus be the foundation of our hopes? Is it less rational, less comfortable, to say with St *Paul*, He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

I heartily pity our *Staffordshire* friend.——Chear him, speak comfortably to him, let not the consideration of his circumstances increase the depression of his spirits. We will never abandon him, nor suffer him to want so long as we have any thing ourselves.——I said, we will not abandon:—But how poor and cold the consolation, arising from this succour! What are we? impotence, misery, sin! I believe he loves the Lord Jesus, flies for refuge to the hope set before him *, in the everlasting righteousness, and perfect atonement of Christ. He may, therefore, boldly say, and apply to himself those glorious promises: I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me †. Present my tender and affectionate compliments to him.

I am glad you have invited to your house, that eminent friend of God,—and dear friend of yours, the Rev. Mr ***, (for such I know he is.) In so doing, you certainly act the [illegible], and I cannot but think the [illegible], even in the judgment of the world.——Thus doing, you are in the fashion; for it is a reigning maxim at court, (the court of the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords), "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers."——And can there be a more worthy stranger? "Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."—You know who it is that says of his faithful ministers, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me." Gracious and adored Redeemer! shall we not receive thee into our houses, who, for our sakes, hadst not where to lay thy blessed head! wast an exile in *Egypt*, a prisoner at the bar; a corpse in the grave!—Pray for me, dear friend, that I may bow my poor head in dutiful resignation to the divine will; that I may bless the hand, and kiss the rod that chastises; and love the Lord who takes away the strength of my body, but has given me the blood of his Son. I beseech Mr *** to unite his supplication with yours; for I am fearful, lest I should disgrace the gospel in my languishing moments.

Upon a repeated review of the hints you have wrote to promote the cause of religion, I do not see how to improve them; only exercise your talent; stir up the gift of God by a zealous use, and you yourself will be the best improver of such hints. O! let us work while the day lasts; the Judge is at the door, and eternity at hand. May we watch and pray always, that we may be found worthy to stand before the Son of man at his coming.

I am ever,

and most affectionately yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXI.

My dear Friend,

I Am quite ashamed to be found so dilatory in acknowledging your welcome letter; made doubly valuable,

* Heb. vi. 18. † Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

by

by bringing with it the judicious obſervation of Mr ***.——Your late favour has himted a conſideration, which will always paſs for ſome excuſe with my compaſſionate friends; and which, ſo long as this earthly tabernacle is upheld from falling into the duſt, I ſhall always have to alledge: I mean, a very languid and diſordered ſtate of body. And as I number you amongſt my truly compaſſionate friends, I look upon myſelf to be acquitted, as ſoon as arraigned.

I entirely agree with Mr ***, in his remarks on my Lord Biſhop's well-meant and pathetic letter. It is pity, and it is ſtrange, that in an earneſt exhortation to repentance, no regard ſhould be had to Chriſt Jeſus. Is it not his gift to impotent ſinners, who is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remiſſion of ſins?—Is not his precious but bitter paſſion, the exciting cauſe of evangelical repentance; according to the teſtimony of the prophet, They ſhall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn?—and can our poor imperfect repentance find favour in the ſight of the Lord, unleſs it be accepted in the Beloved?

I am as much pleaſed with that ingenious writer's obſervations on my own little volumes. Let the righteous ſmite me friendly, and reprove me. With thankfulneſs I ſhall receive, with readineſs ſubmit to correction.——I am very far from thinking Mr *** a ſour critic. On the contrary, I admire his candour, in tranſmitting the miſtakes to the author himſelf, and not trumpeting them abroad to the diſcredit of the work. I have ſo high an opinion of his judgment, that if the Father of lights ſhould enable me to finiſh the ſmall piece I am attempting, I ſhould be extremely glad to have every ſheet paſs under the correction of ſo wiſe and penetrating an obſerver.

To call *Siſera*'s mother a *Midianitiſh* lady, is a moſt undoubted and palpable blunder. If the divine providence pleaſes to give another edition to the book, it ſhall certainly be altered.

As to the frontiſpiece, there was great doubt, whether I ſhould have any at all. It was firſt drawn with a direct crucifix, ſuch as is repreſented in the *Romiſh* churches, and almoſt idolized, I fear, by the Chriſtians of that communion. For this reaſon, the decoration, though ſketched out by my very obliging draughtſman, was wholly omitted in the ſecond edition. Then it was ſuggeſted, that a piece of machinery might ſucceed; be equally expreſſive, and yet unexceptionable; which is the import of the preſent figure; our Lord, not pourtrayed in the window, nor exhibited in imagery, but riſing from the ſpot, or miraculouſly appearing in the place.

With regard to my calling thoſe perſons, who took up arms againſt King *Charles* I. rebels; you know it is the avowed tenet of the church of *England*, and the declared ſenſe of our legiſlators. If I was to alter that expreſſion, eſpecially ſince it has ſtood ſo long, it might probably diſguſt readers, who are in a contrary way of thinking; at leaſt it would give occaſion for ſpeculation, and ſtir up the embers of mutual animoſity, which, I hope, are now ſleeping, and upon the point of being extinguiſhed. For my part, I look upon King *Charles* as one of the beſt men, that ever filled a throne; and eſteem the Puritans as ſome of the moſt zealous Chriſtians, that ever appeared in our land. Inſtead of enveighing againſt either, I would lament the misfortune of both; that, through ſome deplorable miſmanagement, they knew one another no better, and valued one another no more. Otherwiſe, how happy might they have been? they, in ſo devout a ſovereign; he, in ſuch conſcientious ſubjects.

Waſhing away ſins by baptiſm, is a ſcriptural expreſſion: "And now," ſays *Ananias* to the converted perſecutor, "why tarrieſt thou? Ariſe, and be baptized, and waſh away thy ſins." Where, I ſuppoſe, waſhing with water, which is the ſign, is put for the application of the Lamb's blood, which is the bleſſing ſigned.—— This, I apprehend, extends to native impurity, as well as committed iniquity, ſince they both render us children of wrath. Not that it implies an extirpation of original corruption, but refers to its condemning power; which is done away, when the atoning merits of Chriſt's death are applied and ſealed to the ſoul.——Upon the whole, I think the expreſſion juſtifiable. Yet, if Mr ***'s remonſtrance had come ſooner, it ſhould have been more explicit in its meaning, and more guarded from poſſibility of miſtake. And was I called upon to explain my ſentiments, I ſhould take leave to borrow Mr ***'s words.

Pleaſe to preſent my moſt affectionate compliments to him; and let him know, I acknowledge myſelf obliged to him, for his valuable remarks; and ſhall be ſtill more obliged, if he pleaſes ſometimes to remember me in his effectual fervent prayers; that I may, though weak in body, be ſtrong in faith; giving glory, by a thankful reſignation, and comfortable hope, to God our Saviour.——I hope, he intends to publiſh his diſcourſe upon the Chriſtian ſabbath. I think, ſuch a treatiſe is not a little wanted. I have ſeen nothing upon the ſubject that has given me ſatisfaction.

Tranſmit my moſt cordial affection to good Mr ***; I dearly love him, and rejoice in the expectation of meeting him, in the everlaſting kingdom of our glorious Redeemer. How inconſiderable, what a perfect nothing, is the difference of preaching in a cloak or in a gown, ſince we both hold the head, both are united to the ſame Saviour, and have acceſs by the ſame Spirit to the Father. I aſſure him his name has been conſtantly mentioned in my poor interceſſions, ever ſince he favoured me with his friendly and edifying epiſtle. Tell him I am making ſome faint attempts to recommend to the world a doctrine, which is muſic to his ears, and better than a cordial to his heart: The righteouſneſs of Immanuel, freely imputed to wretched ſinners, for their complete juſtification, and everlaſting acceptance. I would alſo repreſent, in an amiable and endearing light, that other precious privilege of the goſpel, ſanctification of our hearts, and newneſs of life, through the power of the bleſſed Spirit; and give, if the Lord ſhould enable, a pleaſing picture of death, ſtripped of his horrors, and appearing as an uſher, commiſſioned by the court of heaven, to introduce us before the Prince of the kings of the earth. Beſeech my worthy friend to aſſiſt me with his prayers to the Father of mercies, and Fountain of light, that if I write, it may not be I, but the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus that writeth by me, enabling blindneſs itſelf to find out acceptable words, and to hit the avenues of pleaſure and conviction.

I am glad to hear that the ſecond part of *Sunday-Thoughts* is come abroad. Pray do not fail to let Mr *** have ſix ſets for me before *Thurſday* morning; becauſe he has another parcel to tranſmit to me this week, in which thoſe may with convenience be incloſed.——You have paid me an obliging compliment; beg of the bleſſed God, dear Sir, that I may not be puffed up with vain conceit of myſelf or my writings. O! that earth and aſhes, that guilt and ſin, ſhould be proud! What ſo unreaſonable? yet what ſo natural? May the Lord of glory rebuke this arrogant ſpirit; and teach my ſoul to be humble, to be evermore dependent on his aid, as a weaned child.

As to your entering into holy orders, I have no manner of doubt; by all means do it. It is what I have been praying for theſe ſeveral years; it is what all the diſciples of Chriſt are directed to implore at the Lord's hand, that he would ſend many ſuch labourers into his vineyard. As God has inclined your heart to the work; as he has given you ſo clear a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jeſus; and ſtirred you up to be zealous for the intereſts of a bleeding Saviour; I aſſure you, if the King would make me a biſhop, one of the firſt acts of my epiſcopal office ſhould be to ordain the author of *Sunday-Thoughts*.——I hope the Lord will guide you

with

with his Spirit, will commiſſion you to feed his flock, and make you a choſen inſtrument of bringing many ſinners to Chriſt, many ſons unto glory.—Pray do not think your letters are troubleſome; they are always pleaſing, always chearing to,

Dear Sir,

Your very ſincere, and

truly affectionate friend, *&c.*

LETTER LXII.

My dear Friend,

*** ſent me ſome time ago, your tranſlation of *Zimmermannus*. I was ſo engaged in urgent buſineſs, that I really had not leiſure, and ſo oppreſſed with bodily weakneſs, that I had not ability, to undertake the office of comparing it with the original. I added my ſolicitation to yours, and preſſed *** to reviſe, and, if need be, correct the manuſcript; and I would beg of you, my dear friend, not to be haſty in publiſhing. In this affair, I am for following the example of *Fabius*, Cunctando *reſtituit rem.*

If I have not been punctual in anſwering your letter, aſcribe it to the uſual, which is indeed the true cauſe: I mean, to a failure of ſtrength, and languor of ſpirits, which both diſincline and diſqualify me for every thing. The winter has made me a priſoner. I have not been any farther than the church theſe two months. May you and all the miniſters of the bleſſed Jeſus, be anointed with the Holy Ghoſt and with power! May you, in imitation of our divine Maſter, go about doing much ſpiritual good, and ſhedding abroad the ſavour of his moſt precious name. O that I had ſtrength! I would then pray earneſtly that I might go and do likewiſe.

Since it is repreſented, that I have engaged to preface the tranſlation of *Zimmermannus*, I will not baulk the expectations of my valued friend, though I aſſure you I ſhall addreſs myſelf to it with ſome trepidation: ſenſible that it will carry too aſſuming an air, and ſeem as though, from being an obliged author, I ſhould take upon me to act as dictator, and direct the Public in their choice of books.

Yours affectionately, *&c.*

LETTER LXIII.

My dear Friend,

I Received your letter; am ſorry to hear you have been ill; heartily wiſh you a re-eſtabliſhment of your health; and ſhall be glad, when it ſuits your inclination and conveniency, to ſee you at *Weſton*.

I am glad you are beginning to catechize your children. I hope you will be enabled to feed Chriſt's lambs, and diſpenſe to them the milk of the word, as they may be able to bear it.—Indeed you apply to a wrong perſon for advice. I make ſome efforts, it is true, to diſcharge this duty, but not to my own ſatisfaction; and great will be the glory of divine grace, if it is to the edification of my people.—My time for catechizing is during the ſummer; when the days are long, and the weather is warm. But, I think, you do right to conform to the uſual cuſtom of catechizing in Lent.

My method is, to aſk eaſy queſtions, and teach the children very ſhort and eaſy anſwers.—The Lord's prayer was the laſt ſubject of our explanation.—In ſome ſuch manner I proceeded:—Why is this prayer called the Lord's prayer? Becauſe our Lord Jeſus Chriſt taught it us.—Why is Chriſt called our Lord? Becauſe he bought us with his blood.—Why does he teach us to call God Father? That we may go to him, as children to a Father.—How do children go to a Father? With faith, not doubting but he will give them what they want.—Why our Father in heaven? That we may pray to him with reverence.—What is meant by God's name? God himſelf and all his perfections.—What by hallowed? That he may be honoured and glorified.—How is God to be honoured? In our hearts, with our tongues, and by our lives, *&c. &c.*

On each queſtion I endeavour to comprehend, not all that may be ſaid, but that only which may be moſt level to their capacities, and is moſt neceſſary for them to know.———The anſwer to each queſtion I explain in the moſt familiar manner poſſible; ſuch a manner, as a polite hearer might perhaps treat with the moſt ſovereign contempt. Little ſimilies I uſe that are quite low, fetched *non ex academia, ſed e trivio.*———In every explanation I would be ſhort, but repeat it again and again. Tautology, in this caſe, is the true propriety of ſpeaking. And to our little auditors, the *crambe repetita* will be better than all the graces of eloquence.

I propoſe to explain to them principally the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the commandments. What relates to the two ſacraments, at preſent, I do not attempt to ſet before them: let them firſt have ſome tolerable notion of the former.———I fancy, you had better proceed in the ſame method. If I know your ſentiments about baptiſm aright, with which our catechiſm begins, I ſhould apprehend, it would be moſt prudent to go immediately to the great fundamentals.——However, pray to the Lord, whoſe work you work; and he who is all-wiſe will direct you, he who is all-powerful will proſper you.———Pray give my very affectionate compliments to ***. Through the everlaſting righteouſneſs of our Redeemer, I hope to meet them in the world of glory? and there he that is feeble, will be as *David*.

Yours ſincerely, *&c.*

LETTER LXIV.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, April 5,* 1750.

WHEN you meditate on *Hoſea* iv. 6. and 7. [namely, "My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge: becauſe thou haſt rejected knowledge, I will alſo reject thee, that thou ſhalt be no prieſt to me: ſeeing thou haſt forgotten the law of thy God, I will alſo forget thy children. As they were increaſed, ſo they ſinned againſt me; therefore will I change their glory into ſhame;"]—when, I ſay, you meditate on this terrifying text, compare it with *Hoſea* xi. 8, & 9. ——xiii. 9. & 12.—xiv. 1. & 2. [namely, "How ſhall I give thee up, *Ephraim*? how ſhall I deliver thee, *Iſrael*? how ſhall I make thee as *Admah*? how ſhall I ſet thee as *Zeboiim*? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceneſs of mine anger, I will not return to deſtroy *Ephraim*; for I am God, and not man, the holy One in the midſt of thee,"] *Hoſ.* xi. 8. & 9.

In the next paſſage, Chriſt ſhews the only remedy for our miſery, namely, "O *Iſrael*, thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf, but in ME is thine help.———The iniquity of *Ephraim* is bound up, his ſin is hid," *Hoſ.* xiii. 9. & 12.]

In the laſt paſſage is preſcribed the method of applying the remedy to your own ſoul, [namely, "O *Iſrael*, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity.———Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, ſay unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly; ſo will we render the calves of our lips," (or ſpiritual ſacrifices of the heart, not calves with horns and hoofs,) *Hoſea* xiv. 1, & 2.]

Pray take theſe texts into frequent conſideration, or elſe you will do a THREEFOLD injury, *viz.* to the divine mercies,—to the Redeemer's merits,—to your own comfort.

Be it that guilt is great,—yet is it boundleſs? Is it infinite, like the kindneſs of God through Chriſt?—Remember what meſſage our Lord ſent to *Peter* after his fall; what offers he made at *Jeruſalem*, after it had murdered the Prince of peace? how eminently uſeful and happy he made *David*, after the commiſſion of * enormous crimes.———He is the ſame gracious, long-ſuffering, ſin-forgiving God, to-day, yeſterday, and for ever.

Beware, dear Sir, that you add not unbelief (the greateſt of ſins, the moſt provoking of ſins, the moſt deſtructive of ſins,) to all your other offences.———We have trampled upon the divine laws, and defiled our own ſouls; but let us not charge the divine declarations with FALSEHOOD, let us not make our God a LIAR.——— I am ſure God loves you, and Chriſt intercedes for you; elſe whence this ſearching of your heart, this acknowledgment of guilt; this ſelf-condemnation, and thirſt after pardoning and ſanctifying grace?

Another proof to me, a very evident and pregnant proof, that the bleſſed God has a very tender and particular concern for your eternal welfare, is, his diſconcerting your ſchemes; than which nothing, I think, could be more effectually calculated, to waft you along the ſmooth ſtream of inſenſibility and pleaſure, into the pit of perdition.

Let this, though a thorn in the fleſh, be a token for good.——He that has begun to reſcue you, will accompliſh his gracious purpoſe.———'Ere long, I truſt this new ſong will be put into your mouth, "The ſnare is broken, and I am delivered." *Pſal.* cxxiv. 7. Be of good comfort, dear Sir, for with the Lord there is mercy and plenteous redemption, *Pſal.* cxxx. 7.

Read by way of conſolation *Manaſſeh*'s humiliation, 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 12, 13.——And ſee likewiſe God's gracious dealings, even with *Rehoboam* himſelf, 2 *Chron.* xii. 6, 7.

Don't indulge diſpiriting ideas,—or have hard thoughts of the God of everlaſting compaſſion; oh how weak is our faith!——Read and ſtudy well that excellent and comfortable little tract, *Liborius* † *Zimmermannus, de eminentia cognitionis Chriſti.*———Converſe with ſome experienced Chriſtians, and remember what our bleſſed Saviour has promiſed, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midſt of them."———We never make any doubt but our friends (eſpecially if they be the diſtinguiſhed ſervants of Jeſus) will fulfil their promiſes; yet we queſtion (fie upon us, fie upon us for our unbelief) whether the divine Maſter himſelf will accompliſh his word.

I am, dear Sir, with much eſteem, and with much concern for your preſent and eternal welfare,

Yours very ſincerely,

JAMES HERVEY.

* The celebrated Dr *Delany* in his very entertaining work, entitled the *Hiſtorical account of the life and reign of David*, has this reflection.

Happy for mankind, that there is ſuch an inſtance (an authentic inſtance) of falling virtue and recovering guilt!—An inſtance ſo fitted to mortify the vanity of virtue, and the merit of exalted piety, and to raiſe the power and price of humble penitence; to abate the pride of ſelf-ſufficiency, and ſupport the hope of frailty. Who can confide in his own ſtrength, when he ſees a DAVID fallen? and who can deſpair of divine mercy, when he ſees him forgiven? Sad triumph of ſin over all that is great and excellent in man! glorious triumph of repentance, over all that is ſhameful and dreadful in ſin.—Millions have fallen, have ſinned as DAVID, but who ever repented and recovered like him!—Revolve his whole life before the affair of *Uriah!* It is almoſt one train of a wiſe, a generous, a pious, and a valiant conduct? Revolve his whole life from the hour of this guilt, and you will find it little elſe than one train of humiliation and repentance before God; and this too, even after the aſſurance of pardon, from the mouth of God himſelf by his prophet *Nathan*; which is the higheſt proof of a refined piety and exalted virtue.

† See letter LXXII.

LETTER LXV.

Dear Siſter, *Weſton-Favell, May* 27, 1750.

THE country is now in its perfection. Every buſh a noſegay, all the ground a piece of embroidery; on each tree the voice of melody, in every grove a concert of warbling muſic. The air is enriched with native perfumes, and the whole creation ſeems to ſmile. Such a pleaſing, improving change has taken place; becauſe, as the *pſalmiſt* expreſſes it, God has ſent forth his Spirit, and renewed the face of the earth.——Such a refining change takes place in mankind, when God is pleaſed to ſend his Holy Spirit into the heart. Let us therefore humbly and earneſtly ſeek the influences of this divine Spirit. All our ſufficiency is from this divine Spirit, dwelling in our hearts, and working in us both to will and to do. Without his aids, we are nothing, we have nothing, we can do nothing.——Would we believe in Chriſt, to the ſaving of our ſouls? we muſt receive power from on high, and be enabled by this divine Spirit; for no man can ſay, that Jeſus is the Lord, or exerciſe true faith on his merits, but by the Holy Ghoſt?——Would we be made like unto Chriſt? It can be done only by this divine Spirit. We are transformed into the ſame image, ſays the apoſtle, not by any ability of our own, but by the Spirit of the Lord. ——Would we be ſet on the right hand of our Judge at the laſt day? This is the mark that will diſtinguiſh us from the reprobates, and number us with his faithful people. For unleſs a man, unleſs a woman, have the Spirit of Chriſt, they are none of his.——But, ſince we infinitely need this enlightening and ſanctifying Spirit, is the God of heaven equally willing to give it? He is; indeed he is. To obtain this gift for us ſinners, his own Son bled to death on the croſs. That we may be made partakers of this gift, he intercedeth at the right hand of his Father: and he has paſſed his word, he has given us a ſolemn promiſe, that if we aſk, we ſhall receive it. See, remember, and often plead in prayer, *Luke* xi. 13.

From your affectionate brother, *&c.*

LETTER LXVI.

My dear Friend, *June* 28, 1750.

IF you chide, I muſt accuſe. Pray where was your warrant, where your commiſſion, to impreſs me into this journey? However, as becomes a good Chriſtian, I forgive you and your accomplice ***.

At St *Alban*'s I was weary, and diſpirited; was loath, could not prevail on myſelf to deſire Doctor *Cotten*'s company at the inn, and was ſcarce able to crawl to his houſe. Believe me, I ſincerely honour, and cordially love,

love, the worthy doctor. Though I am naturally shy, I should want no solicitations to wait on so very ingenious and improving a friend; a pleasure I promise myself, if Providence brings me back alive.——We got to *London* about three o'clock on *Saturday*. I took up my lodgings, not at my brother's after the flesh, but with the brother of my heart. On *Sunday* he preached with his usual fervour, and administered the sacrament to a great number of very serious communicants.—He delights in the work of the ministry, and embraces every opportunity of preaching the everlasting gospel. He is, indeed, in labours more abundant. Dear Sir, what a pattern of zeal, and ministerial fidelity, is our excellent friend! and God rewards him with joy unspeakable. God also fulfils to him, in a remarkable manner, his gracious promise, "They that honour me, I will honour." This day he was most respectfully entertained at the houses of two noblemen. What a most exalted satisfaction must he enjoy in attending these great personages, not to cringe for favours, but to lay upon them an everlasting obligation; not to ask their interests at court, but to be the minister of their reconciliation to the King of kings!—Thus far was wrote on *Sunday* night; but was hindered from finishing soon enough for the post.——*Monday* morning.—Yesterday our indefatigable friend renewed his labour of love, and with such assiduity, that I had no spirits to attend, what he had strength to execute. He preached to a crouded audience, and yet multitudes went away for want of room. In the midst of this audience, was a clergyman in his canonical dress; a stranger; his name I could not learn; he behaved with exemplary seriousness, and expressed much satisfaction. ——One day last week I was most agreeably surprised. Drinking tea at a friend's house, a person knocked at the door: the servant brought word, that it was a stranger, who desired to speak with Mr *Hervey*. And who do you think it was! One whom I tenderly love, but never expected to see again. It was the accomplished and amiable Mr ***. We took sweet counsel together at *Gaius* mine host's, and wished one another a happy meeting in the world of glory.——My fellow-traveller saw your letter, and bid me tell you, that if you are chained to the oar, the chains are of your own making.——Dear Sir, preach the glorious gospel. Be an ambassador of the most high God. Devote yourself to this most important, most noble service; and your divine Master, I hope, will furnish you with employ, and open a door for your usefulness. The fruit of such labours will abide; and our friend is a proof, in what peace, in what joy, they are sown.—My animal nature is so very, very feeble, that I find no benefit from the change of air, nor from the enjoyment of the most pleasing society.—Ever yours, &c.

LETTER LXVII.

Dear Sir, *London, Sept.* 4, 1750.

OUR dear friend ** is much engaged in making interest to succeed the minister of **, who, though not stone dead, is ill enough to alarm the hopes of neighbouring preachers. O! that we may every one contend who shall bring most glory to the crucified King of heaven, and love most ardently his all-gracious and infinitely-amiable Majesty! A strife this, which will not foment, but destroy malignant passions; in which strife, angels will be our competitors; honour and joy, the everlasting prize.

I wish our dear friend *H*—— the rich anointings of God's Spirit in composing and the powerful presence of God's Spirit in delivering, his infirmary-sermon. My most cordial love is ever his, and ever yours.

Thank you I do sincerely, for your prayers to God in my behalf; and Oh! how shall I thank sufficiently him, who procured access for us thro' his blood! We often remember you, and wish and pray, that you may be a burning and a shining light in your generation.—Dear friend, adieu.

LETTER LXVIII.

My dear Friend, *Sept.* 11. 1750.

I Received your last favour. It was without date, but very welcome.——We have lost our zealous friend, for several days. He has been displaying the banner of the gospel at **, and gathering together the dispersed of *Israel*. We admire the hero that wins battles, takes towns, and leaves trophies of his victories in every place. But where will all such toils, and the very rememberance of them be, when the monuments of his labours endure for ever in heaven?

Thanks for your subscription: I have procured more of another friend. I shall soon be a poor man, here are so many necessitous objects. And who can bear to be in affluence, while so many fellow-creatures, are in deplorable want? Especially, if we remember him, who, though he was rich, for our sake became poor; and had not where, (O! marvellous, marvellous abasement!) had not where to lay his head.

This night dear Mr ** is with us; returned from his expedition, full of life, and rich with spoils; spoils won from the kingdom of darkness, and consecrated to the Captain of our salvation.——I have been prevailed on to sit for my picture. If ever portrait was the shadow of a shadow, mine is such. O! that I may be renewed after the amiable image of the blessed Jesus; and when I awake up after his likeness, I shall be satisfied with it! This wish is breathed in a language to me unusual. I generally comprehend my dear friend in such petitions, and make his eternal interests inseparable from my own. ——On *Sunday* I heard the admired Mr **. His text was *Rom.* v. 1. His doctrine evangelical. The faith which purifies the heart, and works by love; the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, comprehending both his active and passive obedience; the operation of the blessed Spirit, in producing this sound and lively faith; were the substance of his discourse.——I commit you, my dear friend, to the tender mercies of our God, and the powerful word of his grace; remaining inviolably yours, &c.

LETTER LXIX.

My dear Friend, *London, Oct.* 23. 1750.

AS your stay in town was so short, we could not expect to see you. On *Sunday* afternoon your old acquaintance Mr ** called upon me, sat about an hour, inquired after you, and talked as became the Christian character, and the sacred day. The conversation was perfectly pleasing; but the subjects, whether we were led to them by chance, or directed to them by Providence, were peculiarly noble and important. *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, &c. *Job* xix. *Behold my servant shall deal prudently*, &c. *Is.* lii.—We expect to see our dear friend **, in a little time. O! that we may meet each other, and daily converse in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of peace!—I say no more about poor Mrs **; perhaps, my concern for her may be uncommonly tender, because there have few days passed, since

since I knew her, in which I have not made mention of her name, in my prayers for the afflicted.——May the God of wisdom teach you, and the God of power enable you, to do always such things as are acceptable in his sight through Jesus Christ! And may the Father of compassions make her sorrows bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and issue in everlasting joy!—I hope, the truly-valuable Dr ** and his family took knowledge of you, that you had been with Christ. Let us study, let us labour, to spread abroad the savour of his blessed name; who suffered the vengeance due to all,—to all our sins.—That his presence may be with you, and his love be in you, is the invariable wish of

Your affectionate, &c.

LETTER LXX.

My dear Friend, *London, Nov.* 15, 1750.

I Have communicated your two messages to **; he is now with his old acquaintance at **. On *Sunday* he preached morning and afternoon at L** church. May his word prove a seed of life and immortality to the hearers.——On *Tuesday* he and Mr ** breakfasted with us: the talk turned principally upon the mystic writers. Dr ** began to warm a little, to hear Mr ** inveigh pretty sharply against them. But by giving a soft answer, and making considerable concessions in their behalf, Mr ** cooled, and qualified all. He spoke with remarkable command of temper, and, I think, with great solidity of judgment. I wish it may lessen our valuable friend *H*——'s attachment to those authors; which, I believe, is immoderate, and, I fear, is pernicious.——I heartily wish your children may recover, and live to be a comfort to their father, an honour to their religion.——I have received Dr *D*——'s remarks; very judicious, and equally faithful. I scarce know any friend, who has so true a taste, and so much sincerity. *Vir Aristarchus*, is the character he deserves.

Yesterday a serious dissenter from the country came to see me. God had freed him from a spirit of bigotry, and made my book acceptable to him. O! that we may all love one another, and bear with one another; so fulfil the law, and follow the example of Christ. In the *New Jerusalem*, that city of the living God, all our little differences of opinion, as well as all the remainders of corruption, will fall off. In the light of God's countenance, we shall see the truth clearly, and enjoy the life, the life of heaven and eternity, perfectly. O! that we may love that amiable and adorable Being every day, every hour more and more; who, though the King immortal and invisible, gave his own Son to bleed and die for worms; for rebels; for you, my dear friend, and for your unworthy, but truly affectionate, &c.

LETTER LXXI.

My dear Friend, *November* 20, 1750.

PRESENT my very grateful acknowledgments to our obliging friend Mr **. I rejoice in his lines, as they are a pledge of his affection and friendship; but I really am under apprehensions from them, as they are to be a public encomium on my character, lest they should make me think more highly of myself than I ought to think. O! may the high and lofty One, who inhabits eternity, and dwells with the humble heart, vouchsafe to defend me from all the insinuations of pride. To be sure, this is a trying occasion: for *laudari a laudatis*, is no common honour.——I would beg leave to postpone the publication of the verses, till the mezzotinto plate is finished, and the print ready to be sold. Because, if such a recommendation appears at such a juncture, I am persuaded, it will cause a demand for the picture, and further its sale. Good heavens! who would have ever thought, that so mean a name, and so obscure a person, should appear in the world with such an air of significancy? Oh! that it may be for the glory of that ever blessed and adorable Being, who manifests his transcendent excellency most chiefly in shewing mercy.——When you heard of Mr **'s death, did you not immediately think of the prophet's declaration? *All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field.* Did you not also ardently desire, and resolve to seek for, an assured interest in the promises of that word, which endureth for ever? May the God of grace seal those promises to our hearts, by his blessed Spirit; and witness with our spirits, that we are the objects of his love, and heirs of his kingdom! Then we may defy death, and boldly bid the king of terrors do his worst.——** is making an excursion to ——, and to ——. May the Lord God of hosts go forth with his servant, and make him terrible to the infernal enemy, as an army with banners; welcome to poor sinners, as the refreshing dews after parching heat.——How my soul longs to be employed in the same sacred, blessed cause! Does not yours also throb with the same desires?——I can no more. Supper waits for me. Adieu. All spiritual blessings be multiplied upon you, and ever yours, &c.

LETTER LXXII.

My dear Friend, *December* 8, 1750.

WHY do you say *Zimmermannus* is too comfortable for you? The comfort of Christianity is the sweet allurement to draw us to heaven, and the powerful instrument to fit us for heaven. If our affections are attached to the world, the comfort of Christianity is ordained, to wean us from its vanities, and win us to God. If we have sinned, the love of the Lord Jesus Christ is the most sovereign means of wounding our hearts, and bringing us to repentance. When *Nathan* said unto *David*, *The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die*; then it is supposed, he penned the xxxiid *psalm*, and poured out his soul in unreserved confession. When the blessed Jesus turned, and looked upon *Peter*, then his conscience smote him deep; then he went out, and wept bitterly. And how did his dear Master look? was it a resentful, upbraiding, menacing glance? Quite the reverse. Is this your promised fidelity? this your kindness for your friend? Ah! *Peter! Peter!* I feel more from your perfidy than from all the insults of my enemies. But I know your weakness, and I am going to die for your guilt. Willingly, willingly, I lay down my life, that this sin may never be laid to your charge. Such was the language of that gracious look. I do not wonder that it fetched a flood of tears from his eyes. I find it impossible to refrain, on the bare meditation on it. O! that the adorable Redeemer may manifest his all-forgiving goodness in our souls, and sure it will overcome our most stubborn corruptions. What can withstand such heavenly love?——I know **; and think you have a peculiar privilege in having opportunity and ability to succour so sincere a Christian. He will more than repay you with his prayers. Whatsoever you do for him, I am persuaded, will be done unto Christ. And who can do enough for him, who despised the shame, and endured the cross for us?——Your writing-paper came safe; and I would have returned it to the stationer as too coarse, but has, since its arrival, been seized; seized

seized in the king's name, by one of the king's officers. Pray, have you taken care to pay duty? have you not been deficient in some instance or other? O! said *Gaius* my host, when he heard of its coming back, it is good enough for me; it will just suit my purpose; I wanted such a supply; so it is in his hands, to be employed in the service of a great king; whose name you can guess; whose goodness you have experienced; and for whose honour, I hope, we shall all be very zealous. What say you? will you turn the forfeiture into a free gift, by sending your full consent to the deed?—Our dear friend has been visited with a fever; attended by the doctor every day this week: but, blessed be God, is, we trust, upon the eve of a thorough recovery. He talks of preaching to-morrow, but I shall use my utmost interest to dissuade him. Let him desist for a while, that he may persist for a long season.——We have but a small share of **'s company. O! that we may meet where we shall part no more, sin no more.——Adieu!—Ever yours, &c.

LETTER LXXIII.

My very dear Friend, *Dec.* 20, 1750.

YOUR letter found me, after a considerable delay in its passage, where do you think? Where I never expected to go any more;—found me at *London!* From whence I write this, and return you my sincerest thanks.——Prevailed on by the repeated importunity of my friends, I came by easy stages to town, in order to try whether change of air may be of any service to my decayed constitution; for my worthy physician Dr S—— has declared, that nothing, which he can prescribe, is likely to administer any relief.

I have reason to be convinced, from the accounts which your letter brings, and from the reports which I receive in this place, that here we have no continuing city. Thanks, everlasting thanks to the divine goodness, which has prepared for us a mansion, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; a mansion, whose Builder, whose Maker, and whose glory is God.—— Not only the disappointment, but even the acquisition of our desires, bespeaks the emptiness of the world. But what a complete felicity, what an all-satisfying portion, will the enjoyment of God be! When I awake up after thy likeness, (and am admitted to stand in thy beatific presence,) I shall be satisfied with it.

I pitied, as I read poor Miss **'s case. There cannot be a keener distress, than a conscience that is awakened, and a heart that desponds. *The spirit of a man will sustain his other infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear?* A wounded spirit was the bitterest ingredient, even in the cup of our Lord's exquisitely-severe sufferings. He that bore the racking tortures of crucifixion, without a complaint, cried lamentably, wept blood, when the arrows of the Almighty were within him. Then his soul was sorrowful, exceeding sorrowful, sorrowful even unto death. This dejection of our adored Master should be our consolation; his agonies are our ease; he was deeply sorrowful, that we might be always rejoicing. To believe, that he was wounded for our sins, and bruised for our iniquities; that he was destitute, afflicted, tormented for our sake; that, by his vicarious and most meritorious obedience unto death, he has obtained everlasting redemption for us;—firmly to believe this, is not arrogance, is not presumption, but our bounden duty, as well as our inestimable privilege. *This is his command*, says St *John, that we believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.* Never, never was any command more gracious, or more worthy to be written on the tables of our hearts. Let us not, my dear Mr **, by indulging unbelief,—O! let us not dishonour the boundless mercy, and the inviolable fidelity of God; let us not depretiate the infinite merits, and all-prevailing intercession of our blessed Mediator; but say with the lively poet, Dr *Watts*, in his hymns,

O! for a strong, a lasting faith,
To credit what th' Almighty saith!
T' embrace the promise of his Son,
And call the joys of heav'n our own!

You inquire about my new work, intended for the press. It is a great uncertainty, whether my languid spirits, and enfeebled constitution, will permit me to execute my design. It is a pleasure, however, to hear, that I am sometimes admitted to converse with you by my book. May the divine Spirit accompany every such conversation; and teach our souls to glow with gratitude to that transcendently great and gracious Being, who stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; who stretched out his arms on the cursed tree, and laid the foundation of our happiness in his own blood.——Please to present my most respectful compliments to Mrs **, your worthy neighbour Mr **, and his nieces. Give me leave, instead of wishing you a merry *Christmas*, to wish them and you all that joy, which the holy prophet felt, when, in an ecstasy of delight, he cried out, *To us a Child is born! to us a Son is given!* All the glories of heaven unite in his wonderful person; all the blessings of time and eternity are the fruit of his precious incarnation.——Adieu, my dear Sir, and cease not to pray for

Your ever affectionate, &c.

LETTER LXXIV.

My dear Friend, *London, Dec.* 22, 1750.

BE so kind as to let your servant look out for some person of *Collingtree*, and deliver to him the inclosed letter. He will probably find some such person on *Monday* at **; and I would have the letter conveyed by *Christmas*, that it may furnish my people with matter for conversation at their hospitable meetings.——Our excellent friend follows the advice of the preacher; whatsoever, of a charitable or godly nature, his hand findeth to do, he does it with his might; as one deeply convinced that there is no wisdom nor device in the grave, whither we all are hasting. Does not so amiable a person, such an indefatigable servant of Christ, such a compassionate friend to mankind, does not he deserve encouragement?

We have just been to hear a very excellent discourse upon *Zech.* iv. 7. Mr **, who made one of the congregation, sends his compliments to you, and to Dr **; which when you present, be pleased to add mine.—— Who do you think I lately drank tea with? The two ladies, before whom you put me so extremely to the blush. May neither they nor I be put to everlasting shame and confusion. I did what was in my power to prevent it, by recommending that adorable Saviour to their affections, in whom whosoever believeth, shall not be ashamed. They commissioned me to transmit their compliments to you.—You have thanks and prayers (the reward which a prophet gives) for the writing-paper.—What account can you give us of Lady * *'s health? Never, never, will the physician's skill be employed for the lengthening of a more valuable life. May almighty goodness bless those prescriptions, and command her constitution and our zeal *success.*

Ever yours, &c.

LETTER LXXV.

My dear Friend, *Dec.* 29, 1750.

THIS time last week, I took pen in hand to beg; now I should be ungrateful, if I did not resume it, in order to return my thanks, which I do most sincerely, in my own name, and on the behalf of my excellent host. He is now engaged in company, and cannot possibly steal a quarter of an hour to make his acknowledgments.—They limner has been with me twice, and is to give the finishing touches on *Monday*. How slowly, and how patiently, these artists advance! A pattern for us. So may we have the image of the amiable Jesus gradually instamped on our hearts, till death gives the finishing stroke, and makes us completely like our Beloved. In the mean time we have need of patience. Patience must be exercised towards ourselves; and God, the blessed God, is unspeakably patient towards us all.——Mr * * is willing to undertake *Zimmermannus*. I would have it thrown into the form of a dialogue.——Why do you entertain such harsh thoughts of the dearest, most benign, and gracious of all beings? I can no more.

Ever yours, &c.

LETTER LXXVI.

Dear Sir,

I Return you thanks for the perusal of your pamphlets. Be pleased to accept the two little volumes, which accompany your other books, as an expression of my gratitude to your pen, and sincere affection to your person. May I request the favour of you, good Sir, sometimes to implore the blessing of a gracious God upon the author, and his weak attempts; that the one may walk suitably to his holy profession, and high calling; that the other may please the reader for his good to edification. This will be a singular favour, and shall be readily returned by,

Reverend Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

——and humble servant, &c.

LETTER LXXVII.

Dear Mr Nixon, *London, Dec.* 24. 1750.

I Am ashamed to see so obliging a letter, from so valuable a friend, lie so long unanswered. I delay my grateful acknowledgments to you on this subject, till I could see what would be the issue of our design.——As you propose to recommend my picture, by your ingenious verses *, I should rather chuse to have them inserted (with your permission) in the magazines, and public papers, than to have them affixed to the copper-plate.——This practice, though once customary, is now, I believe, seldom used; and for me to revive it, when it does me such distinguished credit, would be too vain-glorious; otherwise I allure you, dear Sir, I should be glad to have a memorial of our friendship engraved on brass, or a more durable metal. And give me leave to declare, that though I was exceedingly pleased with the character you gave of my book, in your excellent anniversary sermon, yet I was much more delighted with your acknowledging me as your friend, and suffering it to be known, that I have a share in your affection.

I propose to make a long stay in town, and shall promise myself the pleasure of your company at my brother's.—Have you ever met with a little poem, entitled *Sunday-Thoughts?* The author is a very worthy man, and the poem not beneath your regard.——Shall I wish my worthy friend a merry *Christmas?* This compliment will be paid you by multitudes. Rather let me wish, that Christ Jesus, the ever-blessed Immanuel, may be formed in both our hearts! Renewed after his amiable and divine image, may you see many revolving happy new years below, and at last have an abundant entrance into the *New Jerusalem*, which is above.——Breathing such wishes, I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your much obliged, and

very affectionate friend, &c.

* See these verses subjoined to Mr Hervey's Life.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Dear Sister, *London, Jan.* 3. 1751.

I Have taken my pen in hand to write to you, and yet have no news to transmit. I have nothing to send but my good wishes, and my best advice.

The old year is gone; and if we look back, what a nothing it appears! Departed as a tale that is told. Thus will our whole life appear, when our end approaches, and eternity opens: but eternity will never expire; eternity will last, world without end.——When millions, unnumbered millions, of ages are passed away, eternity will only be beginning. And this short life, this little span is the seed-time of the long, long eternity. What we sow in this state, we shall reap in the eternal state. Should we not therefore be careful, very careful, to improve our time, and make the best provision for an eternity of happiness? Should we not be careful to get faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; to get the love of God shed abroad in our hearts; and our souls renewed according to the amiable example of our blessed Redeemer?—This, and nothing but this, is true religion. Going to church, hearing sermons, and receiving sacraments, profit us nothing, unless they promote these desirable ends.——Fix, dear Sister, this truth in your memory: A true faith in Christ, an unfeigned love of God, and a real holiness of heart, are the greatest blessings you can desire. Without them we shall not, we cannot, enter into the kingdom of heaven. These you should incessantly, you should earnestly seek, through the whole advancing year; and these I most sincerely wish you, who am

Your very affectionate brother,

JAMES HERVEY

LETTER LXXIX.

Dear Mrs ——, *London, Feb.* 5. 1751.

I Received your valuable letter, and thank you for it. ——I am exceeding glad, and bless the unspeakable goodness of God, if he has made my poor ministry, in

in any degree, ſerviceable or comfortable to your ſoul. I accompany my former labours (if ſuch extremely-feeble attempts may be called labours) with my repeated prayers; and bear my little flock on my ſupplicating and affectionate heart, all the day long. O! that the gracious God may fulfil in them all the good pleaſure of his will, and the work of faith with power!

I rejoice to find, that you know the truth. May you know it more and more; be eſtabliſhed in it, and experience the efficacy of it.——May the truth make you free! free from the prevalence of unbelief, the dominion of ſin, and the oppreſſion of ſorrow!—Give glory to God for opening the eyes of your mind, and bringing you to the riches of Chriſt. Take to yourſelf the comfort of this ineſtimable bleſſing, and by no means reject your own mercy.——Pray do not harbour hard thoughts concerning the bleſſed God, nor cheriſh deſponding apprehenſions concerning yourſelf, though always frail, and in every reſpect imperfect.——The great and good Father of our ſpirits knows whereof we are made; he remembers that we are but duſt; and will not be extreme to mark what is done amiſs.——Extreme to mark! ſo far from it, that to thoſe who ſeek him in ſincerity, ſeek him through his dear Son, he is tender and compaſſionate beyond all imagination. "As a Father pitieth his own children, ſo is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him," *Pſal.* ciii. 13. And "as a mother comforteth her ſon, ſo will the Lord thy God comfort thee," *Iſ.* lxvi. 13. Since we want loving-kindneſs and mercy to follow us all the days of our life, bleſſed, for ever bleſſed, be the God of heaven, in theſe he delighteth, *Jer.* ix 24.

O! "caſt thy burden upon the Lord," ſays the Holy Spirit. Caſt it upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. This is an art which the Chriſtian ſhould be diligent to learn, and watchful to practiſe. Chriſt is a Saviour, but we neglect to make uſe of him: we are come to him, but we forget to walk in him.——When guilt accuſes us, or guilt overtakes us, inſtantly let us fly to Chriſt, as the *Iſraelites*, when wounded, looked to the brazen ſerpent. There, let us ſay, there is the propitiation for this abominable ſin. For this, and for all my other iniquities, his heart was peirced and his blood ſpilt. The vials of wrath, due to my provocations, were poured upon that ſpotleſs victim; and by his ſtripes I am healed.——If our own obedience is deplorably defective, ſo that we are ſometimes ready to cry out with the prophet, "My leanneſs! my leanneſs! wo is me!" let us turn our thoughts to the great Mediator's righteouſneſs; this is conſummate and divine; this was wrought out for us; this is imputed to us; in this all the ſeed of *Iſrael* ſhall be juſtified, and in this ſhould they glory.——If your prayers are dull and languid, remember the interceſſion of Chriſt. He ever appears in the preſence of God for you; and how can your cauſe miſcarry, which has ſuch an advocate? If the poor widow was heard, even by the unjuſt judge; ſhall not the dearly-beloved Son of God prevail, when he makes interceſſion to a moſt gracious Father? a Father, who loves both him and his people.——If you want repentance, want faith, want holineſs, Chriſt is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, and to give all theſe deſirable bleſſings. He has aſcended up on high, has led captivity captive, and received gifts, ſpiritual gifts for men, yea, even for his enemies, for the rebellious. It is his office to beſtow theſe precious graces on poor ſinners; and he is as ready to execute this office, as the mother is ready to adminiſter the breaſt to a ſucking child.----Do you read the ſcriptures? Still keep Chriſt in view. When dreadful threatenings occur, ſay, Theſe I deſerved; but Chriſt has bore them in my ſtead. When rich promiſes are made, ſay, Of theſe I am unworthy; but my Redeemer's worthineſs is my plea; he has purchaſed them for me by his merits. All the promiſes of God are yea and amen (ſure and certain to the believing ſoul) in Chriſt Jeſus.

To make ſuch a perpetual application of Chriſt, is to eat his fleſh, and drink his blood. Thus may you, may I, may all my dear people, be enabled to paſs the time of our ſojourning here below! deriving our whole ſpiritual life, our pardon and ſanctification, our hope, and our joy, from that inexhauſtible fountain of all good.——Though I am not with you in perſon, I am often with you in ſpirit; and daily commit you to the great Shepherd and Biſhop of ſouls; who is ten thouſand thouſand times more condeſcending, compaſſionate, and faithful, than

Your truly-affectionate friend,

JAMES HERVERY.

LETTER LXXX.

Dear ——,

I Received your kind letter; and am glad to find, that you and Mrs **, and Mrs **, often meet together, and, like the people mentioned by the prophet, ſpeak one to another of the things of God. Oh! let us exhort one another to faith, to love, and to good works; and ſo much the more, as we ſee the day, the day of eternal judgment approaching. 'Ere long we ſhall hear the ſhout of the archangel, and the trump of God. Oh! let us imitate the wiſe virgins, and get oil in our lamps, true grace in our hearts; that we may be prepared for our Lord's ſecond coming, and not dread, but love his appearing.

My departure from *Northampton* was ſudden and unexpected. Could I have ſeen my people, and given them my parting advice, it ſhould have been in the words of that good man *Barnabas*, who exhorted all the diſciples, that with purpoſe of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

Cleave, my dear friends, to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: cleave to his word! let the word of Chriſt dwell in you richly, and be your meditation all the day long. Let the Bible, that ineſtimable book, be often in your hands, and its precious truths be ever in your thoughts. Thus let us ſit, with holy *Mary*, at the feet of Jeſus; and I hope, we ſhall experience his word to drop as the rain, and diſtil as the dew.

Cleave to his merits.——Fly to his divine blood for pardon; it is the fountain opened for ſin, and for uncleanneſs. It purges from all guilt, takes away all ſin; and, bleſſed be God, it is always open, always free of acceſs.——Fly to his righteouſneſs. Let us renounce our own, and rely on his obedience. What unprofitable ſervants are we! how ſlothful in our whole life! how imperfect in every work!——But as for Chriſt, his work is perfect; it is complete, and infinitely meritorious. In this ſhall all the ſeed of *Iſrael*, all true believers, be juſtified, and in this ſhall they glory.

Cleave to his Spirit.——Seek for the divine Spirit; cry mightily to God for the divine Spirit. Let them that have it, pray, that they may have it more abundantly, and be even filled with the Spirit. This bleſſed Spirit reveals Chriſt, ſtrengthens faith, quickens love, and purifies the heart. Chriſt died to obtain this Spirit for us; he intereedes for us that we may receive it; and his heavenly Father, for his ſake, has promiſed to give the Holy Spirit to thoſe who aſk it. He has promiſed (O! glorious privilege!) to give it more readily than a parent gives bread to a hungry child.

Cleave to his example.——Study his holy life, eye his unblameable conduct, obſerve his amiable tempers: look to this heavenly pattern, as thoſe that learn to write, look to their copy: and God grant, that we all, beholding with open face the glory of the Lord, may be chang-

ed

ed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Thus let us cleave to Christ the Lord:—cleave with full purpose of heart, incessantly, closely, inseparably. Let us lay with our father *Jacob*, *I will not let thee go.* Let us imitate the *Syrophœnician* woman, whom no discouragements could divert from her purpose. Temptations, difficulties, all the assaults of our enemy, should make us hasten to, and abide in the strong hold, the city of refuge: And he has promised, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." He will gather us with his arm, and lay us in his bosom. He will guide us by his grace, and receive us into his glory.——There, in those happy, happy mansions, may we, and many, very many, of my dear flock meet, and never be parted more!——This is the heart's desire, and the daily prayer of

Their and your truly-affectionate friend, &c.

LETTER LXXXI.

Dear ——, 1751.

AND are you very weak? is sickness in the chamber, and death at the door?—Come then, let us both sit down with dissolution and eternity in view; and encourage one another from the word, the precious word of God. I have as much need of such consolation as you, my dear friend, and may, perhaps, have occasion to use them as soon.

What is there formidable in death, which our ever-blessed Redeemer has not taken away?—Do the pangs of dissolution alarm us? should they be sharp, they cannot be very long; and our exalted Lord, with whom are the issues of death, knows what dying agonies mean. He has said in the multitude of his tender mercies, *Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness*, Is. xli. 10. This promise authorises us to say boldly, *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff comfort me*, Psal. xxiii. 4.

Are we afraid to enter into a strange, invisible, unknown world?—It is the world, into which our divine Master is gone; where he has prepared everlasting mansions * for his people, and has appointed his angels to conduct us thither.----Having such a convoy, what should we dread? and, going to our eternal home, where our all-bountiful Redeemer is, why should we be reluctant?

Are we concerned, on account of what we leave? We leave the worse, to possess the better. If we leave our earthly friends, we shall find more loving and lovely companions. We shall be admitted among the *innumerable company of angels, and to the general assembly and church of the first-born, that are written in heaven* †.——Do we leave the ordinances of religion, which we have attended with great delight? leave the word of God, which has been sweeter to our souls, than honey to our mouths? We shall enter into the temple, not made with hands, and join that happy choir, who rest not day nor night, saying, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, which was, and is, and is to come* ‡.——And if our Bible is no more, we shall have all that is promised, we shall behold all that is described therein. If we drop the map of our heavenly *Canaan*, it will be to take possession of its blissful territories. *That city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof* ¶.——O, my friend! blessed, for every blessed, be the grace of our God, and the merits of his Christ! We shall exchange the scanty stream of the boundless ocean; and if we no longer pick the first ripe grapes, we shall gather the copious, the abounding, the never-ending vintage.

Do we fear the guilt of our innumerable sins?——Adored be the inexpressible loving-kindness of God our Saviour! Our sins have been punished in the blessed Jesus; *The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all* †. *He his own self bare our sins, in his own body, on the tree* ‡. So that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus* ‖. O! that we may be enabled, with the apostle, to make our boast of this Saviour, and to triumph in this faith! *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us.*

Is judgment the thing that we fear?——To the pardoned sinner it has nothing terrible. The Lord Jesus, who keeps his servants from falling, *presents them also faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy* §. Observe the sweet expressions, *presents faultless*,——and *with exceeding joy.* Justly therefore does the apostle reckon it among the privileges of the Christians, that they are *come to God the Judge of all* ¶. For the Judge is our friend, the Judge is our advocate, the Judge is our propitiation, the Judge is our righteousness. And is it not a privilege to come to such a Judge, as will not so much as mention our iniquities to us, but condescend to take notice of our poor unworthy services; who sits on the great tribunal, not to pass the sentence of damnation upon us, but to give us a reward;—a reward of free grace, and of inconceivable richness?

Let me conclude with those charming words of the evangelical prophet, *Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak you comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for her Redeemer, her all-gracious Redeemer, hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins* †. May the God of our life and salvation make these scriptures be unto us, as a staff in the traveller's hand, and as a cordial to the fainting heart, that we may be strong in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ; that we may glorify him in death, and glorify him for death; because death will introduce us into his immediate presence, where we shall be sorrowful no more, sinful no more, at a distance no more; but be joyful, and be like our Lord; love him with all our souls, praise him to all eternity.—Let us then be of good chear, soon in our heavenly *Jerusalem* we shall meet again. Because God is faithful, inviolably faithful, and infinitely merciful, who hath promised,—promised to you, and promised to your affectionate friend, &c.

P. S. My kindest respects to Mr **, and Mrs **; bid them be of good courage, and go on their way rejoicing, for their Redeemer is mighty, his merits are unspeakable, and his love is unchangeable.——My most respectful compliments wait upon Mr ** and Mrs **. What a pleasure should I think it, was I able to execute the ministerial office, to bring home to their parlours the glad tidings of an all-sufficient Saviour, as well as to preach them in the pulpit!——*Polly*, I hope, loves her Bible; may the word of Christ dwell in her richly;

* John xiv. 2. Luke xvi. 22. † Heb. xii. 22, 23. ‡ Rev. iv. 8. ¶ Rev. xxi. 23. † Is. liii. 6. ‡ 1 Pet ii. 24 ‖ Rom. viii. 1. § Jude ver. 24. ¶ Heb. xii. 23.

and

and may he be with your father and mother, now they are old and grey-headed.

LETTER LXXXII.

Dear ——,

I Hope, this will find you a little better in your health; but, if it should find you in a weak and languishing condition, I hope a gracious God will sanctify what it contains, to the comfort of your soul.

Often consider, if you die you will leave a world full of sin; a condition full of frailty, ignorance, and misery; a body that has long been a heavy burthen, a sore clog, both to your services, and to your comforts; and why should any one be greatly unwilling to leave such a state? —If you die, you will go into an unknown world; but the comfort is, you have a kind and faithful friend gone thither before; Jesus Christ, your best friend, and the lover of your soul, is Lord of that unseen world. *Joseph*'s brethren were not afraid to go down into *Egypt*, when they knew that their dear brother was governor of the country. And since your most merciful Saviour is ruler of the invisible world, be not afraid to leave the body, and depart thither. It is said, the spirit of old *Jacob* revived, when he saw the waggons sent to carry him to his beloved son: and the poor languishing believer may look upon death, as the waggon sent by Jesus Christ, to bring his soul home to heaven.

But after death comes judgment, and this is terrible. ——Consider, who is the Judge. Was the father that begat you, was the mother that bare you, or the friend that is as your own soul; was any one of these to be the judge, and to pass the sentence, you would not be apprehensive of rigorous proceedings, you would expect all possible clemency. Mercy in this case, would rejoice against judgment. —But to our unspeakable comfort, we are informed by the scriptures, that a glorious person, far more merciful than a father, far more compassionate than a mother, far more affectionate than a friend, is to decide our doom; even the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us with an everlasting love; who declares, that a woman may forget her sucking child, much sooner than he forget to be merciful to those that put their trust in him. For thus it is written, *God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, even Jesus Christ*, Acts xvii. 31.

The Judge calls himself our husband, the bridegroom of poor believing souls. And will the bridegroom deliver to destruction his own bride, whom he has bought with his blood, and with whom he has made an everlasting covenant? *Is.* liv. 5.

The Judge vouchsafes to be our advocate. And will he condemn those for whom he has long interceded? will he condemn those for whom he poured out his prayers when he was on earth, and on whose behalf he has constantly pleaded in the presence of God? 1 *John* ii. 1.

The Judge condescends to be our head, and calls the weakest believers his members. And did ever any one hate his own body? did ever any one delight to maim, or take pleasure to ruin his own flesh, and his bones? *Col.* i. 18. 1 *Cor.* xii. 27.

The Judge has been our victim, the sacrifice for our sins. And will he consign those to damnation, for whom he endured the agonies of crucifixion? If he has given himself for us, will he not with this gift freely give us all things? give us pardon at that awful day? give us the crown of glory, which fadeth not away? *Heb.* ix. 14. 26.

Farther to confirm your faith, and establish your hope, it will be proper to consider, what you have to plead. The proud *Pharisee* made his abstaining from gross iniquities, and his punctuality in some external performances, his plea. The blinded *Jews* went about to establish their own righteousness, and depended on this broken reed for acceptance.——But we have a surer foundation, whereon to build our comfortable expectations.

If arraigned on the foot of guilt; great guilt; manifold guilt; aggravated guilt; long-contracted guilt; we have an atonement to plead, a sacrifice of unknown value; a propitiation glorious and divine. We have the blood of the Lamb to plead; blood that taketh away not one sin, or a few sins, or a multitude of sins only; but (O delightful truth!) taketh away all, all, all sins. Yes, it taketh away all sins, from the believer, be they ever so numerous; all sins, be they ever so heinous 1 *John* i. 7. *Rev.* i. 5.

Should the law take us by the throat, and make that severe demand, Pay me that thou owest.—It is paid, we reply, by our divine Surety. An incarnate God has been obedient in our stead. In the Lord, the Lord Redeemer have we righteousness. And can the law insist on a more excellent satisfaction! Does not this magnify the law, and make it honourable? *By the obedience of one* (that is Christ) *shall many be made righteous*, Is. xlv. 24. Rom. v. 19.

Should it further be urged, without holiness no man shall see the Lord:—Is not holiness the thing that we have longed for? It is true, we have not attained to holiness; spotless and undefiled holiness; neither could we in the regions of temptation, and in a body of corruption. But has not our guilt been our sorrow, and our indwelling sin our heaviest cross? Have we not groaned under our remaining iniquities, and been burthened with a sense of our failings? And are not these groanings, the first-fruit of the Spirit? Are not these the work of thy own grace, blessed Lord? and wilt thou not consummate in heaven, what thou hast thus begun upon earth? Do we not desire heaven, chiefly because in those blessed mansions we shall sin no more; we shall offend our God no more; be no more forgetful of a dying Saviour; no more disobedient to the motions of a sanctifying Spirit? And shall we be disappointed of this hope?—It cannot, it cannot be.—— They that hunger and thirst after righteousness, are not filled, while they abide in the flesh; therefore there remaineth the accomplishment of this promise, they will assuredly awake up after the likeness of their Lord, at the great resurrection-day, and, in another world, be fully, everlastingly satisfied with it.

I must now come to a conclusion:—But I cannot conclude without wishing you all joy and peace in believing.——Though your flesh and your heart fail, may God be the strength of your heart, and your portion for ever!—I daily, I frequently make mention of you in my prayers; and, what is better than all, the dearly-beloved of the Father remembers you now he is in his kingdom.

I am

Your very affectionate friend, &c.

LETTER LXXXIII.

The following letter was sent to the preacher, by a cottager in a country-village; and is here printed, to shew how thankfully the poor receive the preaching of the gospel, and to preserve so remarkable and useful a letter from perishing.

Reverend Sir,

I Humbly beg your pardon for presuming to write to you. Being one of your hearers, I was very much affected with your good sermons, having known and experienced the truth of them, viz. That persons

must be convinced of their *undone* state by NATURE, and brought into a state of *concern* or *self-condemnation*, before they will seek and *earnestly* desire the knowledge of Christ crucified. ——To one who feels the condemning power of the LAW, Christ is precious. ——Such have tasted the bitterness of sin; for till then, they *are alive without the law*, as St *Paul* saith, *Rom.* vii. 9. not seeing that the LAW requires *perfect* obedience, and that THEIRS at the best is *very imperfect*. ——Hence the best of us in our carnal state are striving to be justified by our own *works*; yea, though we cannot but know that we often break the laws of God, *Rom.* iii. 20. & 28.

But then we think, it is true I am a sinner, and there is none without sin; thus we do presume upon our seeming obedience, not considering how great a CHANGE must be wrought upon our soul by repentance; and that we must be united to Christ by faith, and *partake of his likeness*, without which, Christ, as to us, is dead in vain, (*Gal.* ii. 21.) And when the Holy Spirit has convinced us of our misery by sin, (*John* xvi. 8.) and need of Christ; then, usually, we are thinking TO DO something to *purchase* an interest in him; not considering we must be *humble supplicants* at his feet, waiting for *every thing* we want at the throne of grace, as repentance, pardon, sanctification, redemption, as purchased by HIM: (eternal life is the GIFT of God, *Rom.* vi. 23.)

It is the *humbled* person who will accept of Christ, in all his offices, not only as a priest to atone for sin, but also as a prophet to teach, and a king to rule over him, and subdue all his sins. ——The covenant of grace answers all our wants; there is not only *mercy* to *pardon*, but also *grace* to *sanctify*, and renew our nature. It is the *humbled* believer, who can sincerely say, *Christ is the power of God unto salvation*, (Rom. i. 16.)

And now I think nothing more needful than for clergymen to preach as *you* do; for though Christianity is generally professed amongst us, yet many seem as unconcerned about these things, as if there were no such truths in the gospel. ——This is the way of preaching, which has ever been most effectual to the converting of sinners; and may the blessed Spirit attend the word preached, *purifying the hearts of your hearers by faith*, (Acts xv. 9.) ——That the righteousness of Christ accepted and applied to themselves by a lively faith, may entitle them to heaven, (*Rom.* v. 19.) and that their *sincere*, though *imperfect* obedience, may evidence their title to be true and real, is the hearty desire of,

Reverend Sir,

Your most humble servant.

To *true believers*, the LAW is set forth as a rule of *manners*, not as a law of *condemnation*, for there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, *Rom.* viii. i. 6. or, in other words, those who *love* Christ, *love* his commandments, as kind rules of life, not obeying (like legal people) with reluctance, and out of fear of being punished. There is not, perhaps, a greater or more important truth, than that in proportion as our faith in the Redeemer, evidenced by our works, increases, so our fear of death proportionably decreases.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Dr. ——,

YOU need make no excuse for recommending Mr *** in his distressed condition. I am pleased to see you so tenderly concerned for a brother's welfare; and I am glad you have used the freedom of applying to me; seeing divine Providence has put it in my power to help a disciple, a child, a member of Christ. I purposed to have given him ***, and to have lent him three; nor should I have been very rigorous in exacting the debt, provided there was but little ability to repay. But lest the fear of not being able to repay, should create anxiety in an honest heart, and lessen the comfort of a seasonable supply, I make him a present of the whole; heartily wishing, that the same gracious God, who inclined a stranger's heart to bestow it, may also prosper his endeavours to improve it. And if he often calls to remembrance that almighty power and goodness which made a few drops of oil at the bottom of a cruse, and a little handful of meal that was the gleaning of the barrel, a lasting support to the prophet, and to the poor widow, and her son, I doubt not but that he will be enabled to fix his dependence upon the same everlasting Father, for needful success in trading. ——So that, by God's blessing, I hope, this little stock, frugally managed, may, through his kind Providence, put him in a way of procuring necessaries in this wilderness, till he comes to the fulness of the heavenly *Canaan*.

I think every instance of kindness shewn to us, or exercised by us, should enlarge our apprehensions of the divine benevolence. What is a grain of dust to the whole earth? what is a drop of water to the great ocean? or what are a few days to the countless ages of eternity? Less, unspeakably less is all created kindness, compared with the boundless goodness of God in Christ Jesus. For by him we have access to the Father, being reconciled by his blood shed on the cross. We are adopted and received into the church, whereof Christ is the head. Being thus in the favour of God, he delighteth in hearing the prayer of faith, which those who believe in Christ daily put up to the throne of grace. O! how great is his loving-kindness and tender mercy! He is exalted, that he may have mercy upon all that call upon him in sincerity and truth. He waiteth to be gracious. He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not, for past ingratitude and great unworthiness. Oh! how great are these blessings which he giveth! Blessings, in comparison of which, silver is as clay, and gold as the mire of the streets. He giveth grace and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from them who live a godly life; from them who are accepted in the Beloved, and love him who first loved them. I shall add that charming declaration of the beloved disciple, and earnestly wish that we may learn by happy experience, and feel in our souls, what it means,—"We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." Let me beg my dear friends to remember, at the throne of grace,

Your affectionate friend, &c.

LETTER LXXXV.

Dear Sister,

I Have taken my pen in hand to write; but what shall be the subject? News I have none; or, if I had, my brother would communicate it, in his conversation. ——Let me imitate a royal example. It was once said by a renowned king, *My song shall be of mercy and judgment:* of the same let my letter treat. The former was very lately the topic of some agreeable discourse with a young gentleman. ——We observed, how necessary it is, to be firmly persuaded of the infinitely-rich mercies of God in Christ Jesus. This will make us delight to think of him, and encourage us to fly to him. Whereas, if we have a jealousy, that he bears us ill-will, or designs our ruin, we cannot take pleasure in him, or

place our confidence in him. Therefore the condescending God has given us repeated and solemn assurances of his pity, his grace, his tender mercy in Christ Jesus.

Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. * He makes it his very name. Intimating, that a man may forget his own name, before the blessed God can cease to be merciful to them that fear him.

Ezek. xxxiii. 7, 11. † He confirms his divine good-will to us by an oath! He swears by his very life, that he desires our happiness, and seeks our salvation.——Here are two immutable things, the name, and the oath of God. Can we have stronger confirmation of his loving-kindness?

I think, if it be possible, we have. *He has so loved us*, saith the scripture.——How hath he loved us? So, as no words, no not of his own all-wise Spirit can express; nothing but the unspeakably-precious effects: so as to surrender his own Son to die, that we might live; to be made subject to the law, that we by his obedience might be made righteous; to become a curse, that we might inherit the blessing.——Read what the wife of *Manoah* very justly alledges, and apply it to the point before us, *Judges* xiii. 23. ‡ for I can no more: I hear the coach coming to carry me out on a visit.

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXXVI.

My dear Friend,

I AM glad to find that the beloved traveller called at your house, and gave you so much of his company. Cold as the weather was, did not your heart burn within you? burn with zeal and love for that all-glorious God, whom he (excellent man!) so faithfully serves in the gospel of his Son?

May Mrs *** increase in humility, be more convinced of guilt, more sensible of depravity! and then the will grow in every other grace. Proud minds suffer the curse, imprecated on the mountains of *Gilboa*; while humble souls are like the valleys spread forth by the rivers, or as a field which the Lord hath blessed.

I think you should not have shewn here the free remark which I made; it was well meant, and she is well disposed, but human nature is very, very depraved. And perhaps there is no greater instance of it, than our proneness to take offence at the least disparaging hint; nay, sometimes to fancy ourselves wronged, if we are not extolled to the skies. I heartily wish, the blessed Jesus may give this young lady, the ornament of a meek and humble spirit; that, being lowly in her own eyes, she may be exalted by the great God.

I see so much indigence, and so many distressed objects, that I begrudge myself all unnecessary disbursements of money. Who would indulge too much, even in innocent and elegant amusements, and thereby lessen his ability to relieve, to cherish, and comfort the Lord Jesus, in his afflicted members?

I wish you could have preached at *Collingtree*. My poor people long for the sincere milk of the word. You would have a congregation, all of them honouring you, most of them attentive to you, and many of them edified by you.—It grieves me, it pains me at my very soul, that I am dismissed or rather cut off, from the honourable and delightful service of the ministry.—But to be resigned, perhaps, is better than to labour; and an adoring submission for me at least more proper, than a zealous application. O! may I bow my head, and dutifully stand in the lot, which the almighty Sovereign pleases to assign!

Ever yours, &c.

LETTER LXXXVII.

My dear Friend, *London, Saturday Night.*

I Congratulate you on ***'s recovery. Why do you call her ***? 'Tis a strong temptation to vanity. She must be deeply ballasted with humility, not to be puffed up at such a title; which assimilates her to one of the most lovely and accomplished characters, that ever was described.

O! that we all may be recovered from that lethargic indolence, which deadens our attention to the one thing needful!—What a God have we! how immensely glorious! and how little do we reverence him!—What a Saviour! how unutterably gracious! and how little do we love him!—What promises! how inviolably faithful! Yet how feeble is our affiance in them!—What a heaven! how transcendently delightful! Yet how languid are our desires of it!—O! that the blessed, blessed Redeemer may baptize us with the Holy Ghost, as with a flaming fire! to quicken, animate, and kindle into a glow of devotion, these benumbed souls of ours!—I must add no more, only that I am, with great sincerity, tho' in great haste,

Inviolably yours, &c.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

My dear Friend,

I AM surprised at what you say, relating to dear ***. What evil hath he done, or wherein has he offended, that discesteem should be his lot? Yet what are such instances of contempt, compared with the reproaches and insults offered to the all-glorious Redeemer? God, I trust, will bless his sermon, and so much the more, as it is regarded by some people with an evil eye. Oh! what a comfortable consideration is it, that the success of our discourses depends not upon our own ability, which is as nothing; depends not upon the favour of men, which is very capricious; but depends wholly upon the influence of that almighty Spirit, whose presence is unlimited, and power uncontrollable!

My father had engaged Mr *** to supply at *Collingtree*: I hope he grows in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Adieu! my dear friend, adieu!

LET-

* And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the childrens children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

† So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of *Israel*; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of *Israel*?

‡ But his wife said unto him, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would, as at this time, have told us such things as these.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Sir, *London, Feb.* 23.

MR ** and Mr *** may have tried, and may repeat their attempts, to alienate the affections of my *Collingtree* hearers. I am under no concern with regard to myself.——*Fragili cupiens illidere dentem, offendet ſolido*,—will, I believe, be the iſſue of their endeavours. I am only ſorry for the people's ſake, that they ſhould ſquander away their miniſterial talents, and miniſterial labours, to ſo poor a purpoſe. Let them be more inceſſant in warning every man, and teaching every man, that they may preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus.——Thus let them ſeek to win their affections, and I do rejoice, yea and will rejoice, in their ſucceſs. Dear Sir, the way to ſecure the love of others, is, to love them, to pray for them, and with a willing aſſiduity to ſet forward their true happineſs. This, whenever I was amongſt them, my people will confeſs, I did not ceaſe to do. And the God of heaven knows, I daily bear them on my heart, and often recommend them to the tendereſt mercies of our everlaſting Father. Never therefore be apprehenſive of my loſing either their eſteem with regard to my conduct, or their affection with regard to my perſon. O! that their precious ſouls were as firmly united to Chriſt, as their favourable opinion is ſecured to me!——Well, ſhould neighbours undermine us, and friends forſake us, the adorable and all-condeſcending God is faithful. He changeth not. His word of grace endureth for ever. He loves his people with an everlaſting love. And O! what worms, what duſt, what mere nothings, are all men, are all creatures, before that infinitely-bleſſed Author of all perfection! What a ſenſe had the pſalmiſt of this weighty truth, when he poured forth that rapturous exclamation; *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none, there is nothing on the earth, that I deſire in compariſon of thee?* May this, my dear friend, be the continual language of your heart; and of his, who hopes to be, both in time and to eternity,

Affectionately yours, &c.

LETTER XC.

Dear Mr Nixon, *Wedneſday morning, Miles's-lane.*

YOUR obliging letter found me at my brother's in *Miles's-lane*, where I propoſe to abide to the end of the week; and here your entertaining and improving company would be a favour, not to myſelf only, but to the whole family.

I am indebted to your good-nature, for ſo candidly accepting the ſmall but free obſervation, made in my laſt. I am going to run myſelf farther in debt, by propoſing to your conſideration, what now occurs to my thoughts.——The incloſed queries I ſubmit entirely to your judgment, and from your determination ſhall make no appeal.

I have read *Elihu;* and very much admire his zeal for that moſt comfortable doctrine, the righteouſneſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, imputed to ſinners for their juſtification. I highly honour alſo his diſtinguiſhed veneration for that incomparably-excellent book, the Bible. Surely, his works will be a means of cauſing the ſtudy of thoſe ἱερὰ γράμματα to revive. Don't you think, the ſtyle is maſculine, and the manner enlivened?——As to the *Hutchinſonian* peculiarities, I don't pretend to be a competent judge, and dare not peremptorily condemn them. Yet they ſeem to be ſo very finely ſpun, and to have ſo large an alloy of fancy, that I know not how to admit them for ſterling truth.——I am truly concerned to hear of Mr **'s and his lady's illneſs. Dear Sir, what a fading flower is health, and what an expiring vapour is life! May you be an inſtrument of bringing ſouls to the knowledge of the adorable God, and to the faith of Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent; then they will, in another ſtate of things, poſſeſs a vigour that is ſubject to no decay, and enjoy that life that knows no end.

I am, dear Sir, your obliged and

affectionate friend, &c.

P. S. Is "lively oracles," an exact tranſlation of the above-mentioned *Greek* clauſe?

LETTER XCI.

My dear Friend, *London, March* 28, 1751.

YOU depend, you ſay, upon my promiſe: and ſee, how readily it is performed.——And if you depend on the execution of a promiſe from a frail, frail creature; will you not much more expect accompliſhment of promiſes, made by that adorable Being, *whoſe counſels of old are faithfulneſs and truth?* O! that we may not diſhonour God's goodneſs, diſparage his veracity, and depretiate his dear Son's unſpeakable merits, by unbelief, baſe, vile, deſtructive unbelief!

I have not an opportunity of communicating your news to our dear friend. He has left *London*.——It is not known when he will return. He is not expected, till ſome months are expired; and who, how many, may be gone into eternity, before that period is arrived!

You aſk, how it fares with my health? You may remember that I have more than once anſwered ſuch an inquiry with ſilence; for I don't like to be upon the complaining ſtring, and I cannot ſay, my health is either reſtored, or improved. When your letter came (not till *Tueſday* about five o'clock,) it found me in a ſtate of extreme languor. I had written nothing, done nothing, ſince dinner. Though I took up an eaſy and entertaining book, I was obliged to lay it down again. Thus I ſpend, rather thus I loſe many hours: So that between intervening company, and debility of ſpirits, I make but a very ſlow, ſcarce any progreſs in my intended work.

I have no news, tho' at the great mart of intelligence. My ſiſter is ſafely delivered of a ſon; which puts one in mind of the glorious piece of news, celebrated by the angels, and foretold with a rapturous delight by the prophet,—*To us a Child is born; to us a Son is given. His name ſhall be the mighty God;* and yet his office ſhall be, to bear our ſins in his own body on the tree. May this news be ever ſounding in the ears, and ever operative on the hearts of my dear friend, and of

His ever affectionate, &c.

LETTER XCII.

My dear Friend, *Tottenham, May* 30, 1751.

I Am now at my brother's country-houſe.——Pray who is Mr ***, the writer of the letter incloſed in yours? He aſks me, to get him a curacy; little aware,

that I am but a curate myself. I believe, the world has a notion, that I am a dignified, or a benefited man at leaſt. Dear Sir, may it be your benefice and mine, to do good to ſouls! and our higheſt dignity, to glorify the ever-bleſſed Redeemer! who for our ſake had not where to lay his head, till he was numbered with the tranſgreſſors, and laid it in the ſilent grave.

I hope your health is eſtabliſhed; and how does your ſoul proſper? Don't you delight to think of, to talk of, to have communion with, that wonderful, that amiable Being, whom to know is wiſdom; whom to enjoy is happineſs? happineſs, not to be deſcribed by words, only to be underſtood by experience. O! that we may follow on to know him! Then we have a promiſe, a promiſe more ſtable than the foundations of nature, that our *labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.* Gold has no value, and diamonds loſe their luſtre, when compared with thoſe unſearchable riches of Chriſt, which Mr *** ſo largely enjoys himſelf, and ſo freely offers to others. His miniſtry is ſignally owned by his condeſcending and almighty Maſter. Many, I am told, of the ſuperior, as well as lower orders in life, attend his miniſtry. And if there be efficacy in united prayers; if there be zeal in the Lord God of hoſts, for the honour of his dear Son,—if there be faithfulneſs and compaſſion in our exalted Saviour,—his labours will,—they will be bleſſed. May they, every day, every hour, be bleſſed more abundantly!

Moſt cordially yours, &c.

LETTER XCIII.

My dear Friend, *Tottenham, July 2, 1751.*

I Hope you have now done with Mr ***; I hope your houſe is ſufficiently ornamented. I think it is rather overſtocked with decorations. Now let us be good ſtewards of Jeſus Chriſt; employ what we can ſpare, for the honour of his bleſſed name, and comfort of his indigent people. *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive riches,* as well as *bleſſings and praiſe.*

Pray, don't mention me to Mrs ***. Tho' I honour and compaſſionate her; I am not fit to viſit her, nor qualified to edify her. This is with me the trying ſeaſon of the year, and my animal nature is all relaxation. O! that I may be ſtrong in faith! that precious faith, that *where ſin hath abounded, grace will much more abound.*

Don't you ſometimes ſee our dear friend ***? I find he has been at *Briſtol* lately, to diſtribute, I don't doubt, the waters of life, far more precious and healing than the waters of that medicinal ſpring. Let us do likewiſe. *For yet a very, very little while* (μικρον οσον οσον) *and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry.* Then opportunities of ſpiritual and bodily charity ceaſe for ever.

I believe it is four months ſince I heard from Mr ***. How precarious human interchanges of kindneſs! What a bleſſing, that the way to heaven is always open! Whenever we will, we may have acceſs to God through the blood of his Son. And *he never faileth them that ſeek him!*

How does Mr *** go on? Don't you ſometimes ſtir up the embers in his heart, if ſo be the coals may glow, and the fire at length burn?—I hope, your converſation is bleſſed to Mrs **. Glad to find ſhe admits Mrs *** to her company: a godly, ſenſible woman, who underſtands, reliſhes, talks ſavourily and intelligently on the truths of the goſpel.——Is diſcreet likewiſe, knows how to keep a becoming diſtance, and will not make a wrong, an aſſuming uſe of a lady's condeſcenſion. May the God of heaven bleſs them both, and give them to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. And what I pray for them, I pray for my dear friend,

Ever yours, &c.

LETTER XCIV.

My dear Friend, *Tottenham, July 14, 1751.*

I AM ſorry to hear your account of Mr ***. See what ſnares are around us. How the devil endeavours to obſtruct our uſefulneſs, by blemiſhing our credit. May the miniſters of Chriſt be upright and undefiled in the way! or elſe they will not be able to reprove and exhort with all (no, nor with any) authority. The God of power and faithfulneſs ſays of his church, ſays of his people; *I the Lord keep it, I will water it every moment, leſt any hurt it: I will preſerve it night and day.** May this promiſe be our ſhield! be fulfilled to us evermore! Don't you go on, my dear friend, to lay up theſe precious pledges of heaven in your memory, and enrich your heart from them, by frequent meditation! They are the ſeed of faith. By theſe we are to be *made partakers of the divine nature. Partakers of the divine nature!* volumes cannot explain, what is compriſed in thoſe few words. May we know what they mean, by happy, happy experience!

I pity poor Mr ***, knowing what it is to be in a ſtate of languiſhing. Ah! ah! my dear Sir, lay up a ſtock of comfort, get your graces lively, while animal nature blooms. When the blaſt of ſickneſs ſmites, and our ſtrength becomes labour and ſorrow; how miſerable muſt be our condition, without an intereſt, an eſtabliſhed intereſt in the all-glorious Redeemer!

Why do you cheriſh diſtruſtful thoughts of the bleſſed God? Is he not boundleſs goodneſs? Is not his goodneſs greater than the heavens? Does not his mercy, that lovely attribute, endure for ever? All the kindneſs of the moſt endeared relations, compared with the tender compaſſions of a God in Chriſt, are no better than cruelty itſelf. Read the laſt chapter of Hoſea. *Hide it within your heart.* Turn it into prayer to the King of heaven; and I hope it will be to your ſoul, as the dawning-day after a darkſome night.

Our dear friend has met with uncommon favour and acceptance. Excellent man! How does he work while it is day! How ſweet to ſuch a labourer, will be heaven's everlaſting reſt! There may you meet him! and there find, as a monument of infinitely-free grace in Chriſt,

Your truly-affectionate, &c.

LETTER XCV.

My dear Friend, *October 18, 1751.*

TWO of your letters are now before me, who expected long ere this to have been before the Judge of quick and dead.——Bleſſed be God, I am got down ſtairs, and the day before yeſterday went abroad in a coach. Oh! what great troubles and adverſities haſt thou ſhewed me! Yet didſt thou turn and refreſh me; yea, and broughteſt me from the depth of the earth again. Oh! my dear friend, how ſhall I be thankful?

* Iſ. xxvii. 3.

May that infinitely good and gracious God, who has given me ſuch cauſe, give me power to be grateful. May I be enabled to devote every moment of that life which he has prolonged, and every faculty of that body which he has preſerved,—devote them wholly to the honour of his bleſſed name.

Poor ***'s caſe I commiſerate. The charge attending my illneſs will be conſiderable; but I am not without hopes that my father will be ſo good as to defray it, then my hands will not be ſtreightened: Oh! that my bowels may never be ſtreightened, but may I *draw out my ſoul to the hungry.*

I am glad to hear that a ſeventh edition of Dr *Stonhouſe*'s book is demanded.——May it go forth in the name, in the ſtrength, and for the honour of the bleſſed Jeſus, and may it proſper! Tho', as you obſerve, he and I think differently on ſome points; nor is the doctor an admirer of my favourite author Mr *Marſhall*.——The acceptance however which God has given to his and to my own writings, ſhould ſend both of us oftener to the throne of grace, and quicken our applications to the divine goodneſs; that his all-powerful Spirit may accompany our inſtructions, and make them a real bleſſing to our readers.

——I write, as a poor priſoner that lately expected to have the ſentence of death executed; but has now got a ſhort, uncertain reprieve. May I never forget how much I ſhall want an aſſured faith in the all-glorious Redeemer, when that awful change approaches. Let us labour after ſuch a firm eſtabliſhment in Chriſt, ſuch an unſhaken affiance in his merits, and ſuch an unfeigned love of his name, as may make it gain to die, and the day of our diſſolution better than the day of our nativity.——Poor Dr ***! O! may he and his afflicted partner find conſolation in the faithfulneſs, the goodneſs, the unſearchable riches of Chriſt! Theſe, apprehended by a ſweet, aſſured, ſoul-reviving faith; theſe, I ſay, are our ſovereign ſupport under all troubles, and our moſt effectual preſervative from all temptations. We believe, bleſſed, bleſſed Jeſus, help our unbelief!

I am,

My dear Sir,

Ever yours, while

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XCVI.

London, Miles's-lane, Dec. 3, 1751.

Dear Mr Nixon,

IT is probable, you may have heard of my late dangerous ſickneſs; and it is more than probable, nay, I look upon it as a certainty, that your good nature has admitted this circumſtance as an excuſe for my ſilence. ——Indeed, dear Sir, I was ſick, and nigh unto death. Little did I think of writing any more to my friends, or of being written any longer among the living. O! that I may devote the life that has been prolonged, devote it wholly to the God of my health and my ſalvation!

I received by Dr ** your quotation from *Plato*, proving that the preposition ἀντὶ bears a vicarious ſignification *. For which be pleaſed to accept my thanks. It is a moſt reviving and delightful truth, that Chriſt has ſuffered in our ſtead, and bore all our ſins in his own body on the tree. When I was lately upon the verge of eternity, and juſt going to launch into the inviſible world, I could find conſolation in nothing, but this precious, precious faith. If all my iniquities were laid upon the beloved Son, they will never be laid to my charge in the day of judgment. If the bleſſed Jeſus made full ſatisfaction for my tranſgreſſions, the righteous God will never demand two payments of one debt. What an anchor for the ſoul is ſuch a belief! how ſure, how ſtedfaſt! May it be our ſolace in life, and our ſecurity in death!

A volume of letters, written by the Earl of *Orrery* to his ſon, has very much captivated the attention of the public.——Dr *Brown*'s remarks too upon Lord *Shafteſbury*'s *Characteriſtics* are, I think, equally worthy of univerſal acceptance. 'Tis a refined entertainment, to peruſe ſuch elegant and judicious compoſitions; but how flat are they all, how jejune and ſpiritleſs, compared with the ſincere milk of the word; the lively oracles of God! I hope, they will always prove a whet to our ſpiritual appetite; quicken our deſires, and heighten our reliſh of that heavenly manna, which is ſpread over every page of the Bible.

I am, dear Sir,

Your very affectionate friend, &c.

LETTER XCVII.

My dear Friend, *London, Jan* 14, 1752.

I Know you will excuſe my long ſilence, and acquit me on the receipt of this letter, though I own myſelf in your debt for another. When I have a lucid or a lively interval, I think it my duty to employ it, in attempting to finiſh my little work; which alas! proceeds as ſlowly, as my blood creeps heavily through my veins. Happy, happy they! who have firmneſs of nerve, and fertility of thought; and are enabled to devote them both to their gracious Redeemer's ſervice.

Pleaſe to pay my beſt thanks to Dr *Cotton*, for his very delicate *viſions*. I wiſh they may do good, and promote virtue; then, I am perſuaded, they will anſwer the benevolent intention of the author. I wiſh at the ſame time, that he would be a little explicit and courageous for Jeſus Chriſt. He deſerves it at our hands, who for our ſake endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame: he will recompenſe it into our boſom, by owning us before his Father, and the holy angels. Nor can I ever think, that the ſpread of our performances will be obſtructed, by pleaſing him, who has all hearts and all events in his ſovereign hand.——A viſion upon death, without a diſplay of Chriſt, ſeems to me like a body without a heart, or a heart without animal ſpirits. I am ſure, when I was lately (as myſelf and every one apprehended) on the brink of eternity, I found no conſolation but in Chriſt. Then I felt, what I had ſo often read, that there is no other name given under heaven, whereby man may obtain life and ſalvation, but only the name, the precious and ineſtimable name of Jeſus Chriſt. Oh! that its ſavour may be to us, both living and dying, *as ointment poured out.*

Tell Mrs **, that ſhe has not offended me; but I am

* The learned and Reverend Mr *Nixon*, Rector of *Cold-Higham* in *Northamptonſhire*, who furniſhed Mr *Hervey* with the proof from *Plato* that ἀντὶ bears a vicarious ſignification, hath communicated a remarkable paſſage, which ſhews that the notion of a vicarious ſacrifice prevailed alſo amongſt the old *Gauls*. *Pro vita hominis niſi vita hominis reddatur, non poſſe aliter Deorum immortalium numen placari arbitrantur* (Galli,) *publiceque ejuſdem generis habent inſtituta ſacrificia.* J. Cæſ. Comment. de Bell. Gall. l. vi. c. 16.

griev-

grieved, that I ſhould give her occaſion for ſuch a ſuſpicion.

You refer me to 2 *Eſdr.* v. 33.* 'Tis a ſweet paſſage, a noble and comfortable truth; and the apparent doctrine of ſcripture, however found in an apocryphal book.——Oh! that we may ſeek more aſſiduouſly to our all-condeſcending and omnipotent Friend. He will never upbraid us for our importunity; he will never diſappoint our hope; he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can aſk or think: and, bleſſed for ever be his name, as is his power, ſo is his love to his people, his children, his heirs. In this bleſſed number may he rank my dear friend, and his ever-affectionate, &c.

LETTER XCVIII.

Miles's-lane, March 24, 1752.

My dear Friend,

I Received your favour.——I congratulate you on your ſucceſs in your profeſſion. *Moſes* ſays, *It is God who giveth power to get wealth.* May ſuch acceſſions of proſperity enlarge your heart with gratitude, and attach your affections to our divine Benefactor!—I am ſorry to hear your account of dear **. O! that we may be taught *προσευχεσθαι*. *Lord, lead me in a plain way*, was the prayer of a noble ſufferer. May the thing that he prayed for, be the deſire of our heart, and guide of our life. I will very readily give him ſome Bibles, if he (for he is, if I miſtake not, a member of the ſociety for promoting Chriſtian knowledge) will ſend me an order in his name, a dozen ſhall be at his ſervice. I ſhall think my own books are publiſhed to good purpoſe, if they enable the author to diſtribute the invaluable book of God.

Upon reflection I charge myſelf with folly, for putting it into Mr **'s power to communicate a certain rumour. The wiſe man ſays humorouſly and ſarcaſtically; *Venture to conceal a ſecret, and be bold it will not burſt thee.* Intimating withal, that a ſecret in moſt people's breaſt, is like fermenting liquour in a caſk, which muſt have vent, or elſe it will burſt the veſſel. Therefore

Quid de quoque viro, et cui dicas, ſæpe caveto.

Mr **'s laſt piece I have not read through. I can't ſay, I am fond of that controverſy. The doctrine of the perſeverance of Chriſt's ſervants, Chriſt's children, Chriſt's ſpouſe, and Chriſt's members, I am thoroughly perſuaded of. Predeſtination and reprobation I think of, with fear and trembling. And if I ſhould attempt to ſtudy them, I would ſtudy them on my knees.

I wiſh you would aſk Dr S**'s opinion about *Eph.* iv. 16. with relation to the anatomical propriety of the paſſage; and with his, give me your own.——I know not what to do about publiſhing. May the Father of lights direct me! and not ſuffer me, either to write improperly, or to print precipitately!—With thanks for your letter, and with prayers for your increaſe in faith, in love, and holineſs; or, in that *kingdom of God*, which *is righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt.*

I am ever yours, &c.

* And I ſaid, Speak on, my Lord; then ſaid he unto me, Thou art ſore troubled in mind for Iſrael's ſake: loveſt thou that people better than he that made them?

LETTER XCIX.

Miles's-lane, 1752.

Dear Mr Nixon,

I Am obliged to you, for the favour done me by your letter, and for the honour done me by your verſes to be engraved under my mezzotinto picture. I ſhould have acknowledged both theſe obligations ſooner, if my printſeller had not been dilatory in publiſhing the picture; which is now tranſmitted to Dr *Stonhouſe*, and deſires your acceptance.

I cannot forbear thinking, that what is called honour, is a little capricious and whimſical. I, for my part, had taken my final leave of her; expected none of her favours, and was become familiarly acquainted with contempt. How is it then, that ſhe ſingles out a perſon, whoſe name has long ago been ſtruck out of her liſt; and beſtows her careſſes upon a mean creature, that has been uſed to ſit on the dunghill? O! that it may be for the glory of Chriſt's grace, Chriſt's wiſdom, Chriſt's power! May I ſerve to the Sun of Righteouſneſs, as a cloud is ſubſervient to the ſun in the firmament, which, though all-gloomy in itſelf, exhibits a rainbow; and thereby ſhews the world, what beautiful colours are combined in that magnificent luminary.

You are pleaſed to inquire after my little work; dear Sir, add to your kind inquiries, a prayer, to God, that it may be executed under the anointings of his Spirit, and appear (if ever it appears) under the influence of his bleſſing. My late ſickneſs laid an abſolute embargo upon it, for a conſiderable time; and has ſo ſhattered my feeble conſtitution, that I proceed like a veſſel that has loſt its rigging, and is full of leaks.——However ſlowly I advance in this eſſay, may I grow daily in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; and meet you, dear Sir, in that happy, happy heaven, were we both would be. Till then be pleaſed to rank, in the number of your ſincere and affectionate friends,

Your obliged humble ſervant, &c.

LETTER C.

To his MOTHER.

Honoured Madam, April 6.

I Received your favour of the 4th inſtant. Am very ſorry to find my father is ſo ill. Hope and earneſtly pray, that the great eternal Lord of life and death, will rebuke his diſorder, and reſtore him to health.——You need not doubt of being remembered in my ſupplications to the throne of grace. O! that they were better! O! that they proceeded from firmer faith, and were accompanied with greater fervour! Poor and weak as they are, they are often put up in behalf of my honoured parents, that the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, may ſtrengthen them with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-ſuffering with joyfulneſs, may give them an humble reſignation to his bleſſed will; enable them to rejoice even in their tribulations, and make all things work together for their good,—their exceeding great and everlaſting good.

I have, in obedience to your orders, put my affairs in readineſs to leave the city; but hope there will be no occaſion for ſuch a ſpeedy removal.——But if I ſhould come, alas! what can I do? My weakneſs is inconceivable. None can know it but the all-ſearching God.

God. I am evidently worſe, now the milder weather is advancing.

I am glad to hear my ſiſter holds well. God always mingles our cup of affliction with ſome ſweetening drops. None but Chriſt, that dear and adored Redeemer,—none but Chriſt, had gall without any honey, and vengeance without mercy. Bleſſed be his moſt holy name for enduring all kind of miſery, that we might want no manner of thing that is good.

I am, &c.

LETTER CI.

Dear Sir, *Tottenham, October* 18, 1751.

WHAT ſhall I ſay, or how ſhall I excuſe myſelf? I ſeem to be in the condition of *Pharaoh*'s butler, who remembered not his good friend *Joſeph*, but forgat him.——Yet be aſſured, dear Sir, that I have not forgot your kindneſs; I have retained a warm ſenſe of gratitude in my breaſt. The reaſon of my not acknowledging your favour ſooner was this; I propoſed to have tranſmitted my piece to your hands, (that part of it at leaſt, which was to be enriched with your own thoughts), that it might have the advantage of your critical reviſal, and judicious corrections.

But extreme weakneſs of body has retarded me in accompliſhing, has almoſt rendered me incapable of proſecuting the work. To all which infirmities the providence of our all-wiſe heavenly Father, has been pleaſed to ſuperadd a violent fever; which confined me for eight weeks, and brought me to the very brink of the grave. I beg of you, dear Sir, to accept my beſt thanks for your letter and its valuable contents; though late in their arrival, they are very ſincere in their tender. I hope you will give me leave to be obliged to you for one favour more. If ever the divine goodneſs ſhall enable me to complete my deſign, allow me to put it under your examination; I ſhall ſend it abroad into the world, with much leſs trepidation, with much greater ſatisfaction, if it has undergone the ſcrutiny of your judgment, and received the correction of your pen.—— I am, at leaſt I wiſh to be, ſenſible of my own incapacity, for handling the glorious, the divinely-excellent truths of God's everlaſting goſpel. If the apoſtle, who had been caught up into the third heaven, could not forbear crying out with ſo much vehemence, *Who is ſufficient for theſe things?* what, O! what ſhall I ſay? Indeed, I have much fear and trembling of heart, leſt I ſhould give ſome wrong touch to the ark; or by any imprudent, though officious kiſs, betray my divine Maſter to his enemies, rather than recommend him to the world. ——Good Sir, aſſiſt me with your prayers, that if I write, I may be anointed with that unction from the Holy One, which may teach me all things, and lead me into all truth; which may furniſh me with the tongue of the learned, and give me the pen of a ready writer.

Have you ſeen Mr *Taylor*'s late treatiſe on the *ſacrifice and atonement of Jeſus Chriſt?* If you have, I ſhould be glad to know what remarks occurred to your mind on the peruſal.——As you are a lover of natural philoſophy, I wiſh you would conſider the bleſſing of *Joſeph*, *Deut.* xxxiii. 13, 14, 15, 16. and favour me with your ſentiments upon that beautiful paſſage.——I ſhould not make either this or the preceding requeſt, if I had not the higheſt opinion of the freedom and fidelity of your temper, and the accurate diſcernment of your underſtanding.——As the bleſſed God has been pleaſed to deaden your ſenſe of hearing, may he daily quicken your ſpiritual ſenſes, to diſcern both good and evil. May he give you to hear the ſweet and ſtill voice of his good Spirit, witneſſing with your ſpirit, that you are the child of God, and an heir of glory! And would you implore the ſame bleſſing for your unworthy friend, it would be a kindneſs moſt gratefully to be acknowledged by, dear Sir,

Your much obliged, and

affectionate ſervant, J. H.

P. S. We have put one of Mr *Moſes Browne*'s children apprentice to a handſome buſineſs, and it will be a pleaſure to do ſo worthy a man all the ſervice that lies in my power.

LETTER CII.

London, Miles's-lane, Dec. 22, 1751.

Dear Siſter,

YESTERDAY in the afternoon, Mr ** and his mother called upon me; he offered to convey a letter or any meſſage to *Weſton*. I could not neglect this opportunity of ſending you my beſt wiſhes, and the congratulations of the ſeaſon.

Pleaſe to thank my mother for her kind letter.—— The wine was to have come laſt week, but my brother forgot to give the neceſſary orders, until it was too late. I hope no ſuch diſappointment will happen, if we live to ſee the end of this week. I wiſh you much of the divine preſence, and joy of the Lord in uſing it. May we all drink of thoſe living waters, which Chriſt Jeſus has promiſed in his goſpel! Of which they who drink, ſhall thirſt no more; but they ſhall be in them a well of water, ſpringing up into everlaſting life. Pray let me know, what thoſe living waters mean?

I have no preſent to make you this *Chriſtmas*, unleſs you will accept one from God's holy word. In the ninth chapter of *Iſaiah*, it is foretold, that poor ſinners, ſhall not only have a good hope, but ſhall even rejoice before God; rejoice with exceeding great joy; ſuch as the huſbandman feels, when he gathers in his harveſt, and receives the reward of all his toil; ſuch as the ſoldier experiences, when he has conquered his enemy, and is dividing the ſpoil.

What ſhall be the ſource of this joy?—their worldly wealth? Alas! riches make themſelves wings, and fly away. They profit not in the day of wrath.——Their carnal pleaſures? Theſe are always froth, and frequently gall. To be enamoured with theſe, is death. ——Their own good deeds? Theſe are a broken reed, a filthy rag; and ſhould cover us with confuſion, not fill us with conceit.——Whence then is this joy to flow? From Chriſt, wholly from Chriſt: he is the rich gift of God, he is the pearl of great price; the only conſolation of ſinners, and the ſupreme joy of his people. ——Therefore the prophet adds, in the language of triumph and exultation, *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder; and his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, the Mighty God, the Everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace.* This Child is Jeſus Chriſt, who is the foundation of all our comfort, the ſpring of all true delight.——He is the Son of the Moſt High, yet given to be made man, to be made a ſacrifice, to be made a curſe, for us.—So great, that the government of univerſal nature is upon his ſhoulder. The ſceptre of ſupreme authority is in his hand: he is *Head over all things to his church.*——So glorious, that his name ſhall be called *Wonderful*. God and man in one matchleſs

and

and marvellous perſon, clothed with clay, yet poſſeſſed of all the fulneſs of the Godhead: like *Jacob*'s ladder; whoſe foot was fixed on earth, while the ſummit was loſt in the ſkies.——So gracious, that he is *the Counſellor* to inſtruct ignorant creatures, and by his word and Spirit make them wiſe unto ſalvation. *The mighty God*; to ſubdue our iniquities, to write his laws in our hearts, and make us partakers of a divine nature. *The Prince of peace*; reconciling us to God by his death, and making peace by the blood of his croſs; by applying theſe bleſſings to our conſciences, filling us with that peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding. The *everlaſting Father*; to cheriſh us under the wings of his providence and grace, to make all things work together for our good, and prepare for us an everlaſting inheritance; even the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. O may the adorable Redeemer be all this to us! The prophet repeats this expreſſion, *To us*. This circumſtance is of the laſt importance. Then only is Chriſt our Fountain of life, and full of delights, when he is all this, does all this to us, even to us.

Let this ſcripture be the ſubject of our meditation, amidſt the approaching ſolemnity. And may an everlaſting ſenſe of its bleſſings give an additional, a heavenly reliſh to all our other entertainment!——I am your affectionate brother,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CIII.

Dear Sir,

IT is not the difficulty of anſwering Dr **'s queſtion, that makes me avoid it, but the diſagreeable nature of the office; as it will oblige me to ſhew, that he entirely miſtakes both the nature of the ſcriptures, and the nature of man. He would make Dr **'s and Dr ****'s ſentiments of things, the touchſtone of divine revelation. What is level to their apprehenſions, muſt be right; what comports with their notions, muſt be true. At this rate, they are not doers of the law, but judges. On the contrary, if they do not underſtand the doctrine of union with Chriſt, or the fitneſs of free juſtification to promote holineſs, it is becauſe their underſtandings are darkened: it is a ſign, that they want the eye-ſalve; a proof, that their ſenſes are not exerciſed to diſcern between good and evil.

Dr ** has *Roman* virtue; but indeed he very much wants the eye-ſalve. He ſees no glory and comelineſs in Chriſt, but much in his own conformity to the commands of his Maker.—While ſuch ſentiments poſſeſs the mind, people have no eyes to diſcern the beauty of free grace. Chriſt is juſt as inſignificant, as a phyſician's offering to preſcribe for a perſon in perfect health.—I am ſure, my poor, lame, mangled conformity to my Maker's commands, fills me with ſhame, and would make me hang down my head as a bulruſh. But my Lord's death, my Lord's obedience, my divine Lord's merit, encourages me, emboldens me, and enables me to ſay, Who ſhall condemn me?—Be pleaſed, by the by, to compare Dr **'s foundation for comfort and confidence, with St *Paul's*, Rom. viii. 33, 34. Who is in the right, I leave you to determine. I will only venture to aſſert, that *Paul* of *Tarſus* had as much conformity to the commands of his Maker as our amiable friend. Oh! that he was leſs amiable in his own eyes; and knew himſelf to be "wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked." See *Rev.* iii. 17.

1ſt. "A perſuaſion of our reconciliation to God, previous to our performance of holy duties."—Dr ** aſks, what is the foundation of ſuch a perſuaſion?—To which I anſwer; The doctrine delivered by St *Paul*, Rom. v. 10. *When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* From this paſſage he will ſee, that reconciliation to God is previous to our performance of holy duties. It is a bleſſing procured for enemies; and to ſay, that enemies have performed holy duties, is to confound the difference between rebels and ſubjects; is to make rebellion and allegiance the ſame.—Nay more, this bleſſing has no manner of dependence on our performance of holy duties, becauſe it is procured, not partially, but wholly procured by the death of Chriſt. It is not ſaid, when we, who were ſometime enemies, began to perform holy duties; but when we were enemies, while we were enemies, and conſidered only as enemies. Then, even then.—Wondrous grace! grace worthy of a God! Will not ſuch grace incline the rebels to throw down their arms?

The Doctor having laid down ſome premiſes, makes this inference; "Hence the phraſe of our reconciliation "to God, when we have renounced our ſins." But does this inference tally with the apoſtle's declaration, or is it the proper conſequence of his doctrine? Let not the acute diſputant, but the way-faring man judge.

"Our bleſſed Saviour," adds the Doctor, "directly "aſſerts, that the performance of religious duties is the "ſole evidence of our reconciliation."—We are not inquiring about the evidences of reconciliation, but about the way to acquire them. To determine what are the evidences of a cure, is eaſy enough; but to preſcribe the expeditious and certain method of working the cure, this is the thing we want. Here, according to my poor opinion, Mr *Marſhall* excells as much in the ſpiritual, as Dr ** in the animal *Therapeutica*.

The Doctor urges our Lord's words, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you*. Wandering from the point again. The queſtion is, How we ſhall be animated, ſtrengthened, and enabled to do them?

Upon this ſubject reaſon tells us, that ſuch a diſcharge of religious duties can alone convince a Chriſtian of the ſincerity of his profeſſion.—It may be ſo; but pray, Madam Reaſon, don't be impertinent, we did not aſk your opinion upon the point; if you would ſpeak to the purpoſe, you muſt tell us, how we may be enabled to diſcharge theſe religious duties. Does your Ladyſhip know, which is the firſt religious duty? I queſtion it; be content therefore to receive information from ſcripture: *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*. This is the firſt religious duty; now tell Dr ** and me, tell me honeſtly and explicitly, how we can perform this duty? Is it poſſible to love the Lord, to love him with all our heart, if we look upon him as incenſed againſt us, unreconciled to us? Is it poſſible to love him when we apprehend ourſelves to be under his wrath, or ſuſpect that he will prove an enemy to us at the laſt?

The Doctor having a higher opinion of reaſon * than I, is a greater favourite with her; I would therefore beg to know of him, what reply ſhe makes to this interrogatory; and I promiſe beforehand, that I will ſtand to her award, if ſhe can point out any method of practiſing this duty, different from that propoſed by Mr *Marſhall*; then my favourite author and myſelf will ſubmit to the charge of enthuſiaſm.

2dly, "A perſuaſion of our future enjoyment of the "heavenly happineſs, previous to our performance of "holy duties."

I aſk Mr *Hervey*, "What is the foundation of ſuch a "perſuaſion?"—Mr *Hervey* anſwers, Our free juſtification through Jeſus Chriſt, which we receive under the character of ungodly perſons; conſequently, before the performance of good works, *Rom.* iv. 5.—I anſwer again, The free promiſe of God: *God hath given unto us*

* Reaſon I mean, in her preſent fallen ſtate.

eternal life, 1 *John* v. 11. But is not this promiſe founded on our own duties and obedience? No, but on the duties and obedience of our great Mediator. *This life is in his Son.*

In the firſt book of the ſacred writings is this important interrogatory, made by God himſelf; *If thou doſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted?*—Here I beg leave to aſk, in my turn, Which is the perſon who does well? Dr **, who would perſuade us to reject the gift of God, (1 *John* v. 11.) and not believe his word, or Mr *Marſhall*, who would engage us to credit the divine declaration, and receive the divine gift? The apoſtle ſays, by not believing this record, *we make God a liar*, 1 *John* v. 10. And ſhall we call this doing well? or is this the way to be accepted?

The Doctor farther urges, in the very laſt chapter of the ſame ſacred volumes, we are told, *Bleſſed are they who do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life.*—Let me aſk again, does the Doctor remember, what the commandments of the Almighty are? He may ſee them reduced to two particulars, and ranged in the exacteſt order, 1 *John* iii. 23. The firſt of theſe commandments is, *That we believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* Let the Doctor only interpret this precept, tell me what is included in this injunction, and I am inclined to think, he will find each of Mr *Marſhall's* preliminary articles contained in its import. To believe in Chriſt, is to live under a perſuaſion, that he has died to reconcile me to God; that he has obeyed to obtain eternal life for me; and intercedes in heaven, that I may receive the Holy Ghoſt the Comforter.—Take away theſe ingredients from faith, and its ſpirit evaporates; its very life expires; you have nothing left, but a mere *caput mortuum.*

The Doctor charges us "with ſpiritual pride." But is it pride, to confeſs ourſelves ungodly wretches; and as ſuch, to receive free juſtification from infinitely-rich grace?—"With preſumption and unwarrantable perſuaſions."—But is that a preſumptuous claim, or that an unwarrantable perſuaſion, which is founded on the infallible promiſe of God, and implied in the very nature of faith?—He bids us "beware, leſt we be the dupes of our own credulity." We thank him for the friendly admonition; and, to ſhew our gratitude, we would ſuggeſt a caution to our worthy friend, that before he argues on a religious ſubject, he would gain clearer ideas of its nature. He talks of reconciliation, as implying concern and grief. Here he fights with a ſhadow, and a ſhadow of his own raiſing; no mortal ever affirmed or dreamed of any ſuch thing. Reconciliation is neither more nor leſs, than a removal of offence, and a reſtoration to favour. He mentions Mr *Marſhall's* three propoſitions, as the requiſite ſignals of faith; whereas they are the conſtituent parts, the very eſſence of faith; they differ as much from a ſignal, as the florid blood and lively ſpirits differ from the bloom on the cheek, or the ſparkle in the eye.—He tells us "that the faith of the *Jews* "was one thing; but after our Saviour's death, the faith "of the *Gentiles* was another." St *Paul*, who was a *Jew* by birth, and an apoſtle of the *Gentiles* by office, tells us the very reverſe. There is one faith, of which Chriſt the Lamb, ſlain from the foundation of the world, was and is the invariable object. *To him give all the prophets*, as well as all the apoſtles, *witneſs, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.* Believing in Chriſt, we ſee, is the one, conſtant, unalterable way, in which both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, the hearers of the prophets and the converts of the apoſtles, obtained pardon, life, and glory.

Had Dr ** obſerved this caution, he would not have ſpent ſo many needleſs and random words on the third propoſition, which proceed upon an abſolute miſtake of the point. "We advocates for ſelf-ſufficiency in man!" I wonder how the ingenious Doctor can entertain ſuch a ſuſpicion, eſpecially as he knows, we have ſubſcribed, we believe, and we maintain the tenth article of our church. He has blamed us for this belief; therefore he ſhould, in all reaſon, blame himſelf for thoſe extravagant excurſions of his pen; which are juſt as far from ſobriety and fact, as the *Antipodes* are from the latitude of *London*. Our maxim and Mr *Marſhall's* meaning is,—Though leſs than nothing, though worſe than nothing in ourſelves, we can do all things through Chriſt's ſtrengthening us.—I am, &c.

LETTER CIV.

Saturday Morning.

SHALL I beg you to tell Dr ***, that his beautiful *Viſions* * were by *Dodſley* the bookſeller put into the hands of a very pious and ingenious friend of mine, who propoſes an alteration in the ninth line of the ſixty-ninth page of the fifth edition, where he would read *Jeſus* inſtead of *virtue*.

At that important hour of need,
Jeſus ſhall prove a friend indeed.

But I am not of his opinion, unleſs an uniform vein of evangelical doctrine had run through the whole. This, I muſt confeſs, I could have been glad to have ſeen in ſo elegant a poem, where *Spencer's* fancy, and *Prior's* eaſe are united: And I hope if the Doctor ſhould ever write any more poetry, he will take this important hint into his conſideration. Indeed he ought; for even in his *Viſion on death*, he has not paid the leaſt regard to Chriſt our Redeemer, the Conqueror of death. I preſume they fell according to our wiſhes. May they, under the bleſſing of a moſt gracious God, impart good to the world, and bring gain to the author!

If I miſtake not, you are a ſubſcribing member of the ſociety for promoting Chriſtian knowledge; will you be ſo kind as to procure for me a dozen of Bibles, and a dozen of the Biſhop of *Man* on the Lord's ſupper!—I give away *this* to communicants, becauſe it has the communion-ſervice in it; and becauſe it is more evangelical, and leſs exceptionable than the generality of what are called preparations for, or companions at the ſacrament;—too many of which books, by long prayers for each day in the week, and by injudicious repreſentations, have ſometimes, I fear, a contrary effect to what was intended.—I had once a deſign, nor have I wholly laid it aſide, of extracting from *Jenks's office of devotion*, the few leaves he has here wrote ſo pathetically on the ſacrament, and of printing them with the communion-ſervice, after the manner of the Biſhop of *Man*; adding on the ſides ſuitable obſervations of my own, to ſupply *Jenks's* deficiencies.—I propoſe likewiſe to add what *Marſhall* ſays on the ſubject, and inſert from the Biſhop of *Man*, his ſhort, yet ſtriking meditations on ſome well-choſen texts of ſcripture, which will be of ſervice to every one; particularly to thoſe who are unaccuſtomed to meditate, or have no talents for it, and conſequently want ſuch an aſſiſtance to employ the time while others are receiving the bread and wine.——What ſays my *fidus Achates* to this?—Give it a place in your thoughts; and however we may determine on this, let us determine to cleave more cloſely to the Lord, and wait upon our God continually. *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the heavens.* Let this be our pattern, and ſuch our practice. To his tender care, and continual guidance, I commit you; and am

Cordially yours, &c.

* See letter XCVII.

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LETTER CV.

Dear Sir, *London, Miles's Lane, April* 9, 1752.

SOON after I received your laſt favour, we were viſited by a very alarming providence; a fire broke out in a ſugar-baker's workhouſe, part of which communicated with my brother's houſe, and the whole was ſeparated from us, only by a court-yard, four or five yards in breadth. Three engines played from his houſe, and another ſtood ready in the dining-room, in caſe of any unexpected exigency.——We were all conſternation and confuſion; in the hurry, I miſlaid ſome where or other your valuable letter, and cannot recover it by any ſearch. I wiſh you would be ſo kind, as to direct me once more to the magazine, in which your chronological obſervation is inſerted. I ſhall be more particularly pleaſed, to ſee difficulties of this nature cleared up; becauſe the works of a very celebrated genius are lately publiſhed, in which he very much decries the chronology and hiſtory of the ſacred ſcriptures; I mean ſome poſthumous volumes, written by the late Lord *Bolingbroke.*

You will excuſe me, for not making my thankful acknowledgments ſooner. The objections you ſtarted, and the anſwers you gave, were richly worth preſerving; I am truly ſorry, that the aforementioned diſaſter has, I fear, deprived me of them. Have you no copy taken for your own ſatisfaction? With relation to my intended work, if it was in your hands, I believe, you would not think it expedient, to add any thing more of the argumentative kind. I fear, I have been too prolix already; and if ever I ſhould be ſo happy as to obtain your reviſal of it, ſhould be very deſirous that you would make very free with the pruning-knife.—I have no vindication, but ſome excuſe, for my delay in writing.—I catched ſuch a cold, on the late terrifying occaſion, (being obliged to wade through water in order to eſcape the fire,) as confined me to my chamber ſeveral weeks. I mentioned to you *Taylor's* treatiſe of *original ſin.* As you have not ſeen the work, give me leave to tranſmit, as fully as I can recollect, one or two of his objections to the orthodox opinion.—God is the Maker, the true and immediate Maker of all men, *Job* xxxi. 15. Now it is impoſſible that God ſhould make our nature, and yet not make the qualities and propenſities which it has when made. Therefore, whatever principles, or whatever ſeeds are implanted in our conſtitution, they cannot be principles of iniquity nor ſeeds of ſin; becauſe they are are all infuſed and planted by our infinitely good and holy Creator.—Such paſſions, appetites, propenſities, cannot be ſinful, becauſe they are neceſſary and unavoidable, (and that cannot be ſinful in me, which I can nowiſe avoid, help, or hinder,) neither can they render us objects of God's wrath; for it is infinitely abſurd, and highly diſhonourable to God, to ſuppoſe he is diſpleaſed at us, for what he himſelf has infuſed into our nature.

What ſays St *James?* * *Therewith curſe we men, who are made after the ſimilitude of God.* The ſimilitude of God ſignifies thoſe moral endowments, which diſtinguiſh the poſſeſſor, both from the brutes and the devils: and in this image, or veſted with theſe qualifications, men are made. What then becomes of the doctrine of original ſin?

St *Paul* ſpeaks of people, that had their underſtanding darkened, that were alienated in their minds, were haters of God, *&c.* But this is affirmed of the idolatrous heathen. The very *Gentiles*, according to St *Paul's* account, *ſhew the work of the law written on their hearts, their conſciences mean while accuſing or elſe excuſing one another.*—Here then are heathens, who have the work of the law, (not barely diſcerned by their underſtanding, but) written on their hearts; have both the knowledge and the love of its moral precepts; with an awakened tender conſcience, ever ready to act the part of an impartial reprover, or a zealous advocate; and what higher character can you give of your firſt-rate believer; They are alſo ſaid to *do by nature the things contained in the law;* an irrefragable proof that our nature is not ſo depraved in point of inclination, nor ſo diſabled with regard to its executive powers, as the doctrine of original ſin ſuppoſes.

Let me requeſt the favour of your ſentiments upon the preceding objections. Your ingenious remarks on *Deut.* xxxiii. 13. *&c.* I received; I prize, and I thank you for them. May the gracious God, for a recompence, lead you farther and farther into the unſearchable treaſures of wiſdom hid in the ſcriptures, and fill you with all wiſdom and ſpiritual underſtanding. I comfort myſelf in thinking, that you do not in your prayers forget, dear Sir,

Your much-obliged, and

Truly-affectionate friend,

J. HERVEY.

* James iii. 9.

LETTER CVI.

Weſton-Favell, Dec. 14, 1752.

Reverend Sir,

LITTLE did I think, when I recommended, to the public, the *Obſervations on*—*, that I ſhould be ſo agreeably and amply recompenſed for my occaſional note; recompenſed with a letter from the author;—which, I aſſure you, was extremely welcome; not only on account of the ſame ſtrain of elegance, which runs through and adorns your book; but for the tender which it brought me, of a very valuable acceſſion to the ſmall number of my friends.—Your friendſhip, dear Sir, I accept as a privilege, and ſhall cultivate with delight. Only I muſt, in common juſtice, forewarn you of one particular: That your ſocial intercourſes with *James Hervey*, will be an exerciſe of charity, rather than an advantageous traffic to yourſelf. Beſides other reaſons, which I might too truly alledge for the ſupport of this hint, a long-continued habit of indiſpoſition and bodily weakneſs, has laid a heavy hand on my animal ſpirits, which (take my word for it, ſince I hope you will never know it by experience) both cramps the exertion and obſtructs the improvement of the intellectual faculties.—You remember, however, who has ſaid, *It is more bleſſed to give than to receive;* which, I think, will hold good, when applied either to the treaſures of the mind, or the riches of fortune.

Your approbation of any thing in my ſlight remarks, will give me ſingular ſatisfaction; yet I ſhould be no leſs obliged for your free thoughts, on what ſhould have been added, expunged, or altered. Let this, dear Sir, be the firſt-fruits of our friendſhip. Point out my blemiſhes, and ſupply my defects. Applauſe may be more ſoothing to my vanity; but ſuch kind corrections will be more pleaſing to my judgment, and more ſerviceable to our common cauſe. It is ſcarce probable that a ſecond edition ſhould be publiſhed, as the firſt was numerous; but if there ſhould be ſuch a demand, I am ſure, your animadverſions would enrich and ennoble it.

I thank you for your reflections on the ſcriptures, which are perfectly juſt, and peculiarly animated. I

* Probably the *Obſervations on Tacitus*, commended by Mr Hervey, above, page 514.

cannot

cannot but wish, that the vindication of their dignity, and the display of their excellency, had fallen to your share. This, I trust, is a service reserved for your pen; to be drawn with tenfold energy and success, on some future occasion. And may you, when called to such an important work, be *a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use!*

I bless God for the just notions you form concerning the Holy Spirit, and the necessity of his enlightening influences; without which, the scriptures will be a sealed book, and even the word of life a dead letter. Men of superior abilities too often lean to their own understanding, and reject the guidance, the teachings, of the Holy Ghost. Not because these are not mentioned, insisted upon, promised in the gospel; but because they fancy themselves capable of comprehending, without any supernatural aid, τα μεγαλεια του θεου. But may we, Sir, be sensible, ever sensible, that all our sufficiency is of God; and not blush to be the humble pupils of the heavenly Teacher, who *hideth these things from the wise and prudent, but revealeth them unto babes.*—I am desirous of being taught by the labours of learned men; more desirous of being taught by the written word of revelation: but, amidst all, and above all, to be taught of God; or, as our liturgy very boldly, but not improperly, explains the prophet, "taught by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit."

I am pleased to hear from **, that you are situated near that worthy gentleman Dr * *, whose works praise him in the gate; to whom belongs that noble character, *The liberal person deviseth liberal things;* to whom, I trust, will be made good that inestimable promise, in its fullest extent, *By liberal things shall he stand.* They shall be his witnesses at the day of eternal judgment, that his faith in Christ Jesus has neither been empty, barren, nor dead.—When you have the pleasure of waiting on him, be so good as to present him with my most respectful compliments.

You are not under the least obligation to me, for bearing my testimony to your late performance. It is a debt which I owe, for the delight I received in perusing it. I wish it may soon come to a second edition: And, if my attestation to its merit is a means of introducing it into the hands of my readers, I don't doubt, but it will do an honour to my taste. The present, which you promise me, will be very acceptable: But, my dear Sir, if you have a family, or your circumstances should not be affluent, I beg you would not think of it. You see I follow your example, and speak, not as a new acquaintance, but as a bosom-friend.

Should it ever be in my power to do you any service, I can suggest a method, whereby you might repay, more than repay the favour. That is, by taking the trouble of reviling a little work, which I have upon the anvil, and bestowing upon it your free remarks.——A few touches from your pen would, if the thing be not incorrigibly bad, very much improve it. Had I not seen a display of your judgment and delicacy, in the *Observations, &c.* I should not have asked such an instance of your friendship: whereas now I cannot but earnestly desire it, shall highly esteem it, and shall very thankfully acknowledge it.

Not by might, nor by strength, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. And we may truly say, Not by polished diction, or brilliant sentiment; not by the arts of persuasion, or the force of reasoning; but by God almighty's blessing, our attempts are prevalent, and our books successful. This is my comfort, and this my confidence: as an author, I would aim, singly aim at the glory of my divine Master, and the furtherance of his everlasting gospel. Then I would resign the issue of my endeavours wholly to his providence and grace; who can, out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, perfect his praise. Nevertheless, I would by no means neglect the recommendations of a grateful composition. I would be glad to have the apples of gold, which are the truths of our holy religion, conveyed or set in pictures of silver. For this we have the genius of human nature, which, generally speaking, must be pleased, in order to be profited.——For this we have the precedent of the wisest of men, who *sought and found out acceptable words*, even when that which was written, was the truth of God.—If it is consistent with your other engagements, to oblige me in this very substantial manner,—**, who undertakes to transmit this letter, has promised to convey a little parcel to your hands.

I wish you, Sir, what the eloquent apostle styles, * *the riches of the full assurance of understanding;* and turning my wishes into prayers, take my leave, and profess myself, Rev. Sir,

Your truly-affectionate
Friend and Brother,
J. HERVEY.

LETTER CVII.

My dear Friend,

THE apostle warns us not to be *carried about with every wind of doctrine*—I think, *Marshall* has answered great part of Dr ***'s letter, (see page 96. 97. of the 8vo edition.)—Pray desire Dr *** at his leisure to shew, wherein he suspects *Marshall* to be unscriptural.—You may depend upon it, I shall appeal from the Doctor's determination, unless he supports it by scripture.—The poor and unlearned generally understand the gospel better than the accomplished scholar; because it pleases God, by the foolishness † of preaching, to save them that believe.—God long ago foretold, that but few would understand and receive evangelical truth. *Who hath believed our report?* says *Isaiah:* Very, very few. To this St *Paul*; *Not many wise, not many mighty are called.*—The attributes of the Deity will stand clear from all just impeachment, if we demonstrate, that his doctrine is most excellently calculated, to humble the sinner, to exalt the Saviour, and promote filial obedience.—Let the objections and misapprehensions of such learned and ingenious men, teach us to distrust our own ability; not to lean on our own understandings, but seek more earnestly for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation.

Dr *** thinks the doctrine delivered in *Marshall's* book to be inconsistent with scripture, and repugnant to reason.—Whereas I think it contains the very marrow of scripture; consequently is reason in its highest refinement. I daily experience it to be the medicine of my better life, or the most sovereign means to comfort the conscience and purify the heart.—If the Doctor had leisure, I should be glad to hear what a person of his fine sense and keen discernment could say against my favourite author.—

Have you any author of elegance and spirit, who has written either a treatise or sermon on the subject of true holiness,—its nature,—its necessity,—its excellency? If you could furnish me with such a treatise, I would endeavour to put his displays of holiness into *Theron's* mouth, and *Aspasio* should shew the manner of acting, all on evangelical principles.—Has *Atterbury* said any thing of this kind, or *Foster* in his sermons?—I wish you would search your own stock of ideas. Search your most admired *Arminian* writers, and produce the noble qualities, the important duties, which constitute the dignity or the happiness of our nature; and I will undertake, I will attempt, at least to point out the ex-

* See Col. ii. 2. † See 1 Cor. i. 21.

peditious

peditious and easy way to them, all on Mr *Marshall's* plan.

The Doctor is strangely vague in his argumentation. On the two first topics he does little else but ramble; the last he absolutely mistakes. I don't affirm that we have sufficient strength. I wonder how he could suppose this, when he knows it is our persuasion, that we have not power so much as cordially to will that which is good. But a persuasion that God will give us sufficient strength, this is the point we plead for, the privilege to which we stand entitled by the gospel.

You forgot, my dear friend, to send me *Jennings* on *original sin*.—If you think Mrs *** is in want, I will very willingly give her two guineas. Who would not give away their superfluities for his sake, who gave his very life for our sins? O! that I had also strength of body, that I might spend what is more valuable than gold in his sacred service! But forbear, my soul, his will be done.—I hope God may incline your heart, to review those manuscripts; and strengthen your judgment, to discern their improprieties. I really have no fondness to appear again in print: I had much rather decline, what requires any labour of the brain. But since I have proceeded so far in the work, since there is some expectation of it, and many prayers put up for it, I cannot be easy, when I offer to discontinue it. Do, my dear friend, give me a little of your time; take some pains in my behalf; 'tis the last trouble of this kind I shall ever give you. For should this piece be finished, never, never will I attempt another. Who knows, but if you help me in this work, I may converse with you, when I am dead; and perhaps, a very weak hint, from the pen of an old friend, may be blessed to your comfort, when he is gone hence, and no more seen? Till then, after then, and for ever, I hope to be affectionately yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S. Pray let me hear the issue of your interview with the gentleman.—I hope, the God of wisdom and of power will give you an irreproachable conduct, and a decent boldness. Why should we be *afraid of man that shall die, and the son of man that shall be as grass; and forget the Lord our Maker, who stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth?* Fear not, you have done nothing in this whole affair, but what, I am verily persuaded, is pleasing to him, whose loving-kindness is better than life.

Oh! that it was worth your while to wish, and that it was safe for me to grant, an absolution of my sentence against you;—but you must not come to hear me so long as the small-pox is in your town, as many of my people will be terrified at your presence. I'll tell you one good thing, that was in our sermon last *Sunday*: this portion * of scripture, viz. *With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.* And this, all this is for you, my dear friend; and for thee, my sinful soul. O! let us receive the blessings! let us embrace the blessings! For it is our gracious Master's will, by these sweet, inviting, generous methods, to wean us from a deluding world, and win us to his blessed self.—Adieu.

LETTER CVIII.

Dear Sir,

MY poor father is in some respects better, but he is as weak and helpless as ever. Most of his time passes in a kind of dosing sleep. He has no inclination to talk; takes little notice of persons or things.—I hope, his great work is done, his interest in Christ secured, and his soul sanctified by grace. For indeed, such a state of languishing is as unfit to work out salvation, and lay hold on eternal life, as to grind at a mill, or to run a race. Oh! that we all may give diligent attention to the things which belong to our peace, before the inability of sickness, and the night of death approaches.——I sent for the *Poem on sickness* by Mr *Thompson* of *Queen's* college, *Oxford;* and was surprised to find it a four-shilling and six-penny piece. It is, I think, a loose and rambling performance; some good lines, but a great deal of it nothing at all to the purpose: not comparable in point of elegance, propriety, and beauty, to his *Hymn on May.* However, I would not have it depretiated, methinks, because it speaks worthily of the Christian religion, and the Rock of our hopes, Christ Jesus.

Adieu, my dear friend,

Ever yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CIX.

Dear Sister,

I Hope this will find my father better. I heartily wish and daily pray, that the God of everlasting compassions may comfort him under his sorrows, may sanctify his affliction, and restore him to his health, that he may recover more spiritual strength before he goes hence, and is no more seen.

I sent my brother some books, and humbly beseech the Giver of every good gift, to accompany them with his heavenly blessing; for what he blesses is blessed indeed.

I could be truly glad to hear your complaints are removed;—but if they continue, don't be discouraged.—*Whom the Lord loveth he chastiseth.* God had but one Son without sin, but none without sufferings. Oh! that his infinite goodness may sanctify your tribulations, that they may be a means of weaning you from the world, and bringing you to Jesus Christ! Then you will one day say with the *psalmist, It is good for me that I have been afflicted.*—I am, *&c.*

J. HERVEY.

LETTER CX.

Dear Sir,

YOur observations are perfectly just, and Dr *Doddridge's* remarks are admirably judicious; his alterations are indeed excellent and charming. Oh! may they be equally impressive on me, as I transcribe them, and on all that may hereafter read them! Many most solid and valuable corrections has the Doctor already made in my little piece, but, in my opinion, these are beyond them all. I cannot but wish he had leisure, to have went through the whole with his improving strokes; but, as the business of his academy and ministry is so various, and so important, I cannot prevail with myself to make such a request. I will try, and do the best I can, to proceed on the plan which he has formed, and to follow (*magno licet intervallo*) the example he has set. Be so good as to make my most grateful acknowledgements; let your tongue speak, for really my pen cannot write how greatly I am obliged to him. I will

* See *Psal.* cxxx. 7.

venture to turn, what was uſed formerly as an imprecation, into a wiſh and a bleſſing on this occaſion, *May God do ſo to him and more alſo!*

—O! that our writings may be accompanied with the bleſſed Spirit; and that the ſpirit of our writings may be operative on our hearts, and apparent in our converſation!

Ever yours, while

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXL

My dear Friend, *Miles's Lane, Sat. Morn.*

IF I am tolerably well, I will wait upon Dr *C**** on *Tueſday* morning.—He has a delicate genius, and I dare ſay he is an excellent phyſician.——Oh that his fine parts may be grafted into the true olive-tree, and bring forth fruit unto God.———If Providence permits us to meet, I hope to have ſome evangelical diſcourſe with him.

Sure you could not go to *London*, without putting to your heart ſome of your own important queſtions, under the heads of ſelf-examination.———Have you indulged yourſelf in needleſs amuſements, needleſs diverſions of any kind?——Have you employed your time uſefully to yourſelf, or to others?—My deareſt friend, remember in what book, by whoſe hand ſeveral ſuch like queſtions are written! I fear you have not ſo much as ſpoke one word for Chriſt, ſince you have entered the metropolis; though you muſt have had ſo many opportunities. Oh! why do you thus bury your ſprightly talents in a napkin!——Edify your neighbours by your converſation.——What a loſs has Mr ** and Mr ***, and others of your correſpondents, ſuſtained by your forgetting, or diſuſing the language of *Zion?*——I have lately purchaſed *Lowman*'s *expoſition of the Revelations.*———Give me leave to refer you to the fifth verſe of the ſecond chapter, *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and do thy firſt works.* Pray lend me *Lowman* on the *civil government of the Hebrews*, which I hear is a moſt excellent book, and illuſtrates many obſcure paſſages in the Bible.

Do you keep a diary as you uſed to do, a ſecret hiſtory of your heart and conduct, and take notice of the manner in which your time is ſpent, and of the ſtrain which runs through your diſcourſe? Do you minute down your ſins of omiſſion as well as of commiſſion, and obſerve the frame of your ſpirit in religious duties? Do you regiſter your moſt ſecret faults, thoſe faults to which none but your own conſcience is privy, none but the all-ſeeing eye diſcerns?—And do you often review theſe intereſting memoirs? remembering at the ſame time, that for all theſe things God will one day call you into judgment.——Keeping a diary is the way to know ourſelves, and of all other preparatives it beſt diſpoſes us to prayer, and to ſeek in earneſt after that bleſſed Redeemer, who died to ſave ſinners, and through whom alone we can ever expect to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Adieu! my dear friend!——God in heaven bleſs and protect you! I hope to ſee you 'ere long;—and am in the mean time, with true regard,

Yours faithfully and affectionately,

J. HERVEY.

LETTER CXII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton, Feb. 3. 1753.*

I AM greatly obliged for your repeated favours, and truly ſenſible of my obligations. I have not acknowledged them ſo punctually as I ought; but I hope you will excuſe this neglect, and aſcribe it to the real cauſe, ill health and weak ſpirits, which cramp my mind, unnerve my hand, and make me treſpaſs upon the candour of all my correſpondents. Why did I ſay hope? I ſee you do excuſe me. Of this your laſt letter, tranſmitted to Mr *Moſes Browne*, is a clear and pleaſing proof, which I ſafely received, and for which I ſincerely thank you;—as I bleſs the God of grace, and the God of wiſdom, for giving you ſo friendly a temper, and ſo diſcerning a judgment.

The little * piece which you have ſo judiciouſly retouched and improved, was not written for public view; but I thought, after frequent prayer to God for direction, and attending to the workings of his Providence, it was his will that it ſhould be publiſhed. I was ſenſible of its many defects, but upon his almighty power I depend for its uſefulneſs; he can bid even a worm threſh the mountains, and make his ſtrength perfect, illuſtrious, triumphant, in the moſt abject weakneſs.—Bleſſed be his holy name, that the ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt, and the advocates for his ſacred cauſe, have ſuch an arm to rely on. If another edition ſhould be required, I will take leave to enrich my piece with your remarks; and let me beg of you to favour me with your opinion, in relation to ſome additions, which I have occaſionally penned. Page 111. after line 22. add,—But what ſhall we ſay to a miſtake in the ſacred chronology,—a palpable miſtake pointed out by his Lordſhip, proved to be ſuch by the teſtimony of profane hiſtory,—*Samaria* ſaid to be taken by the king of *Aſſyria*, twelve years after the *Aſſyrian* empire was no more?——For my own part, I make neither heſitation nor ſcruple to reply, if *Iſaiah* and *Herodotus* † vary; if the authors of the *Kings*, the *Chronicles*, and ſeveral of the prophets, differ from the *Greek* hiſtorians, I am under no difficulty in ſettling my judgment, and taking my ſide. When profane writers agree with the ſacred, I admit both accounts; when they diſagree, I reject the former, and acquieſce in the latter. Nor can I tax myſelf with any thing unreaſonable or arbitrary in this proceeding: for ſurely thoſe writers, who are able to foretell future events, muſt deſerve the preference in relating paſt. Thoſe witneſſes, who dwelt on the ſpot, and were perſonally concerned in affairs, are more to be relied on than thoſe who lived in a diſtant country, and wrote in a diſtant age? With regard to the caſe ſpecified by my Lord *Bolingbroke*, I believe the attentive reader will find the error, not in the ſacred chronology, but in his Lordſhip's apprehenſion. The kingdom of *Aſſyria* was not at that period no more; but like the *Iriſh* or *Scotch* crowns to the *Engliſh*, united to the *Babylonians:* of which, when the holy writers treat, they call it ſometimes by one name, ſometimes by the other.

Page 15. after eſtabliſhed,—inſert,—" If *Iſaiah* ſpeaks " by divine inſpiration, when he ſays of the formidable " *Sennacherib*, *The Lord of hoſts ſhall ſtir up a ſcourge for* " *him, according to the ſlaughter of Midian;* ſurely that " memorable defeat, recorded in the book of *Judges*, " muſt be an undoubted fact. Could the Spirit, which " is infallible, give ſuch a ſanction to a ſtory which was " fictitious?" When the ſame *Iſaiah* prays in that elevated and ardent ſtrain,—*Awake, awake, put on ſtrength,*

* This little piece, was Remarks on Lord *Bolingbroke*'s letters on the hiſtory of the Old Teſtament, inſerted, above, p. 512. &c.

† *Herodotus* does not differ from the prophet *Iſaiah* and the ſcripture-accounts of the empire of *Aſſyria*; 'tis *Cteſias* and *Juſtin* that vary from it.

O arm

O arm of the Lord! awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old! Art thou not it, that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it, which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep? that hath made the depths of the sea, a way for the ransomed to pass over? can we reasonably imagine, that the prophet would plead lying vanities, before the God of truth? that he would ground his own and his countrymens faith, on a popular romance; or on what my Lord calls, "a purely-human and therefore fallible" narrative?

Does not the blessed Jesus describe the manner, and illustrate the efficacy of his own death, by the serpent lifted up in the wilderness, and its all-healing virtue on the wounded *Israelites?* Does not the holy apostle enumerate several of the most wonderful miracles, wrought for the deliverance, the preservation, the chastisement of *Israel*, and from these occurrences,—deduce the most important admonitions; urge the most forcible exhortations?—Such references, made by such persons, not only suppose, but prove more than bare allusions; they are also ratifications; and demonstrate, with an evidence, clear as the wisdom, firm as the faithfulness, of an incarnate God, that the writers of these accounts have neither deceived us, nor were deceived themselves.—Should it be said, that these passages are chiefly in the *Mosaical* history, and therefore give no authority to the other historical memoirs. I would ask, does not St *Paul*, *Rom.* ii. 23. quote a passage from the book of *Kings?* does he not build upon the passage as a sure and indubitable truth? does he not dignify the book with what I may term, the incommunicable character in writing; and style it, by way of superlative eminence, the scripture? Is it not undeniably certain, that the *Jewish* youths, and *Timothy* among the rest,—were instructed in the historical as well as the prophetical volumes of the *Old Testament?* Does not the best of judges recommend all those volumes to our highest estimation, by pronouncing them holy writings, (ἱερὰ γράμματα)? Does he not clearly manifest their divine extract, when he so nobly displays their divine effects; they *are able to make thee wise to salvation, through faith which is in Jesus Christ?* What then shall we think of Lord *Bolingbroke's* declaration? which I could not read without grief, and cannot transcribe without horror. "The Bible history appears to every one, who reads "it without prepossession, and with attention, to be "nothing more than a compilation of old traditions, "and an abridgment of old records." In short, my Lady, the doctrinal and historical parts are indissolubly, *&c.* Page 20. line 18. after the word "vigilance;" and instead of the eight following lines, insert,—the number of whose verses,—especially in the Pentateuch —was computed; and the arrangement of the very letters, for the space of many centuries, known; whether, before the coming of Christ, the spirit of prophecy, which confessedly existed in the *Jewish* church,* was not sufficient to prevent, or else sure to detect, any corrupt innovations; whether, after the coming of Christ, the jealous eye which the *Jews* and *Christians* had on each other, was not an unsurmountable bar against any material alterations.

* This is a fact asserted by every ancient prophet, and by almost all the sacred historians. A fact, confirmed by Christ and his apostles; unanimously attested by the earliest *Jewish* writers: neither disproved, nor contradicted, nor so much as questioned, by any contemporary author. And if all this does not amount to a proper proof, what proper proof can be given of any transaction, that passed in a remote age?

The argument mentioned above will receive additional strength, if considered in connection with that solemn charge, "not to add nor diminish." *Deut.* iv. 2. *Prov.* xxx. 6. and with the custom observed by the prophets, of referring people for a solution of their religious doubts, to the written word. For would men of the prophetical character allow a book full of spurious additions? Or would they direct the well disposed to such fallacious guides?

Page 21. line 2. after "composition,"—add,—"Though we should rescue our sacred books from the "imputation of spurious additions, this will not, with "my Lord at least, either establish or retrieve their "character." They contain, he says, a very imperfect account of the *Israelites* themselves, of their settlements in the land of *Canaan*, of which by the way they never had entire, and scarce ever peaceable possession.—The sacred narrative is a summary account of the *Jewish* affairs; but is it therefore to be censured as an imperfect account? It is an epitome, rather than a complete history; but has it not all the qualities of a perfect epitome? Those particular facts are selected, which have a more especial reference to the interests of religion, and the kingdom of the Messiah: in which the divine providence is most eminently conspicuous, and from which mankind may be most effectually edified.—Instead of finding fault with the writers for not being copious, when their professed aim was to be concise, a true critic would rather admire the felicity of their narration; which, though a foreign history of the remotest antiquity, relating to a people of the most singular manners, and peculiar customs, expressed in an absolute, dead language, and comprised in the shortest compass, is nevertheless so clear, so intelligible, and so very satisfactory.

But they contain a very imperfect account of the *Israelitish* settlements in *Canaan*.—Is it possible for a person, who has read the book of *Joshua*, to advance such a position? Was ever any thing of the kind described more minutely, or with greater accuracy? Here we have the general distribution of the land, and the extent of each particular allotment. The borders of the several divisions are marked out, as with a line, and the cities in the several cantons mentioned by name. In short, this whole transaction is so circumstantially displayed, that some readers, agreeing with my Lord in their disaffection to the Bible, but diametrically opposite in their taste of literature, have thought it particularised even to tediousness.—However, this particularity of description was highly expedient, not only to supersede any such objection, as his Lordship has raised, but also to ascertain, by an unalterable standard, the boundaries of the tribes; to prevent any encroachments upon the inheritance of each other; and to demonstrate the wonderful agreement, between the ancient prediction of *Jacob*, the more recent prophecy of *Moses*, and the situation, the limits, the produce of the territories, respectively assigned to the patriarchal families. *Jacob* foretold, that *Zebulun* should dwell at the haven of the sea, whose portion actually lay on either side of the sea of *Galilee*, and extended to the *Mediterranean*.——*Moses* foretold, that the Lord should dwell between *Benjamin's* shoulders, or the temple be placed at the extremity of his borders.—But I would refer my reader to *Gen.* xlix. and *Deut.* xxxiii. In which chapters, compared with the distinguishing circumstances of the several tribes, he will discern a most surprising spirit of prophecy; planning out, with precision, what was afterwards determined by lot; and foreshewing, with exactness, what was not come into existence.

The *Israelites*, 'tis added, never had entire, and scarce ever peaceable possession of the land. This, my Lord imagines, must imply an inconsistency between the divine promise, and the issue of things: therefore, to animadvert upon it, he digresses from his subject. But how will his Lordship's animadversion comport with the testimony of *Joshua?* Just as well as light consists with darkness. The Lord gave unto *Israel*, all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers, *Joshua* xxi. 43. 44. Is it not demonstrable, from *Joshua's* topographical draught of the country, and from the habitations allotted to the several tribes,

tribes, that they poſſeſſed the bulk of the land? What little remained in the occupation of the *Canaanites*, bore no more proportion to the heritage of *Iſrael*, than to the addition of a fringe, or the inſertion of a loop, bears to the whole dimenſions of the garment. That they poſſeſſed all this, and that they poſſeſſed no more, were circumſtances equally conſonant to the prophetic declarations of ſcripture. The one a punctual execution of the minatory; the other, an evident accompliſhment of the promiſſory. He that ſaid to their pious progenitor, *Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and ſouthward, and eaſtward, and weſtward; for all the land which thou ſeeſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy ſeed for ever*, Gen. xiii. 14. 15.; *for ever*, is evidently promiſed, on condition of their obedience; whereas, in caſe of diſobedience, the very reverſe is threatened, *Deut.* iv. 25. 26; the ſame ſaid unto their degenerate offſpring, *Elſe if ye do in any wiſe go back, and cleave unto the remnant of theſe nations, even theſe that remain among you; know for a certainty, that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of theſe nations from before you*, Joſhua xxiii. 12. 13. My Lord muſt forget this laſt particular, or neglect to compare it with the preceding; otherwiſe he would have ſeen in theſe prophecies and their correſponding events, a ſignal manifeſtation of God almighty's goodneſs, juſtice, and faithfulneſs: goodneſs in giving what he gave, juſtice in with-holding what he with-held, and faithfulneſs in both diſpenſations.

As for peaceable poſſeſſion,—we have already heard the witneſs of *Joſhua*, a very ſufficient witneſs, one would preſume, as he was generaliſſimo of the *Jewiſh* forces, and ſuperintendant-general of the affair. However, let us ſearch the records of the nation; here we meet with long periods of peace, under the government of the firſt illuſtrious commander, and under the ſubſequent adminiſtration of their judges: *The land had reſt from war*, (Joſhua xiv. 15.) *The land had reſt forty years*, (Judges iii. 11.) *The land had reſt eighty years*, (Judges iii. 30.) We find the ſame face of public repoſe, in the reigns of *David* and *Solomon*, *Aſa* and *Jehoſhaphat*; and not of one only, but of every righteous and religious king; or, if peace departed for a ſeaſon, victory ſupplied its place, and ſucceſs crowned their arms.—The bleſſing of national tranquility, was never promiſed to the *Iſraelites* abſolutely, but upon condition of fidelity to their almighty Sovereign. Whenever they were entitled to it, by virtue of this promiſe, and their correſponding obedience, they never failed to enjoy it. Whenever they forfeited their title, either by revolting to idolatry, or confiding in idolaters, they were conſtantly puniſhed with inteſtine commotions, or foreign invaſion. What ſhall we infer from hence? a concluſion any way prejudicial to the ſacred annals? No; but greatly to their glory. From hence it appears, that they are indeed the annals of heaven: A regiſter, not merely of political conduct, but of divine diſpenſations: The awful and important memoirs of a real *Theocracy*, in which, according to the emphatical language of *Iſaiah*, *The Lord was their Judge, the Lord was their Lawgiver, the Lord was their King*.

But theſe facts, my Lord complains, are related in a confuſed manner. To which I can anſwer, We have each reign in the proper order of time. The parentage to the ſovereign is ſpecified, and his general character given. We are informed at what age he aſcended the throne, and how long he ſwayed the ſceptre: who were the eminent perſons, and what the remarkable incidents, which diſtinguiſhed his government; how he died, and where he was buried. Is this confuſion? where then ſhall we look for regular arrangement?—Perhaps his Lordſhip means the interchangeable narration of occurrences, in the kingdom of *Judah*, and the kingdom of *Iſrael*. This, I own, is obſerved in the latter parts of the ſacred hiſtory. But this can no more be called confuſion, than the diſpoſition or varying colours in ſome beautiful piece of *moſaic* can be called irregularity. It is rather a fine contraſt, or that pleaſing diverſification in the ſeries of hiſtorical writing, which my Lord's poetical friend ſo juſtly admires in the decorations of a rural ſeat:

Here order in variety you ſee,
Where all things differ, and yet all agree.
POPE.

Page 61. to line 19. ſuppoſe I ſubjoin the following note.——"*Joſhua* and *Samuel* wrought miracles: *Iſaiah* and *Jeremiah* foretold future events. Though it is not abſolutely certain, that all the ſacred hiſtorians were prophets, yet it is highly probable, from 1 *Chron.* xxix. 29. This, however, is unqueſtionable, that their writings were reviewed and approved by men of prophetical gifts; and the approbation of ſuch judges muſt give a ſanction, little inferior to the authority, which their own compoſitions would claim."

Page 71. at the top of the page add,—My Lord tells us, "That the ſcripture-hiſtory, contains an account of "the diviſions and apoſtaſies, the repentances and re"lapſes, triumphs and defeats of the *Iſraelites*, under "the occaſional government of their judges, and under "that of their kings, and of the *Galilean* and *Samaritan* "captivity." Whether this is mentioned by way of derogation, let the judicious reader determine. I would beg leave to obſerve, that theſe occurrences, related in the ſcriptural manner, with a continual regard to the ſuperintending hand of Providence, are ſome of the moſt weighty and intereſting materials, that can enrich the hiſtorical page. None ſo well calculated to teach nations, to admoniſh kings, and improve poſterity.—His Lordſhip might have ſaid, with the utmoſt veracity; and, I think, in common juſtice, he ought to have ſaid: They contained alſo the moſt unparalleled inſtances of national ſucceſs, and perſonal achievements; the moſt beautiful and affecting pictures of virtue, delineated, through all its branches, in a multiplicity of living characters; than which nothing can be better accommodated to excite the attention, and charm the imagination; to touch the heart, and impreſs the paſſions; to inflame them with the love, and mould them into the image of univerſal holineſs.

Here we behold a people always deſtitute of cavalry, the main ſtrength of the battle; yet always a match, and more than a match, for their moſt powerful adverſaries, ſo long as they maintained a dutiful reliance on their God: A people, who left their frontiers naked and defenceleſs, at three ſtated ſolemnities in every year; yet never were invaded at this critical juncture, by their moſt vigilant enemies, ſo long as they perſiſted in obedience to their almighty Protector: A people, whoſe very land, as well as its inhabitants, was wonderful; both the ſcene and the ſubject of miracles: for, after five years unintermitted tillage, (which, one would imagine, ſhould have exhauſted its proliſic powers,) it yielded conſtantly a double increaſe, in order to ſupply the demands of the ſucceeding year; when, by the divine appointment, all was to lie fallow and uncultivated.—Here we behold men of ſuch ſingular and exalted piety, that they walked with God, and were tranſlated into the realms of glory, without paſſing through the gates of death: Men of ſuch undaunted courage, that they have rebuked princes, confronted angry monarchs, and ſmiled at the ſevereſt menaces of a tyrant, whoſe bare frown has made the world to tremble: Men of ſuch heroic abilities, that one of them has ſlain hundreds; another of them has put his thouſands to flight; and both by the moſt contemptible weapons: A third without any weapon, has given chace to the roaring lion, and the ranging bear; and rent them to pieces, or ſmitten them to the earth: Men, that have been empowered to ſhut or open the ſluices of the ſky; have commanded the ground to expand her horrid jaws, and ſwallow up the living; or bid the grave unlock her adamantine doors,

doors, and reſtore the dead: Men, who have walked amidſt the burning fiery furnace, as compoſed in their ſpirits, and as ſecure in their perſons, as if they had been taking the air in ſome calm, ſequeſtered, ſhady bower. In a word, here is a detail of ſuch marvellous things, as no eye hath ſeen performed in any other nation under heaven; no ear has heard related by any other annaliſt or biographer whatever; and, though they are the very ſanctity of truth, yet ſuch as never entered into the imagnation, even of romance itſelf to conceive.—— *Aſk now of the days that are paſt, which were before thee, ſince the day that God created man upon the earth; and aſk from one ſide of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any ſuch thing, as theſe great things are, or hath been heard like them*, Deut. iv. 32. This, though ſpoken of the miracles wrought in *Egypt*, and the wonders manifeſted in the wilderneſs, is applicable to almoſt the whole tenor of the ſcriptural hiſtory. My *remarks*, &c.

Your opinion with relation to the proceeding paragraphs, will be received as a favour, and attended, I hope, with a bleſſing.——I find, I am blamed, for animadverting on his Lordſhip's ſtyle, (page 36.); for not giving his Lordſhip the title of Noble, not treating him with a reſpect due to his dignity. I have treſpaſſed, it is farther alledged, againſt the rules of candour and benevolence, page 33. 34. and page 68. I know you have a large ſhare of patience, may the Lord Jeſus (of whoſe fulneſs his ſaints receive, even grace for grace,) multiply upon you, both this and every other fruit of the Spirit! Pray what do you apprehend to be the preciſe meaning of St *Paul's* expreſſion ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν. —*Rom.* i. 17. *from faith to faith*, as 'tis tranſlated.

I ſhould be much obliged, if you would let me know, what are ſome of the moſt valuable books, which you have met with on various ſubjects of importance?—what little treatiſe is moſt proper to put into the hands of illiterate people?—what are ſome of the moſt judicious and improving compoſitions in biography?—what the moſt ſound and weighty authors, that might be recommended to a young ſtudent in divinity?—You ſee I am always in the begging ſtrain; the language of my letters, is like the horſe-leech's two daughters, Give! give!—All I can do, by way of return, is to beſeech the King immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, to give you all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly things.—To do this, with all the ability which God ſhall beſtow, will be as truly pleaſing to, as it is juſtly due from,

Dear Sir,

Your much obliged,

and very affectionate friend,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXIII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, May* 19, 1753.

I Have lately been ſomewhat buſied in preparing a ſermon to be preached before the clergy, at our archdeacon's viſitation: and to my weak nerves, and languid ſpirits, a little buſineſs is a toil. A commentator, with whom I wiſh you may long be unacquainted, has taught me the meaning of *Solomon's* deſcription, *The graſshopper ſhall be a burden.*

This, I hope, will apologize for my delay, in anſwering more fully your laſt very obliging favour.—More fully, I ſay, becauſe, in a former letter, I acknowledged the receipt of a parcel with your remarks. Let me once more, dear Sir, return my ſincereſt thanks for thoſe judicious and delicate obſervations. They are ſo valuable, that I cannot but be very deſirous to have the other parts of my propoſed work, undergo the ſame ſcrutiny, and receive a poliſh from the ſame hand. If this kind office will not too much interrupt your own ſtudies, give me a permiſſion to ſend another packet; and withal a direction, how I ſhall tranſmit it to you moſt expeditiouſly.

You will eaſily perceive, from ſeveral hints, perhaps, from the whole tenor of my writing, that your new friend is, what people would call, a moderate *Calviniſt*. Your ſentiments, in ſome particulars, may differ from mine. Freely object, where-ever this is the caſe: I aſſure you, I can bear, I ſhall delight to have my notions ſifted; nor am I ſo attached to any favourite ſcheme, but I can readily relinquiſh it when ſcripture and reaſon convince me it is wrong.—When I ſee wiſe and learned men forming opinions different from mine, I hope, it will make me diffident of my own judgment; teach me "not to lean to my own underſtanding;" and prompt me to apply more earneſtly, for that bleſſed Spirit, whoſe office it is, *to lead into all truth*.

I ſhall be glad to hear, that the work you have in hand is going on with expedition. What a privilege will it be, and what a diſtinguiſhing favour, if the great eternal God vouchſafes to make uſe of our pens to bring any glory to his name, or impart any ſpiritual good to his people! To no occaſion is the wiſe man's exhortation more applicable: *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom, in the grave, whither thou goeſt.* —I have a treatiſe entitled *Dr Hildrop's huſbandman's ſpiritual companion*; but never read a page in it, nor ever heard a character of it. I have a diſcourſe upon the ſame ſubject, amongſt the writings of Mr *Flavel*; it is a long time ſince I ſaw it, and then I only dipped into it, ſo that I cannot pretend to give a character of it: only I think, in general, that *Flavel* abounds with fine ſentiments, exalted piety, and his language, for the moſt part, is expreſſive and beautiful.

Poſſibly you will wonder that I ſhould have had the treatiſe you inquire after ſo long, and not have peruſed a ſingle page of the book; and you juſtly might, in caſe I had bought it: but it came to me by inheritance. My ſtudy is compoſed of the books that were collected by my father and grandfather: among which there are multitudes, that I ſhall continue a ſtranger to, as long as I live, though they ſtand at my right hand and my left every day.—I want to be better acquainted with God's holy word,—to have its ineſtimable truths lodged in my memory,—its heavenly doctrines impreſſed upon my heart,—that my tempers may take their faſhion from it,—that my private converſation may be ſeaſoned with it, and my public miniſtrations enriched by it.—Thus, dear Sir, may the word of Chriſt dwell in us richly!

Will you give me leave to lay before you a *plan* of the work? (part of which has already received, and the remainder humbly requeſts, your improving touches);—*viz.* Sincere obedience not ſufficient for our juſtification.—The deſign of God's law, to convince of ſin, and bring to Chriſt.—Some farther objections urged and anſwered:* the whole ſummed up. Our friends part, but agree to correſpond.—*Theron* more attentively obſerving his heart and life, is convinced of his guilty ſtate; and begins to ſee the neceſſity of a better righteouſneſs than his own; deſires to ſee what can be alledged in ſupport of the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs.——This occaſions ſome letters from *Aſpaſio*, wherein the point is proved, from the articles and homilies of our church; from the writings of our moſt eminent divines; from the Old and New Teſtament.—The excellency of this righteouſneſs diſplayed, both from its matchleſs perfection, and the dignity of the

† See line 31 from the bottom of the firſt column of the next page.

author.——A letter or two from *Theron*, by way of carrying on the epistolary intercourse, relating to the wonders of creation, as they appear both in the sea, and on the land; chiefly calculated to manifest the goodness of the Creator, not without a view to the main subject.—The influence of this righteousness on moral virtue and evangelical holiness.——Our friends brought together again. *Theron*, under discouraging apprehensions.——The freeness of grace, and of the gift of righteousness.—Discourse on faith, by which we are united to Christ, and interested in his righteousness.—The noble, beneficial, and delightful use to be made of this doctrine. *Theron* relapses into sins of infirmity; his faith shaken; supports proper for such a state.—Sanctification; its nature, its principles, its progress.—*Aspasio* seized with a sudden and fatal illness; his sentiments and behaviour in his last moments.

These, dear Sir, are the stamina of my intended piece. Oh! that that he, who educes so many millions of elegant leaves, lovely flowers, and graceful plants, from the seeds of spring, may enable this enfeebled hand to diate, fill up, and finish the whole!

As soon as I conclude this epistle, I write to a very ingenious friend of yours. With whom, several years ago, I had begun to form an acquaintance; but my departure from *Oxford*, and other accidents, interrupted the intercourse for several years. And I was informed, to my unfeigned sorrow, that Mr *** was dead. But a letter lately received from him, most agreeably undeceived me, and brought a very welcome overture for a renewal of our correspondence.—God almighty grant, that all our social communication may be a happy means, not only of cherishing our affection, and refining our taste, but also of quickening our love to the blessed Jesus, and animating our zeal for his sacred interests; or, as the apostle expresses my wish, with an energy which no language but his own can reach, that they may be subservient and effectual υπερ παροξυσμον αγαπης και καλων εργων.

One or two articles I forgot, in exhibiting to you my plan. But this * will direct where they are to be introduced.——"The corruption of our nature, demonstra-
"ted, first from scripture, then from experience. Be-
"tween which, to relieve or entertain the reader, is in-
"serted a dialogue on the admirable formation and œco-
"nomy of the human body."——The visitation-sermon I mentioned in the beginning, though perfectly plain and artless, is in the press. It will wait upon you in the next parcel, as soon as I have the favour of your answer. It is printed for the relief of a poor afflicted child, as a short advertisement will inform the world. The person, to whose management it is consigned, informs me, that he has given orders for an impression of two thousand; besides a hundred and fifty, which I have bespoke for myself. Would this circumstance recommend it to your beneficent and worthy friend Dr ***; I may now no longer look upon it as a discourse delivered by me, but as an agent for the miserable, and an advocate for the distressed. I should therefore be very glad, and much obliged, if he would (in case he approves the performance) purchase some of them, in order to give away. Of this he may be assured, that, by every one, of which he shall so dispose, he will do a real act of charity to a diseased and crippled youth; and I shall not cease to pray, that the God of infinite goodness may accompany the † piece, with his divine blessing, and make the gift an act of spiritual charity to the reader's soul.—Be pleased to present my most respectful compliments to the Doctor; and give me leave to expect, not a line, but a sheet filled with your thoughts. Then I shall promise myself one thing more, that you will, in the speed of your favours, as well as in the worth of its contents, exceed, greatly exceed,

Dear Sir,

Your truly-affectionate,

and very much obliged friend,

JAMES HARVEY.

* See I. 12. from the bottom of last column, in the foregoing page.

† His sermon, intitled, *The Cross of Christ the Christian's glory*, inserted, above, V. p. 495. &c.

LETTER CXIV.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell*, *Aug.* 18. 1753.

I Have now procured some franks; and lest the want of this vehicle should retard the delight and improvement, which I always receive from your correspondence, I take leave to inclose one. 'Tis for your use, but my benefit.

I received the parcel, and owe you my thanks for the present. I wonder, that you should be backward to gratify Mr **. Certainly, you have truth on your side. The arguments are nervous and conclusive; clearly and (for the most part) concisely stated, urged with propriety, and a becoming warmth; yet without any of that *wrath of man, which worketh not the righteousness of God*; but rather (for I apprehend, there is a μειωσις in the expression) obstructs its advance, both in ourselves and others. If I was in your case, I would let my arrow fly, as far as Providence is pleased to carry it: and I beseech the blessed God to prosper it, that it may give a mortal blow to error, and co-operate with his own holy word, in being profitable προς ελεγχον.——Now I mention Mr **, pray let me desire you to ask, when you write to him again, whether he received, some months ago, a letter from me. If it miscarried, I shall with pleasure supply its place with another: for, though I have now but very few correspondents, and my enfeebled constitution will allow me to write but few letters, I shall strive hard to keep up an intercourse with those gentlemen, from whom I expect to have my taste refined, or my mind improved. And among that number I reckon Mr **.

I shall sincerely rejoice to hear, that your eye is strengthened, and your health confirmed. How valuable are these blessings! especially to those who employ them for the honour, and devote them to the service of Christ!——I wish you had taken minutes of what you saw most remarkable, in your tour through *Westmorland* and *Cumberland*. A description of those counties would be very acceptable to us, who inhabit a more regular and better cultivated spot. Described in your language, and embellished with your imagination, such an account might be highly pleasing to all; and grafted with religious improvements, might be equally edifying.——Such kind of writings suit the present taste. We don't love close thinking. That is most likely to win our approbation, which extenuates the fancy, without fatiguing the attention. Since this is the disposition of the age, let us endeavour to catch men by guile; turn even a foible to their advantage, and bait the gospel-hook agreeably to the prevailing taste.——In *this* sense, *Become all things to all men.*

Permit me to ask, Whether you have yet seen *Witsius de œconomia fœderum?*—I wish, for my own sake, that you was somewhat acquainted with this author; because, if you should be inclined to know the reason and foundation of my sentiments on any particular point,

* A translation of this favourite author of Mr *Hervey*'s was published some years ago.

Witsius

Witsius might be ſpokeſman; he would declare my mind, better than I could myſelf.

Converſing ſometime ago with a very ingenious gentleman, he made an obſervation, which I think is new and curious; I ſhould be glad of your opinion, whether you think it rational and ſolid. It was upon thoſe words, Βαπτισμων διδαχης, επιθεσιος τε χειρων, *Heb.* vi. 2. This paſſage is generally ſuppoſed, eſpecially by the writers of the eſtabliſhed church, to denote the ſacrament of baptiſm, and the rite of confirmation.——With regard to the latter, my friend queried, whether the practice of confirmation can be allowed to conſtitute one of the fundamentals (θεμελια) of Chriſtianity?—With regard to the former, can it be ſhewn, that the apoſtle, in any other place, calls the ordinance of baptiſm Βαπτισμοι, in the plural number?——May not then the clauſe more properly refer to the two eminent *Jewiſh* uſages; the various purifications made by waſhings, and the impoſition of hands on the piacular victims? The one of which repreſented a purity of heart and life; the other was expreſſive of a tranſlation of puniſhment from the offerer to his ſacrifice. Then we have ſignified, in language familiar to the *Hebrew*, and by images with which they were perfectly acquainted, the ſanctification of the Spirit, and the ſubſtitution of Chriſt in our ſtead.—What ſeems to corroborate this conjecture is, the vaſt importance of theſe two articles. They are the two grand diſtinguiſhing peculiarities of the Chriſtian ſcheme: without them, every treatiſe upon fundamentals muſt be extremely defective.

I am much pleaſed with your remark on a certain learned ***. The heart ſurely ſhould be engaged in the preacher's office, as well as the head.—

Are paſſions, then, the Pagans *of the ſoul?*
Reaſon alone baptiz'd? alone ordain'd
To touch things ſacred?

The great apoſtle was fervent in ſpirit, as well as cogent in arguing. He beſeeches, conjures, and charges his people. He adds prayers to his entreaties, and tears to his prayers. When he reaſons, conviction ſhines; when he exhorts, *pathos* glows. May your diſcourſes, dear Sir, be ſtrong with the one, warm with the other, and by both be happily inſtrumental, *to turn ſinners from* * *darkneſs unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins.*—We have very wet unkindly weather for the harveſt. May it teach us all to ſee our dependence on that divine hand, which giveth rain from heaven and fruitful ſeaſons. May it ſtir us up to long more ardently for that inheritance which is incorruptible, as well as undefiled! whoſe character is perfection, and whoſe duration is eternity. Into this, dear Sir, may you, and many of your hearers, many of your readers, in due time, have an abundant entrance! and there find, as a monument of mercy, and a trophy of redeeming grace,

Your truly-affectionate friend,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXV.

Weſton, October 28. 1753.

AND muſt I reſume my correſpondences? Does my dear Mr *** join with ſeveral other friends, to render me inexcuſably rude, if I neglect writing any longer?—Then, with the divine aſſiſtance, I will again take up my pen, though an inceſſant ſeries of infirmities has wore it to the very ſtumps; for which reaſon I had thrown it aſide, with an intention to continue ſilent, and inactive, as a dead man out of mind.

To make ſome reparation for my paſt negligence, I acknowledge your late favour without any delay. Yeſterday I received it, and to-day I anſwer it; even though I might juſtly plead wearineſs, as an excuſe for a dilatory conduct.—I have this afternoon been preaching to a crouded audience—The Lord Jeſus Chriſt grant it may be an edified one! You would be ſurpriſed, and I believe every body wonders, that I am able to officiate for myſelf. I am ſo weak, that I can hardly walk to the end of my pariſh, though a ſmall one; and ſo tender, that I dare not viſit my poor neighbours, for fear of catching cold in their bleak houſes; yet I am enabled, on the Lord's day, to catechiſe, and expound to my children in the morning, and to preach in the afternoon. And every *Wedneſday* evening, hay-time and harveſt only excepted, I read prayers, and give them a lecture-ſermon in *Weſton* church. This is the Lord's doing, or, as your favourite book expreſſes it, this is owing to "the good hand of my God upon me." Join with me, my dear friend, in adoring his grace; and pray, that if my life is ſpared, my capacity for his ſervice may be prolonged; that, if it be his bleſſed will, the day which puts an end to the one, may put a period to the other.

I thank you for your news from the *Weſt*. I aſſure you, it is highly pleaſing to hear, eſpecially concerning the proſperity of my old acquaintance. I often think of them, and with deep regret, for my unprofitableneſs amongſt them. Bleſſed be God for ever and ever, that both they and I may have a better righteouſneſs than our own. May we all grow in grace, and 'ere long meet in glory!

Ye need not doubt, but it is a pleaſure to my heart, to remember, in my beſt moments, that valuable and valued friend, with whom I have frequently took ſweet counſel on earth, and with whom I ſhall quickly be admitted into the heaven of heavens; there to behold the glory, the inconceivable and eternal glory of him, who loved us both, and has waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood.

God has been pleaſed to pity the poor youth, for whoſe relief the viſitation-ſermon I preached at *Northampton* was printed. Through his good providence an edition of two thouſand is diſpoſed of; beſides a ſupernumerary proviſion of two hundred, deſtined to the uſe of my pariſhes. Nay, the manager for the diſtreſſed object is venturing upon another edition. See, dear Sir, if God will bleſs, who can blaſt? If he will further, what can obſtruct? A feather, a ſtraw, if he pleaſes to command, ſhall be a poliſhed ſhaft in his quiver. Truſt not therefore in eloquence or argument, in depth of thought or beauty of ſtyle, both which are confeſſedly wanting in the preſent caſe; but *truſt ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength.*

I am ſurpriſed, that any attendant on the ** of ***, ſhould inquire after my ſermon, unleſs it was to criticiſe, cenſure, and expoſe. Becauſe there was really given too much occaſion, both to his ** and all his friends, to reſent what ſome time ago I ſeemed to have done. In the midſt of the controverſy between the ** and the ***, there was put into the ** Journal a paragraph from a letter of mine, conſiſting of a pretty high encomium on Mr ***. As though I ſhould, unchallenged and unprovoked, ſtep forth to confront your ***; or ſhould think to bear down a *** objections by my ſingle authority.——This was alſo inſerted in the moſt offenſive manner; not as an extract from a private epiſtle, without the conſent or knowledge of the writer, but introduced as my own act, and ſubſcribed with my own name.

I have found no reaſon to retract one jot or tittle of what was ſaid. And God forbid, that I ſhould be aſhamed of that incomparable miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt; than

† See Acts xxvi. 18.

than whom I know no man on earth, who has more of the amiable and heavenly ſpirit of Chriſt. Nor do I remember to have met with, in all my reading, a perſon, ſince the days of miracle and inſpiration, ſo eminently zealous, or ſo extenſively uſeful. Yet to obtrude his character on the public, at ſuch a time, and with ſuch circumſtances, had ſuch an air of officiouſneſs, ſelf-conceit, and arrogance, as muſt neceſſarily diſguſt others, and is what I would abſolutely diſavow.

This, I afterwards learned, was done by a well-meaning and moſt pious man; but, in this particular, very injudicious. It is much to be deſired, that religious perſons may have wiſdom with their zeal; eyes in their wings, that, as far as is conſiſtent with the exerciſe of integrity, and the diſcharge of duty, we may give no offence, neither to the *Jew*, nor to the *Greek*, nor to the church of God.

Accept my ſincereſt thanks for your promoting the ſpread of my ſermon; and continue your prayers for its enfeebled author, that if the moſt high God vouchſafes to employ him in any other work for the honour of his dear Son, he may be enabled to find out acceptable words, and that which is written may be words of truth. My affectionate compliments wait upon Mrs **. May you and yours dwell under the defence of the Moſt High, and abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty!

I am, dear Sir,

Moſt cordially and inviolably yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XCVI.

Weſton, May 5, 1753.

Dear Sir,

SOME time ago, Mr *Moſes Browne* was ſo kind as to tranſmit to me three of your letters, which gave me both pain and pleaſure.—Pain, to think how I had neglected to cultivate ſo valuable a correſpondence:—pleaſure and improvement, from the peruſal of your truly-judicious remarks on Mr *Kennicott's* performance, and Mr *Goadby's* attempt.—The latter, I am afraid, is not ſenſible of the great importance, and no ſmall difficulty of writing a proper comment on the whole Bible. To explain and illuſtrate with any tolerable juſtice, a book ſo very ſublime, ſo vaſtly comprehenſive, ſurely ſhould be the work, not of a few months or years, but of his whole life, were his abilities ever ſo diſtinguiſhed. I ſhould be extremely ſorry, to ſee that glorious gift of heaven come abroad into the world,—with ſuch a collection of remarks, as might be more likely to depretiate, than miniſter to its univerſal acceptance.

You are pleaſed to mention my intended work, and to offer your kind aſſiſtance: and offer, which I aſſure you I highly value: I deſire nothing ſo much, as to have the ſame impartiality of criticiſm exerciſed upon my manuſcript, as you have beſtowed upon the aforementioned writings. When my piece has been enriched by your corrections, and if it receives your imprimatur, it ſhall go to the preſs without delay, as there is a likelihood of a large demand for the work, both at home and abroad. This conſideration makes me timorous and diffident, eſpecially as my inceſſant infirmities and unconquerable languors render me ſadly unfit for the ſupport of ſo weighty and ſo grand a cauſe. If it was not for ſuch a declaration in the word of truth and life as this,—*Not by might, nor by ſtrength, but by my Spirit, ſaith the Lord*, I ſhould totally deſpair of any ſucceſs.—Excuſe, dear Sir, this haſty ſcribble; ſtrengthen the feebleſt of all hands, engaged in the divine Jeſus's ſervice; and pity a man, whoſe head aches while he writes to you; and heart almoſt fails, when he writes for the public; but is, amidſt all his weakneſſes,

Your very ſincere and much obliged friend,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXVII.

Weſton-Favell, May 20, 1754.

My dear Friend,

YOUR letter was good news from a far country, and made doubly welcome, by a long preceding ſilence, and by the valuable hand that brought it.

Mr ** gave me his company one afternoon. We talked of Chriſt Jeſus and his beloved miniſter at **. Oh! that our converſation may be edifying, and build us mutually up in our moſt holy faith!—He was ſo obliging, as to preſent me with the picture of the late worthy Dr ——. I hope, when I view it, I ſhall be reminded of the inſcription of *Sennacherib's* ſtatue; Ει τις ορᾳων ευσεβης ἐστω.* Or rather, that it will addreſs me with the apoſtle's admonition; *Be ye not ſlothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promiſes.*"

Mr ** has likewiſe tranſmitted to me ſeven of your ſermons, ſix on common, one on ſuperfine paper. For the latter I ſincerely thank you; for the former, I deſire you will give me leave to pay you. I propoſe to gratify and oblige my friends with them; and it ſeems utterly unreaſonable, that I ſhould be generous at your expence.—I admire and applaud your noble reliance on God and his providence; and, were you a ſingle man, I would not ſuffer to interpoſe a prudential hint. But, perhaps, the other amiable parts of yourſelf, may not have the ſame ſteady and triumphant faith. For their ſakes therefore it may be adviſable, to take the ant for a pattern, and lay up ſomething againſt a rainy day.

I heartily wiſh, that good providence, on which you depend, may ſpread your piece, and proſper it in the world. Sure you ſhould ſuffer it to be advertiſed in ſome of the principal newſpapers. I dare ſay, you deſire, you covet, you are ambitious to do good, and be extenſively uſeful. As this then is a commodious open door, let not my friend's modeſty or ſelf-diffidence ſhut it.

I have no deſire to reconcile you, dear Sir, to ſyſtems, human ſyſtems of religion; I know other devout and godly perſons, that diſlike them. They have been ſerviceable to my ſoul; and whenever I read them, I think, they are bleſſed to my improvement and comfort: only let us all concur in prizing the bleſſed book of God. May we enter into its treaſure more and more, and ſhed abroad the ſweet ſavour of its doctrine in every place! Above all, my dear Mr **, may we never ceaſe to teſtify of him, who is the Alpha and Omega of the ſcripture, and the ſoul and centre of the whole Chriſtian religion; who is, by infinite degrees, the moſt grand and amiable repreſentative of the eternal Godhead to the church; and the only ſource of pardon and acceptance, of wiſdom and goodneſs, of grace and glory, to the believer.

I rejoice to find that you take in good part my very free remarks, and very feeble attempts to criticiſe. Indeed, I did not doubt but you would.—I ſend two or

* Whoever looks on me, let him worſhip God.

three

three manuſcripts, and beg of you to exerciſe the ſame frankneſs of admonition, and the ſame impartiality of cenſure upon them.—My bookſeller tells me, it cannot be compriſed in leſs than three volumes. I have always had an averſion to ſo diffuſive a work. Many will not have ability to purchaſe them; many not have leiſure to read them; and to ſome, I fear, the very ſight of three volumes would be like loads of meat to ſickly or ſqueamiſh ſtomachs. Yet I cannot contract the work, and reduce it to the ſize of two, without omitting thoſe parts, which are intended to entertain the reader, keep him in good humour, and allure or bribe him to go on. What would you adviſe?

I have not ſeen Lord ***'s works. And ſince their character is ſo forbidding, their tendency ſo hurtful, I ſhall not attempt to ſee them. I don't queſtion, but the great Phyſician will provide an antidote for this poiſon, and the almighty Head of the church will enable his diſciples to tread on ſuch ſerpents.

I am this day a priſoner in my chamber, and write in much pain. Bleſſed be God for that world, where all tears will be wiped away from our eyes, and *there will be no more pain.* And bleſſed be God for a Saviour, who is the way to thoſe happy manſions, and the door of admiſſion into them.—O! that every thing may lead my dear friend and me more and more to Chriſt. In him alone peace, and reſt, and true joy are to be found.

I ſend Letters viii. ix. x. xi. and Dial. xv. xvii. Do, my dear Sir, improve, poliſh, and enrich them. And if God almighty bleſſes them, if our adored Redeemer vouchſafes to work by them, I will thank you, not only in theſe regions of ſin and mortality, but when I meet you before the throne of the Lamb, and amidſt the angels of light. Till then may the Father of mercies keep you as the apple of his eye, and make you a poliſhed arrow in his quiver. Believe me to be,

Dear Sir,

Your ſincere, obliged, and affectionate brother in Chriſt,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXVIII.

Weſton, May 30, 1754.

Dear Sir,

YEſterday I received your valuable letter. I thank you for the comfortable prayer; it exactly ſuits my circumſtances; may I be enabled to breathe it from my very ſoul in faith, and may it enter into the ears of the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Pray make no apology for the length of your letter. Whenever you favour me with an epiſtle, the more you ſuffer your pen to enlarge, the more you will oblige and improve your correſpondent.—I wiſh you ſucceſs in finiſhing your chronological and hiſtorical treatiſe, and ſhall be much pleaſed to peruſe it.

Your ſolution of the difficulty in *Acts* vii. is very ingenious, and ſubſerves the purpoſes of piety. But do you think the patriarchs would inter the *Sichemites* in a burying-place that belonged to a ſtranger; and not rather depoſit them in their family-vaults, or the ſepulchres where their anceſtors lay?—I ſhould be glad to ſee the ſequel of your diſſertation concerning the fallen angels.—I ſend herewith four of my Dialogues,—which I beg of you to examine with a kind ſeverity. I do aſſure you, I can bear to receive cenſure from a friend, and will kiſs the lips that adminiſter it, eſpecially when it is intended to preſerve my attempts to further the glorious goſpel from the contempt of the public.—I will ere long ſend you in a frank a general view of my plan, which, in the execution, is become too prolix; and cannot be comprehended in leſs than three volumes, of the ſame ſize with the *Meditations*, unleſs ſome judicious friend will help me to curtail and abridge.—I am very unwilling to publiſh a work conſiſting of three volumes; I apprehend, this will obſtruct the ſale not a little. Be ſo kind as to ſerve my eſſays as you have treated Mr *Goadby's* expoſitory notes; take the pruning-knife, and freely lop off the luxuriant parts. Your notes on *Taylor* of *Norwich* I return with thankful acknowledgments; you will ſee what uſe I have made of them.—I had penned more animadverſions upon that piece, but upon a review I found they would ſwell the work too much. I have a note, Dial. iv. page 4. that is directly to the point; would you adviſe me to retain it? I had expunged it. I have directed the printer to reſtore it, but *hæſitanter hoc.*—You will receive half a dozen of a little collection of ſcripture-promiſes,* which I lately printed in two ſmall bits of paper, chiefly for the poor, to be paſted, one at the beginning, the other at the end of their Bibles, or indeed of any pious book.—Perhaps you may know ſome, to whom ſuch a preſent, though minute, may be welcome.—As ſoon as you return theſe manuſcripts, if I have your approbation, I purpoſe to employ the preſs. In the mean time, it ſhall be my prayer to God, that he may give you a right judgment in all things.

Your moſt affectionate,

J. HERVEY.

LETTER CXIX.

June 12, 1754.

My dear Friend,

DO you wonder, why I have not acknowledged the receipt of your laſt? Indeed it deſerved a moſt ſpeedy and a moſt grateful acknowledgement; but was unwilling to interrupt your thoughts with freſh inquiries. Your thoughts, I hope, have been employed, in diſcovering the Rev. Dr ***'s miſtakes, and in teaching him, what that means, which our Lord gave as the commiſſion to his miniſters, *Preach the goſpel.*

I received your preſents from Mr ***; but I ſhall not want any memorial of your friendſhip, ſo long as you will give me leave to conſult you about difficult paſſages in ſcripture; and theſe memorials, I aſſure you, will not be tranſient; I ſhall carefully preſerve them; and when their number and ſize is a little more increaſed, ſhall form into a volume, which will be more valuable to me, than any book in my ſtudy.

The anecdotes of your own life are very welcome; if you could add others, they would be ſtill more pleaſing. As you are well acquainted with ancient hiſtory, have you met with any account of the four monarchies? conciſe, taking in only the moſt memorable and ſtriking facts; and ſtill moſt particularly calculated to explain the prophecies of ſcripture, and demonſtrate their exact accompliſhments. This, with a ſuccinct detail of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the diſperſion of the *Jews*,

* This collection is inſerted above, p. 533.

would, I think, be a very pretty hiſtorical furniture for young maids.

I think all your criticiſms pleaſe and improve me, that only excepted, which relates to 1 *Cor.* ix. 24. While I was writing this Mr *P****, the bearer, came in; for which reaſon, you will give me leave, for the ſake of enjoying his company, to conclude; only let me add, that I purpoſe, if I live till the beginning of next week, to finiſh what I intended to ſay, in a letter by the poſt; which very probably may anticipate what now comes from,

Dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER CXX.

Dear Sir,

I Think one guinea is full enough for giving away to a perſon, whoſe character we are ignorant of. There are too many (*dolet dictum!*) to whom an alms in the way of money, is only an adminiſtration of fuel to their luſts. Not that I preſume to fix ſuch a charge upon the preſent petitioner; yet this conviction makes me cautious, where I have no aſſurance of the perſon's ſobriety. Had it not been for his father's worth, I ſhould have almoſt thought it my duty to have ſhut my hand, till I received ſome more ſatisfactory recommendation. We are ſtewards of our Maſter's goods, and diſcretion is requiſite in the diſcharge of ſuch an office, as well as fidelity.

I fancy, my dear friend, you did not take notice of an unbecoming expreſſion, which dropt from your lips, while I ſat at your table. You was a little chagrined at the careleſſneſs of your ſervant, and ſaid to him with ſome warmth, "What! in the name of God do you mean?"——Such expreſſions from your lips, will be much obſerved, and long remembered. I need ſay no more; you yourſelf will perceive, by a moment's reflection, how faulty they are in themſelves, and how pernicious they may be to others. May the good Lord pardon and deliver you from evil!---and may both of us more frequently meditate on this important text, *Set a watch before our mouths, and keep the doors of our lips!*

Ever yours, while

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXXI.

My dear Friend, *June* 14. 1754.

BEfore this can reach your hands, you will, in all probability, have ſeen Mr *P****. He is really an ingenious gentleman, has a lively apprehenſion, a penetrating judgment, as well as a large ſhare of reading. May the almighty Spirit vouchſafe to ſanctify thoſe endowments; and make our interviews, not an occaſion of ambitiouſly diſplaying our talents, but of building up one another in our moſt holy faith! I can hardly agree to my friend's propoſal, for altering the tranſlation of 1 *Cor.* ix. 24. May it not be an incitement to the utmoſt diligence? *q. d.* The contenders know, that, though many run, yet one alone can receive the prize. Therefore they exert all their ſtrength and all their ſpeed, each hoping and each ſtriving, to be that diſtinguiſhing happy one: So likewiſe do ye; or may it not be an encouragement, drawn from the proſpect of general ſucceſs? *q. d.* How much greater reaſon have you to run the Chriſtian race? Since not one only, but all may receive the prize of your high calling.——Of theſe interpretations the former ſeems moſt ſuitable to the tenor of the apoſtle's diſcourſe. What do you apprehend to be the preciſe ſenſe of that expreſſion, ἐστὶ ἐν αὐτῷ πεπληρωμένοι, *Col.* ii. 10. Is our tranſlation exact? Or ſhould it be rendered, *Ye are filled with him, filled by him?* filled with wiſdom, holineſs, &c. I was reading *Pſal.* civ. and a doubt aroſe concerning the meaning of theſe expreſſions,—*He layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters—He maketh the clouds his chariot.*——Does the pſalmiſt intend to ſignify the ſame thing by waters and clouds? Or by waters does he mean ſomewhat different from the fluid, which compoſes the clouds? *Houbigant* finds fault with our tranſlation of נטפו, *Dure et incredibiliter Arias, contignavit aquis;* he would correct it according to his uſual way, by altering the original, *Nos legimus* חסכם, *cooperiens: Sic legunt, præter Syrum, omnes in Polyglottis.*——What think you of the word ומבוא, verſe 19. *going down?* Is that all, which the ſun knows or obſerves; would not that be a very imperfect diſcharge of his office? May not the original phraſe denote his going, his circuit, his whole journey? Comprehending, not only his ſetting, but his riſing, his meridian, and all his ſtages; together with his paſſage from one tropic to another, and his diſtribution, not only of day, but of ſeaſons alſo, through the various regions of the globe?—מועדים is this word rightly tranſlated *ſeaſons!* By *ſeaſons* we generally mean the four grand diſtributions of the year into ſpring and ſummer, autumn and winter. But theſe, you know, are neither occaſioned by the influences, nor regulated by the appearances of the moon. ——I could be glad to ſee, from your critical pen, a correct tranſlation of this fine pſalm; together with ſuch remarks, as may explain what is difficult, and illuſtrate what is beautiful. Next *Saturday* I hope to ſend your manuſcript. In the mean time, let me promiſe myſelf a remembrance in your prayers, and expect the favour of a letter, which will be thankfully received and highly valued by,

Dear Sir,

Affectionately yours, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXXII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton, June* 21. 1754.

BEfore this arrives, I hope my parcel, tranſmitted according to your direction, will have reached your hands; and my *Dialogues* will have received the free correction, and the friendly improvements of your pen.

As, through my many and repeated infirmities, I had long diſcontinued, and have often intermitted my intended work, I am informed from *London*, that the abettors of the *Socinian* ſcheme have been pleaſed to triumph in my diſappointment; imagining, that through fear or inability, I had laid aſide my deſign, and inſinuating, that I had changed my principles, or was conſcious of the weakneſs of my cauſe.——From theſe gentlemen, if my eſſay ſhould appear in public, it may expect a ſevere examination, and probably a violent attack. I hope your friendſhip will anticipate their inveteracy; and remove thoſe blemiſhes, which might give them a handle for cenſure, or a ground for inſult. My prayer for my kind corrector is, that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe

whoſe ſacred honour and precious intereſts are concerned, would give him *the ſpirit of wiſdom and underſtanding, the ſpirit of counſel and of might*; רוח חכמה ובינה רוח עצה וגבורה. Is there not a peculiar force and beauty in this laſt metaphor? How would you develope and ſet it forth to common view? I have juſt had occaſion to conſider that remarkable expreſſion in Pſalm xv. נתן בעינו לא ימט; methinks, the Bible-tranſlation does not recommend itſelf; to my judgment I am better ſatisfied, and more edified with the verſion uſed by our liturgy; only it ſeems not to have preſerved the ſtrength of the original. However, I will ſay no more upon this point; becauſe, if I live to ſend another packet of probationary manuſcripts, you will ſee my ſentiments on this particular incorporated with the work.

What is your opinion, as to publiſhing three volumes? Mr *Moſes Browne* and another friend pronounce in the affirmative; though I am much afraid that this circumſtance will clog the ſale.——There are ſeveral pieces that are a kind of excurſion from the principal ſubject, calculated to relieve and entertain the reader, yet not without adminiſtering ſome ſpiritual benefit. A whole dialogue upon the wonders of wiſdom, power, and goodneſs, diſplayed in the contrivance and formation of the human body. Two or three letters, pointing out the traces of the ſame grand and amiable attributes, in the conſtitution of the earth, the air, and the ocean. Theſe I am afraid to lop off, leſt it ſhould be like wiping the bloom from the plum, or taking the gold from the gingerbread. To you I ſay *gingerbread*, though I would not ſay ſo to the public; for I really think, the taſte of the preſent age is ſomewhat like the humour of children: ——Their milk muſt be ſugared, their wine ſpiced, and their neceſſary food garniſhed with flowers, and enriched with ſweet-meats. In my next, I hope to lay before you a ſummary view of my whole deſign. I forget whether I incloſed in my laſt one of the little collection of ſcripture promiſes *, which I cauſed lately to be printed, for the benefit and comfort of my people. I would have them paſted into their Bibles; and may the God of all grace command them to be mixed with faith, and ingrafted into their hearts. If I have already deſired your acceptance of one, theſe I now ſend may be for your friends. I fancy, a ſhort but lively diſcourſe upon each of the eight heads, and the texts ſelected, might, after they have been committed to the memories of the people, be acceptable, and what the apoſtle calls *a word in ſeaſon*.——"Angry at the length of your letters!" No, dear Sir!—They are, as *Tully* ſaid of *Demoſthenes*'s orations, "The longer the more valuable."

I am, your obliged friend,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXXIII.

My dear Friend,

THank you for ſending the cuts deſigned for the Bible. All my hope with regard to them, is, that they may remind ſome beholders of the tranſcendent excellency of the ſacred writings. I propoſe by the next poſt to write to Mr ***. I would very willingly preſent him with my picture, as you deſire it; but I really think, my picture, if much better done, is not worth a frame. And, I own, I don't much like giving away, what ſavours more of vanity than benevolence.

Can't you get a little leiſure to peruſe part of my intended work? I have, for a month or ſix weeks, been proſecuting it in earneſt. I have ſent four of the *Dialogues*, tranſcribed by my amanuenſis. Do ſteal a little time from the multiplicity of your medical engagements, to examine them; retrench, where I am redundant; clear up, where I am obſcure; poliſh what is uncouth.——I hope Mr *** will do me the ſame favour; and may the God of wiſdom give both my friends and me a right judgment in all things.—I have ſeen Mr ***'s anſwer. God be praiſed, that I had no occaſion for controverſy.——I have not ſeen Mr *Moſes Browne* this many a day. The laſt time he was with me, he talked about reprinting his *Sunday-Thoughts*, and adding a third part which he had finiſhed, and which completes his ſcheme. I would have the three parts printed in a neat pocket-volume. Have you read his *Poem on the univerſe?* I think it is the moſt pleaſing, and indeed the beſt thing he ever wrote.—I hope, the God of heaven will ſmile upon his endeavours, and animate us all to labour in his dear Son's cauſe, and proſper the labours, which he himſelf excites. And if God will proſper, who ſhall obſtruct? *If he will work, who can let it?* My dear friend, let our eyes be ever looking unto the hills, from whence cometh our help: To that omnipotent being, who ſtretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; to that all-gracious Being, who ſpared not (unparalleled, ſtupendous goodneſs!) ſpared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us both. Oh! that we may dearly love him; firmly truſt in him; and deſire nothing ſo much, as to know him now by faith, and after this life have the fruition of his glorious Godhead. To his everlaſting compaſſions I commit my friend;

And am inviolably yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXXIV.

Weſton, July 8, 1754.

Dear Sir,

YOUR favour of *June* 28, is now before me, and demands my ſincereſt thanks; and mine, I aſſure you, are of the ſincereſt kind. I am ſenſible, it is not in every one's power to do ſuch acts of kindneſs; and if Providence vouchſafes to ſmile upon my eſſay, they will be of the moſt laſting, the moſt extenſive, and the moſt important nature. If I live till next *Saturday*, I propoſe to tranſmit to you ſix more of the Dialogues, which will open a new field for your friendly hand to weed, cultivate, and improve. Exerciſe the ſame benevolent ſeverity upon them, and continue to retrench, as well as to reform.

I am obliged for your criticiſms; andoh! that I may be emboldened by the extract from your intended work. No man, I believe, ſtands in more need of ſuch encouragements than myſelf. Timorous by nature, and made abundantly more ſo, by long ſeries of unintermitted languors, and a very debilitated conſtitution; for which reaſon, I promiſe myſelf, you will commend the writer and his attempt to that great JEHOVAH, in whom is everlaſting ſtrength; and for your kind aſſiſtance, I ſhall think myſelf bound to praiſe his adorable Majeſty; and to pray that he would *fill you with all wiſdom and ſpiritual underſtanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleaſing, being fruitful in every good work, and increaſing in the knowledge of God.*

I will, ſince I have the concurrence of your judgment, and I hope the guidance of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, determine upon three volumes.—How long do you apprehend it will be, before your chronological and hiſtorical piece will be finiſhed? I hope it will abound with explanations of ſcripture, and be rich with ſhort but ſtriking improvements. May you continually enjoy

* See above, p. 533.

joy that unction from the Holy One, which teacheth all things! And oh! that its precious influences may deſcend upon,

Dear Sir,

Your much obliged,

And truly-affectionate friend,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXXV.

July 13, 1754.

Dear Sir,

I Hope my laſt letter, wherein I appriſed you of a parcel to be tranſmitted to you, is in your hand.—Here are ſix Dialogues. May the everlaſting and wonderful Counſellor enable you to ſearch them as with a candle, and make them ſuch as he will condeſcend to bleſs! I have dropped ſeveral objections and anſwers; yet, I fear, too many are ſtill retained. A multiplicity of objects diſſipates the attention either of the eye or the mind.—Are what the painters call the two unities preſerved? one principal action and one grand point of view, in each piece? Does *Theron* ſpeak enough; or with ſuch weight, and ſuch a ſpice of the *ſal Atticus*, as might ſuit his character? Here and there a touch of wit or genteel ſatire in him, I think, would be graceful, eſpecially, in the firſt part, before he is brought to a conviction of his guilt. I hope you will not only find out all the faults, but that you will point this arrow, and trim its feathers; and may the arm of the Moſt High launch it, that it may be the arrow of the Lord's ſalvation.

I am, dear Sir,

Affectionately and gratefully yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXXVI.

Weſton-Favell, Aug. 27, 1754.

Dear Sir,

I Have read part of your chronological manuſcript,*—and I bleſs God for giving you ſuch a penetrating and comprehenſive mind. To confeſs the truth, it is beyond my power to follow, even in thoſe reſearches, where you have ſurmounted the difficulties, and cleared the way; but there are many things, which I underſtand, and with which I am delighted; inſomuch that, if you don't intend to publiſh it, I ſhould very much deſire a copy of it. But what ſhould hinder the publication? Why ſhould not the learned world be improved by what is profound, and the whole world be edified by what is eaſy? I have no acquaintance in this neighbourhood, who is verſed in chronological inquiries, and capable of judging of your computations and arguments: otherwiſe I would obtain for you his opinion. Mr *Moſes Browne* (author of the *Sunday-Thoughts*,) will gladly peruſe it.—Will you excuſe me, though I add no more? A gentleman waits for me below, to tranſact an affair of which I underſtand but very little; he is come to take my parſonage-grounds, in order to plough them for woad, an herb much uſed by the dyers. May proſperity attend his plough; but above all may it attend yours and mine, which would open the ground for the ſeed of the everlaſting goſpel. I am loath to miſs a poſt, loath to defer my thanks for your laſt very valuable favour, otherwiſe you would not be put off with ſuch a haſty ſcrap from,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt obliged and affectionate,

JAMES HERVEY.

* The manuſcript which Mr *Hervey* here takes notice of is called,—"A ſhort chronicle of the moſt remarkable events, from the "beginning of the world, to the building of *Solomon's* temple." In which chronicle the difficulties in chronology are cleared up after a new manner; and the author has ſtrove to enliven his piece by a great number of marginal references.

LETTER CXXVII.

SIR, *October* 2.

I Have peruſed the greateſt part of Dr *Hodge's Elihu*. 'Tis wrote, I think, in a maſculine and noble ſtyle; is animated with a lively ſpirit of piety; and urges, with a becoming zeal, ſome of the grand peculiarities of the goſpel. I hope, it will prove a bleſſing to both the univerſities; and be a means of teſtifying, to both thoſe learned bodies, the truth as it is in Jeſus.—Dear Mr *** has been gone from us almoſt a fortnight. What a burning and ſhining light is he? Burning with miniſterial zeal, and ſhining in all holy converſation.—I hope, our dear friend ***'s ſermon was attended with a bleſſing; and may the bleſſing be greatly increaſed by the publication! May the drop become a river, and the river become a ſea!—I was yeſterday with five or ſix young ſtudents, and this day with three ingenious gentlemen of the laity, two of whom are acquainted with the *Hebrew*. Our converſation turned wholly upon that ſuperexcellent and delightful ſubject, *the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he has ſent*. Oh! may that almighty Being, who has every human heart in his hand, ſanctify our diſcourſe to our eternal advantage!—And let us, my dear friend, talk for him, write for him, and live for him, who *died for our ſins, and is riſen again for our juſtification*.—May his Spirit be your continual guide, and his favour your everlaſting portion!

Ever yours, while

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXXVIII.

Dear Sir,

THE gentleman who verſified part of my *Meditations* is Mr *Newcomb* of *Hackney*. I thought it exceedingly well executed; much ſuperior to his ode on the final diſſolution of the world, which he has ſince publiſhed.

As to Biſhop *Fowler's Deſign of Chriſtianity*, he has, as far as I have read, good ſenſe, clear language, and ſometimes fine ſtriking ſentiments. But I moſt cordially embrace

embrace the propoſition, *viz.* "That faith juſtifieth "only as it apprehendeth the merits and righteouſneſs "of Jeſus Chriſt," which he moſt peremptorily* condemns.—Pleaſe to caſt your eye to the fifth line of the next paragraph; (the Biſhop's words are, "Imputation "of Chriſt's righteouſneſs conſiſts in dealing with ſin-"cerely-righteous perſons as if they were perfectly ſo, "for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt;") and compare his "ſincerely-righteous perſons," with St *Paul*'s declaration, *Rom.* iv. 5. that Chriſt juſtifieth the ungodly.—When you have peruſed and conſidered Biſhop *Fowler's* treatiſe thoroughly, pleaſe to let me have it again; eſpecially as you and Mr *H*———*r* apprehend he has given better directions for the attainment of true holineſs than Mr *Marſhall*.—Thanks for young Mr *Cl*——'s ſermon. He is a correct writer, but wants the main thing. "Chriſt is all in all." He either forgets, or underſtands thoſe words, in a manner very different from my apprehenſion. Mr *G*——*t* has much good ſenſe, but to me his ſermon reads flat: in his diſcourſe likewiſe I wiſhed to have ſeen more of our Immanuel's glory.

I am, *&c.*

LETTER CXXIX.

Weſton, October 20, 1754.

Dear Sir,

I Received the parcel ſafe, and deſire to bleſs God's providence for not ſuffering the manuſcripts to be loſt in their paſſage, as they had like to have been; and to thank my kind friend for his judicious remarks.——Herein is incloſed dialogue xvi. I durſt not venture to commit this to the preſs, without ſubmitting it to your correction. Dear Sir, examine it with a critical ſeverity; and may he whoſe eyes are as a flame of fire, enable you to diſcern and rectify what is amiſs.——It is, as you will eaſily perceive, a ſubject of the laſt importance. Oh! that, in handling it, I might be *a workman, that need not be aſhamed*.—Pardon my ſcraps of anſwers, to your large and valuable letters. I hardly know how to get a moment's leiſure, ſo very intent am I now on the publication of my book. I have not been able, for want of time to read over this tranſcript; I hope, the copier has not made any great miſtakes. Be ſo good, dear Sir, as to favour me with your remarks on this manuſcript, as ſoon as you poſſibly can; you need not return it, only ſend me your remarks. But you will pleaſe to preſerve this, for fear of an accident happening to the other copy.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours moſt affectionately,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXXX.

Thurſday Noon.

My dear Friend,

I Am glad Dr *C*** got time, and took the trouble of overlooking the manuſcripts. He has the judgment of a critic, and the freedom of a friend. *Moſes Browne* is perſuaded by the bookſeller to print his poem on the *univerſe*, and his *Sunday-thoughts* in one volume, and intends to entitle it, *The works and reſt of creation*; with the addition of ſome more particular, explicatory, and ſubordinate title. I objected to this general title; made a query, whether it was ſtrictly proper; or, if proper, whether ſufficiently ſignificant? Inſtead of it, I propoſed, *The works of creation, and reſt of the Sabbath.*

Dr *Gill* ſhall tell you my ſentiments, in relation to *Weſley* on the *perſeverance of the ſaints*. Both their pamphlets on this ſubject I ſend you. Whether his replies and interpretations in the firſt part are ſound and ſatisfactory, judge you; the conſiderations ſuggeſted in the latter part, I think, are full of weight, rich with conſolation, and worthy of a place in our memories and in our hearts: may our own meditation fix them in the one, and the Spirit of God implant them in the other!

I am entirely of your opinion with regard to *Staynoe* on *ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt*: generally very prolix, and ſomewhat tireſome to the reader; yet his ſtyle is good, nervous, and beautiful. Prolixity, I find, is an epidemical fault among writers; the cenſure I paſs on him, rebounds on myſelf: ſave me from this miſconduct, by lopping off my redundancies. I have not looked into *Staynoe* for a great while; when I reviſe him again, you ſhall have my ſentiments concerning his doctrine; which, though excellent in the main, is not, I apprehend, perfectly conſiſtent, nor evangelical throughout.—I have ſeen Mr **'s verſes on Dr ***'s character; I am apprehenſive (*inter nos*) that it will rather depretiate, than exalt the Reverend Doctor's credit, among readers of a goſpel-ſpirit. There are indeed the *ſales Attici*, but where are *ſales evangelici*?—What ſays our lively friend ***? I think, he is the *Caleb* of our fraternity. *Caleb* ſignifies all heart. His name and nature correſpond. Did not he warm you with his zeal? Oh that we may glow with love to him, who bled for love of us!—I have received a letter from our dear friend on the *American* continent. He mentions you in particular, and your late gueſt. Love, cordial love, he tranſmits to you both. We believe him, when he makes a profeſſion of kindneſs; and why are we ſo backward to believe the more repeated, more ſolemn, and infinitely more faithful aſſurances, which the ſcripture gives us of our Redeemer's love? Let us bluſh and be confounded for our unbelief, and may the Lord of all power and grace help our unbelief!

Ever yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S. Certainly our friend judges right in not acting as a juſtice of peace, unleſs he would ſubmit to the fatigue of acquainting himſelf with our national laws. A ſtudy, which is, if I rightly judge, which I am ſure would be to my taſte of all others the moſt jejune and irkſome. Not ſo the ſcriptures! God has, in tender indulgence to our diſpoſition, ſtrewed them with flowers, dignified them with wonders; enriched them with all that may delight the man of genius, and make the man of God perfect. May we, as new-born babes, deſire the ſincere milk of the word; and grow—grow thereby in knowledge, grow in faith, grow in love, in holineſs, in every amiable and happy accompliſhment. Don't you practiſe that excellent rule, of ſelecting for meditation each day a text of ſcripture? As to publiſhing the firſt volume of *Theron* and *Aſpaſia* before the others are ready, I really know not how to act. May the God of unerring wiſdom vouchſafe to direct, for his dear Son our glorious Interceſſor's ſake!

* See the whole paſſage, page 160. of the third edition, and page 190. of the fourth edition.

LETTER CXXXI.

Weston, Aug. 12. 1754.

Rev. and dear Sir,

I Received your favour from *Islington*, and acknowledge myself indebted to you for a preceding one from *Scotland*. I am both to you, and to other of my worthy correspondents, quite an insolvent; yet trust my many infirmities, in concurrence with your candour, will plead my excuse.

I called myself an insolvent; but I shall, 'ere long make one public effort to pay from the press, all my debts of an epistolary nature; the payment, I confess, will not be in the very same specie, but it will bear the same image and superscription, not *Cæsar*'s, but Christ's. This will recommend it to my correspondents, and not only bespeak their kind acceptance of it, but engage their cordial prayers in its behalf. Do, my dear Sir, remember my poor enterprise, when you call upon him who is omnipotent; he can bid the wounded come against the fortress, and the lame take the prey. Unless he succour, unless he support, what can impotence itself expect, but to miscarry in the attempt, and be a laughing-stock to the enemy? but I read, and this encourages me, *It is not by might, nor by strength, but my Spirit, saith the Lord.*

I did not know till yours informed me, that Mr ** was gone to his long, and I trust to his happy home. O that we who survive, may have our affections fixed there, where our God and Saviour resides, whither our friends and relations are removed!

I wish you and your spouse much joy in each other, but much more in Christ Jesus. As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so may the Lord your God rejoice over you both. Let me beg of you to present my affectionate salutations to good Mr *G*——. Assure him, that my silence did not proceed from any indifference to his friendship, or disesteem for his work; but I was much indisposed. I had nothing to communicate, and to have written in such circumstances, would been burdensome to me, and unserviceable to him.—My respectful compliments attend Mrs *O*——, your spouse, and yourself; and I entreat your united prayers for, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend,

and brother in Christ,

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S. The inclosed collection of scriptural promises, are a little present which I make to my people. They are intended to be pasted, one at the beginning, the other at the end of religious books. Perhaps some of your friends may not disdain this spiritual nosegay, because, though little, it is culled from the garden of God.

LETTER CXXXII.

Wednesday Morning.

Dear Sir,

I Was lately favoured at *Weston* with a visit from the Rev. Mr *W**** of *T****, who is indeed a most excellent man, much of a gentleman, and seems well to deserve the character he bears: there is something in him very engaging, yet very venerable.—During our conversation, I felt a kind of reverential awe on my mind, blended with more than fraternal affection. How old is he? By his looks he appears to be past forty. What a reproach is it to our men in power, nay to the nation itself, that so valuable a person should at this time of life be no more than a country-curate?——But he, good man! disregards the things of this world.——That time which too many of his brethren spend to the disgrace of their function, in worldly compliances, and hunting after church-preferments, he employs as a faithful labourer, in the vineyard of Christ; and pays all due obedience to the apostle's important injunction, *Redeem time!* —How would some of the primitive bishops have sought after a man of his examplary piety; and have given him every mark of their real esteem! *Sed tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.*

I am much pleased with the account of the religious society at *T*—, of which Mr *W*— is the founder and present director.—'Tis an admirable plan! I would have endeavoured (had my health permitted my attendance) to have formed one of the same kind at *Northampton*. I heartily wish so useful an institution was more known, and well established in all the principal towns in this kingdom; as I am persuaded such a society must be productive of great good, and in some degree revive the drooping interest of Christianity, whete-ever it was prudently managed.—We had in this neighbourhood a religious assembly, of which I myself was a * member; but no one could be admitted, who did not understand *Greek*, as the chief design of that meeting was to improve each other in scriptural knowledge, and consequently could be of little use comparatively with Mr *W*—'s plan †.

I have lately read Mr *Warton*'s edition of *Virgil*, and much approve the printing the *Latin* on one side, and his poetical translation on the other: he is a clever man; but I think he might have enriched his notes with many more observations on the beauties and masterly strokes of the poet.—I would not for my own part give a straw for the most accurate disputations upon a chronological or geographical nicety; but I would applaud and thank the critic who will assist me to see the art and address, to feel the force and fire, and to enter into the spirit and delicacy of such an author as *Virgil*. I am, dear Sir,

With great respect,

Your obliged and very humble servant,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXXXIII.

Saturday Morning.

My dear Friend,

I Have read over, again and again, the corrected copy of your little tract, which you intend for the next edition, and have examined it with my best attention: not able to make any amendment that is considerable, I have only suggested some slight alterations. Elegance you don't covet in such a composition; plain and neat is the proper array for such an address.

I am surprised to read the letter which the popular gentleman from *Durham* writes against your book. Never fear, my friend;—our writings as well as our lives, are in the hand of God almighty: if he will spread, what shall obstruct them? if he will work by them, who shall disannul his design? O! may we cry to him, cleave to him, and live by faith on him! for *not by might nor by power*; nor by eloquence of composition, nor by interest of patrons, *but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.*

Pray take a little pains with my *Theron* and *Aspasio*;

* The rules and orders of the assembly here mentioned, are inserted above, p. 535.

† The rules and orders of the Truro society are inserted above, p. 536.

—you

—you can ſcarcely imagine what inquiries are made after it, and what a demand there is for it, even before publication. It makes me rejoice with trembling. All-wiſe, all-gracious Jeſus, be jealous for thine honour.—Let me not—oh! let me not cloud its brightneſs or obſtruct its progreſs, by any injudicious touches of my pen.—I now feel the loſs of our valuable friend Dr *Doddridge*, to whoſe judgment I ever paid the higheſt deference; but ſince he is gone, and we can have no more of his perſonal counſels, let us redouble our attention to his writings.

I expect you will tell me my manuſcript is very prolix; but I deſignedly made it ſo, that my friends might judge what is proper to be omitted. It is eaſier, you know, to expunge than to compoſe; I wiſh they would with a leaden pencil incloſe in a parentheſis, what they would have dropt; I hope to retrench one fourth part of the copy. May the God of wiſdom direct, and the God of mercy proſper, all our undertakings!

I am yours very ſincerely,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CXXXIV.

Saturday Morning.

THanks to my dear friend, for the entertainment he has given me, by *Hanway*'s account of * *Nadir Shah*; an illuſtrious villain indeed! he ſpread firebrands, arrows, and death. May we be conformed to his image, who went about doing good.

If you have *Voltaire*'s life of *Lewis* XIV. be pleaſed to give me the peruſal of it; I fancy, his reign in *France* was ſomewhat like the *Auguſtine* age in *Rome*. Periods of politeneſs both! but what are thoſe to heaven? the world, where DWELLETH righteouſneſs,—conſummate righteouſneſs and everlaſting happineſs. Don't you long, more and more, for thoſe courts of the living God? Don't you love him more and more, who (after he had overcome the ſharpneſs of death) opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers?

Warburton, I hear, has publiſhed two volumes of ſermons, octavo; in which, it ſeems, he has decried experimental religion, diſregarded the peculiarities of the goſpel, and treated the operations of the Spirit as mere enthuſiaſm. If this be the effect of his great learning, then, good Lord, deliver us all, ſay I, from ſuch an attainment. If you either have, or can borrow them, juſt let me peep on them.—Don't buy them to gratify me; I can reliſh nothing but what is evangelical.

Your friend's *Diſſertations* were put into my hands; very pure diction, but that is all; all to me, at leaſt. There was the bone, but the marrow was gone; Jeſus Chriſt, my portion and yours, was forgot.——How different his ſtrain from St *Paul*'s reſolution, *I am determined to know nothing but Chriſt Jeſus and him crucified*, which happened to be the ſubject of my exhortation to my family laſt night. Lord, reveal thy adorable Son, the all-ſufficient Saviour, in our hearts; and the more others neglect him, ſo much the more let us, my dear friend, be zealous to honour him.

I have looked into the manuſcript you ſent me; there ſeem to be many lively and ſpirited ſentiments in it, but ſurely it is defective in the main point. St *Paul*, I am apt to think, upon a peruſal of the treatiſe, would ſay, the author has good ſenſe, may be no bad moraliſt, but being *ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh his own righteouſneſs, he has not ſubmitted to the righteouſneſs of God*, Rom. x. 3.——Lord, give us an underſtanding, that we may know him that is true! Then we ſhall ſee Chriſt Jeſus, the God-man, to be, in the grand affair of ſalvation, like the meridian ſun; and all other things, like the ſtars at noon-day.

Did you ever read Mr *Whalley*'s remarks upon *Shakeſpear*? If you have not, I will ſend you the pamphlet. They are very ingenious, and well deſerve the notice of the public; particularly of yours, who are ſuch an admirer of *Shakeſpear*.

When you can ſpare *Francis*'s tranſlation of *Demoſthenes*, (I ſuppoſe it is the ſame *Francis* who tranſlated *Horace*), favour me with a ſight of it. A ſight of this will content me; but God's word, that ineſtimable book, which ſhews me the way of ſalvation, I would cleave to, I would dwell upon. And would not you, my dear friend, do ſo too? Ἐν τούτοις ἴσθι.

My text on *Wedneſday* evening will be a complete deſcription of a Chriſtian; *viz. We are the circumciſion which worſhip God in the ſpirit, and rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the fleſh*, Philip. iii. 3. A fine ſubject for your meditation!—Why ſhould I not add, for your converſation alſo?

Ever yours.

LETTER CXXXV.

Dear Sir,

I Here ſend you part of my manuſcript copy of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*; if you think it worth your while to beſtow any corrections upon them, well; if not, this alſo is well. For my own part, ſo very languid are my animal ſpirits, I am more and more indifferent about them; I ſee ſo much weakneſs in my mind, and ſo many imperfections in my compoſitions, that I am afraid to venture upon the ſtage of obſervation again.—An obliging letter from Mr *H*——*r*, informs me of his willingneſs to peruſe and correct any literary attempt of mine; and diſcovers, I think, ſtill more the integrity, ſimplicity, and piety of his heart.

I prefer both *South*'s and *Delaune*'s ſermons to the Biſhop's, for ſoundneſs of doctrine.——The firſt might be crabbed in his temper, and the ſecond voluptuous in his life, yet both are more evangelical in their ſentiments than he is.——Thoſe who can read ſuch kind of moral eſſays as the Biſhop's, (very improperly called ſermons), as guides to heaven, and as good comforters while on earth, will one day I hope form a better judgment, and be enabled in a clearer manner to diſcern the things which are excellent.

On Dr *Stonehouſe*'s recommendation, I have lately read Dr *Watts*'s treatiſe on *the love of God, and its influence on all the paſſions*; which is indeed a moſt excellent book, happily calculated for uſefulneſs.——If you have never ſeen it, you have a pleaſure yet to come, and I would by all means adviſe you to get it.——The love of God is indeed the ſource and ſoul of religion;—and what can produce it, what can cheriſh it, but a ſenſe of God's love to us manifeſted in his dear Son? by whom we are fully aſſured, that he has forgiven us all treſpaſſes, and will give us life eternal.

Preſent my affectionate compliments to your family, and believe me, as I really am,

Moſt cordially yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

LET-

* See *Hanway*'s accurate and entertaining *travels*, in two volumes quarto, page 255. of the ſecond volume.

LETTER CXXXVI.

Weſton, Jan. 25, 1755.

Dear Sir,

I Really forget, whether I acknowledged your laſt favour. If I did not, let your own candour be my advocate, and my important buſineſs under the moſt enervated conſtitution be my plea. I have been, ſince I wrote, in the phyſician's hands, and debarred from the pulpit. Bleſſed be the Lord our Healer, I am now reſtored to my uſual ſtate, and am enabled to ſpeak a word on the Lord's-day, and preach in my church on *Wedneſday* evening, which is my lecture-day for the honour of my maſter, and I hope for the edification of his people.——Oh! that this privilege may be cœval with my life; and my preaching voice, and my vital breath be ſtopt together! I wiſh you, dear Sir, many new years, much of the new man, and an abundant entrance into the *new Jeruſalem.*

Your moſt obliged,

And truly-affectionate friend.

LETTER CXXXVII.

March 4.

My dear Friend,

DON'T hurry the return of the Dialogues. Take your time, that you may examine them thoroughly; none knows, how far they may ſpread, or how long they may live. Oh! that the God of wiſdom may enable you to judge aright, and correct their miſtakes!

I am ſorry to hear your account of our friend at ***. I wiſh, he could be perſuaded to look upon his myſtic writers, as his chamber-counſel; converſe with them in his ſtudy, and leave them there. I was viſited yeſterday by a gentleman, who would be a darling with Mr *H*——; quite fond of myſtics, but does not go any great lengths; nor eſpouſe, at leaſt not avow or propagate, their extravagant peculiarities. Your old acquaintance Mr *** came in, and ſat with us, I believe two hours. The gentleman happened to refer to *Iſaiah* vi. and deſired I would read the beginning of the chapter; glad of this overture, I readily embraced it, and fixed the diſcourſe to this noble, this alarming and comfortable ſcripture. Oh! let us attend, with aſſiduity and delight, to the holy precious word of God: the apoſtle calls it αδολον γαλα, pure, unmixed, unadulterated, as though every compoſition had ſome improper tincture, was ſome way or other adulterated. *My Son*, ſays the God of heaven, (and it is a moſt important advice, a moſt endearing exhortation,) *attend to my words, incline thine ear unto my ſaying. Let them not depart from thine eyes, keep them in the midſt of thine heart. For they are—life unto theſe that find them, and health to all their fleſh.*

As to *Eph.* iv. 16. does not συναρμολογουμενον refer to the orderly and exact arrangement? συμβιβαζομενον to the nice and ſtrong connections? But where is the beauty or propriety of πασης αφης της επιχορηγιας; Why *that which every joint ſupplieth?* Is there any peculiar fund of nutriment lodged in the joints? would not an anatomiſt have ſaid, that which every veſſel, or every ramification of a veſſel, ſupplieth?—I ſincerely pity poor ***'s caſe; I will give him two guineas; and hope the God whom he ſerves, will raiſe him up other friends. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give him all things?* Tell him this from me, though he knows it already, the Lord may make it a word in ſeaſon. Charge him to ſay nothing of me and my mite, but as much for me to his God and Saviour as he pleaſes.—I hope you will, when opportunity ſerves, ſtrengthen Mr *H*——'s in the faith of the goſpel, and in the ways of the Lord. Let us provoke one another to love and to good works; and ſo much the more, as we ſee the day approaching.—Yeſterday Mr *** of *Cambridge* called upon me; our converſation was not ſo edifying, as I could wiſh; it degenerated into diſpute. Mr ***, who is very much talked of, was the ſubject. I don't thoroughly know his ſcheme, but am inclined to ſuſpect that his opponents will find it a difficult matter to maintain their ground. However, I ſhall not attempt to make myſelf fully maſter of the controverſy. To know Chriſt and him crucified, *hoc nobis palmarium.* This is the deſire and prayer of,

Ever yours.

P. S. The *Latin* prayer you ſent me for my opinion, ſeems to be compoſed by a myſtic. Not a word of Chriſt! Acceſs through his blood is neglected; acceptance through his righteouſneſs is forgotten: The grand error of the myſtic divines! who, wholly intent upon what God is to do *in* us, moſt unhappily diſregard what he has done *for* us, in the perſon of his beloved Son.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

Weſton-Favell, March 19, 1755.

My dear Friend,

A Good while ago I received your kind letter, and this week your valuable parcel. I confeſs myſelf obliged to your candour, as well as to your judgment, for excuſing me, though I have not abſolutely acquieſced in all your remarks; as well as for giving me many excellent corrections, which I have moſt thankfully adopted. I hope what I have written concerning faith, will occaſion ſome calm and friendly debates; I want to have that ſubject ſifted, cleared, and ſtated. I muſt own, I am ſtrongly inclined to ſide with our reformers; I cannot but think they adhere to the ſimplicity of the goſpel. Chriſt died for me, ſeems to be the faith preached and taught by the apoſtles.—I have not had time to peruſe Mr **, nor your manuſcripts; you can hardly imagine, how my time is engroſſed, and my weak ſpirits almoſt overbore, partly by reviſing the work for a new edition, which is put to the preſs,—partly by anſwering a variety of letters, ſent to me on occaſion of the publication; ſome of which cenſure, ſome approve of the performance.

I have read with great pleaſure, your ſhort chronicle; have ſent it to Mr *Moſes Browne*, and received it again: hope you can ſpare it, till I peruſe it a ſecond time.

I have lately been preſented with a magnificent and coſtly *Hebrew* Bible, in four volumes folio, publiſhed by Father *Houbigant*, with which he has intermixed the *Apocryphal Greek* books, ſtyled by him *Deutero-canonici.*——Have you ſeen this work, or heard its character? The author has ſubjoined notes to each chapter, which are employed chiefly in vindicating his alterations of the text. He is a bold enterpriſing writer, takes great liberties with the ſacred text, and makes very many alterations; often without the authority of any manuſcript, purely from his own critical judgment, or critical conjecture.—— If at any time you have a mind to know his opinion upon any difficult text, I will either tranſcribe it in his own words, or give you the ſubſtance of it in *Engliſh.*

His interpretation of *Gen.* xxii. 14. puts me in mind

of an expreſſion in your ſhort chronicle.—"'Tis my "opinion, *Abraham* had never ſo clear a ſight of the day "of Chriſt as at this time." I fancy, you will not be diſpleaſed with a copy of the learned Jeſuit's criticiſm. *Vocavit nomen loci ejus* יהוה יראה *Dominus videbitur.—Non videtur ne ab futuro* יראה *aberremus.—Non videbit, non modo quia non additur quid ſit Deus viſurus, ſed etiam quia in toto illa viſione, hominis eſt videre, Domini videri; propter quam cauſam Deus locum iſtum mox nomine viſionis inſigniebat. Nimirum Deus* Abrahamo *id oſtendit, quod* Abraham *vidit et gaviſus eſt, ſeu Filium promiſſionis unigenitum pro humano genere victimam olim futuram. Atque hoc illud eſt, quod memoriæ ſempiternæ* Abraham *conſecrabat, cum ita ſubjungeret, Hodie in monte Dominus videbitur; illud hodie ſic accipiens, ut accepit* Paulus *apoſtolus illud* Davidis, *Hodie ſi vocem ejus audieritis; quod hodie tamdiu durat, quamdiu ſæcula illa durabunt, de quibus apoſtolus, donec hodie cognominatur. Errant, qui ſic interpretantur, quaſi* Moſes *renarret uſurpatum ſuo tempore proverbium. Nam ſi ſic erit, non jam docebit* Abraham, *cur huic loco nomen fecerit, Dominus videbitur; quam tamen nominum notationem in ſacris paginis non omittunt ii, quicunque nomina rebus imponunt. Quod contra plane docebit,* Abraham, *ſi de eo* Moſes *ſic narrat, vocavit nomen loci hujus, Deus videbitur; nam dixit, In monte Deus videbitur.*—This is a truly grand and delightful ſenſe; would bid fair for preference, if it could be ſufficiently eſtabliſhed. But, beſides other things which might be objected to this interpretation, it ſeems probable that the Lord did not appear to *Abraham*, only called to him ויקרא. Chriſt ſays of *Abraham*, that he ſaw, not his perſon, but his day; ημερα ſignifies, I ſuppoſe, much the ſame as יהוה יורה the remarkables, τα επισημα in any one's life. He ſaw by faith his incarnation, obedience, death, all-ſatisfying atonement, &c. Is not this the meaning of our Lord?

Now I am upon the ſubject of difficult texts and exact interpretations, let me deſire your opinion of *Iſ.* xxx. 18. I have generally looked upon it, as a declaration and a diſplay of God's infinitely-free grace, and profuſely-rich goodneſs. The great *Vitringa* conſiders it in quite a different light.—*Moram trahet* יחבה *Jehovah* (are his words) *in gratia vobis facienda.*—For which ſenſe he adds the following reaſon; *quia delicti gravitas repentinam gratiam non ferebat, ſecundum rationes juſtitiæ divinæ.*—The next clauſe he thus explains; *Propterea* ירום, *i. e. exaltabitur judici et juſtitia, antequam gratiam in vos exerceat. Houbigant* on this verſe does nothing more than offer a ſmall alteration, for ירום he would read ירוץ *præſtolabitur*, that this verb may correſpond with the preceding יחבה.

I propoſed to have cloſed the plan of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, with an explicit and pretty copious treatiſe on *evangelical holineſs* or *obedience*; and to have ſhewn my true believer in his dying moments. If your thoughts ſhould happen to take ſuch a turn, be ſo good, dear Sir, as to ſuggeſt, what you think the moſt adviſable and advantageous way of managing this important point.—This would moſt effectually ſtop the mouths of *Arminians*, and be the beſt ſecurity againſt the abuſes of *Antinomians*. I could wiſh, if it were the Lord's will, that I might live to furniſh out one more volume of this kind, and—*manum de tabula.*

As the new edition is partly finiſhed, and the preſs proceeding at a great rate, and as there will be ſome few emendations, you will give me leave to preſent you with a ſet of what, I hope, will be leaſt imperfect. Till this edition is finiſhed, let me be your debtor in point of promiſe; and in point of affection and gratitude I will be your debtor, ſo long as I am, &c.

LETTER CXXXIX.

May 21, 1755.

Dear Sir,

MY letters to you muſt always begin with thanks, and will generally cloſe with inquiries.—I am quite a proſelyte to your guarded and ſober method of uſing the *Hebrew* manuſcript; though I talked, ſome time ago, with an adept in the ſacred language, and moſt devout ſtudent of God's word, who would not ſo much as hear of alterations, from any authority, or any account whatever; corrections in an inſpired book, were to him little better than ſacrilege. The preſent copy of the Bible, he apprehended, was in no degree, not even a ſingle jot or tittle, wrong. I ſubſcribe your reaſons for rejecting Father *Houbigant*'s, and in not admitting Mr *Kennicott*'s expoſition of the *Hebrew* adagy יהוה יראה.

I ſhall treaſure up your remark on the relative אשר, and wiſh you had the deſigning or the ſuperintending of the cuts, which the printer of Mr *Stackhouſe*'s *hiſtory of the Bible*, ſays, coſt eight hundred pounds. I am delighted with your interpretation of *Iſaiah* xxx. 18. What a charming repreſentation it gives us of the divine long-ſuffering, tender mercy, and profuſe goodneſs! Oh! that I might live under the clear manifeſtation of theſe lovely perfections!

In *Pſal.* xxxvi. 1. *Houbigant* would read לבו inſtead of לבי, and thus tranſlates the clauſe, *Loquitur impius juxta—improbitatem quæ eſt in medio cordis ejus.*

Inſtead of ציון, *Pſal.* cxxxiii. 3. he would introduce שיאו, and juſtifies his alteration from *Deut.* iv. 48. Did you ever obſerve this paſſage, and compare it with the text under conſideration?

Pſal. lxviii. 16. for תר שבי he would ſubſtitute הרלשן *mons pinguis*; which alteration he thus explains, and thus vindicates. *Eſt mons Dei, mons Sion, in quem aſportatur arca fœderis; qui mons, collatione facta cum cæteris montibus, quorum laus eſt pinguedo ſive ubertas, laudatur ob ejus pinguedinem: ex quo, videlicet, tempore eum montem habitat ille, qui pinguem fecit domum Obed-edom.*—*Mons altitudinum, altero in membro, eſt attributum montis Sion, cæteris circum montibus altioris. Itaque mons Baſan nihil hic ad rem; præſertim cum de monte Sion ea hoc in pſalmo dicantur, propter quæ ille mons ſit monti Sion longe anteponendus.* Gen. xx. 16. *Ego dedi fratri tuo argenti mille pondo, erit id tibi pro velaminibus oculorum, ſeu tui tibi aderunt, ſeu cæteri quicunque homines, ne forte te concupiſcant.* ונכחת, *verbum pro verbo, nam concupiſcibilis es ob tuam pulchritudinem; ex* נכח Arabic. *verbo, ducere uxorem vel ejus matrimonium ambire.* Don't you think, this method of deducing the ſenſe of *Hebrew* words, from the preſent *Arabic*, is precarious? If we knew the preciſe ſignification which *Arabic* words bore in the days of *Moſes*, and what words were commonly uſed in that early age, there would be ſurer ground to proceed upon. But I apprehend, the *Arabic* language has undergone great alterations, and received great improvements, ſince that period; that *Golius*'s *Lexicon* is no more the *Arabic* uſed in the time of *Moſes*, than *Johnſon*'s *dictionary* is *Engliſh* ſpoke in the days of *Chaucer*.

My beſt thanks for your plan. I propoſed to follow the track of Mr *Marſhall*, in his book entitled, *The goſpel-myſtery of ſanctification*; you are acquainted, I preſume, with this valuable piece of ſpiritual and experimental divinity; THIS, and Mr *Erſkine*'s ſermons, led me into thoſe notions of faith, which are delivered in Dialogue xvi. If you have that treatiſe, (*Marſhall*'s I mean), I ſhould be much obliged for your opinion of it. You aſk, how *Houbigant* reads *Gen.* xi. 32.—Thus, *Fueruntque dies Thare annorum quadraginta quinque ſupra centum.* This, he ſays, is according to the *Samaritan* copy; and adds,—*Cui ſcriptioni adhærendum eſſe, notat Sam. Bochartus; aliter enim cum Hebræo cod. pugnantia dicturum Stephanum diaconum,* Acts vii. 4. *Quod ſic probatur: dictum fuit,* ver. 26. *Thare fuiſſe annorum 70, cum gigneret Abrahamum. Infra dicetur, (cap. xii. ver. 4.), Abrahamum fuiſſe annorum 75. cum ex Haran in Canaan profectus eſt. Ex quo efficitur, ut Thare, tempore illius profectionis, annum ageret 145, quæ adeo ut Thare, ſi quidem vixerit annos 205, fuerit totos annos 60 huic profectioni ſuperſtes.—Quæ cum ita ſint, non jam intelligitur, quare Stephanus dixerit Abrahamum fuiſſe, mortuo jam Thare, in Canaan profectum. Aut fallitur Stephanus, aut ſtatuendum cum Sam. codice, non plus vixiſſe Thare,*

Thare, quam annos 145. *Nam per eum numerum, libri Geneſis cum Stephano diſcordia conciliatur.——Erroris fontem aperuit Bochartus, in litera* ך 100, *pro* ם 40, *exarata. Erroris fons eo manifeſtior, quod in codicibus Germanicis litera* ך *pede hoc modo decurtato* ך, *fere ſimilis eſt literæ* ם.——His marginal reading of *Exod.* xii. 40. is thus.—According to the *Samaritan* text, מארץ בנעז יואורץ מצרים וטשכ בבני ישראל ואבותם אשר ישבו. Which he thus tranſlates, (for his *Hebrew* text is conformed to the common ſtandard, and only in the tranſlation his corrections are introduced), *Commoratio autem filiorum Iſrael, et patrum eorum qui in terra Canaan et in terra Ægypti habitarunt, fuit,* &c. In his note on this paſſage he refers the reader to his prolegomena; where, after he has proved, that, by admitting the *Samaritan* reading, difficulties, otherwiſe inextricable, are cleared up and removed, he takes to taſk *Grotius, Le Clerc,* and *Buxtorf.* You will perhaps be willing to ſee his manner, which on many occaſions is like the *ſcclenata ſinapis,* ſharp as muſtard. *Non incommode, inquiebat Grotius, ſic explicatur: Exilium illud Ægyptiacum duraſſe uſque ad annum* 430, *ex quo Deus Abrahamo præſignificaverat. In qua Grotiana explicatione Grotium deſidero. Num exilium erat Egyptiacum, tum cum Deus Abrahamo præſignificabat? Vel cui perſuadebat Grotius, Moſen hæc verba, ex quo Deus Abrahamo præſignificaverat, tum dicere vellet, omiſiſſe? Quæ verba cum ſuo marte Grotius, et ſacra pagina invita, inferciat, num huic potius credemus, ut ea verba omiſerit Moſes, ſine quibus intelligi non poſſet, imo ſecum ipſe pugnarit, quam Samaritanis, quorum diligentia commonemur Judæos ſcribas fuiſſe negligentes? Sed audiendus Joannes Clericus. Malim, inquit,* ανωμαλιαν *in Maſoretico codice agnoſcere, quam mendam. Vigilas, Clerice, cum hæc loqueris? Negas Hebr. in volumine eſſe mendam, hoc eſt, errorem a ſcribis Judæis profectum; eo potius inclinas, ut ſit* ανωμαλια, *hoc eſt, Moſis ipſius in temporibus notandis indiligentia? Egregiam profecto indiligentiam, ut Moſes ſcripſerit annos* 430, *cum ſcribere debuiſſet annos* 215, *eo præſertim loco, in quo tempora tam diligenter notat Moſes, ut non modo annos computet, ſed ipſum etiam ponat anni menſem, menſiſque ipſum diem. Quid Buxtorfium dicemus, non modo, ut cæteri interpretes, hic tergiverſantem, ſed etiam plane negantem, fuiſſe hic quidquam a Judæis ſcribis omiſſum? Heus tu, Buxtorfi! Illamne fuiſſe Moſis ſcriptionem putas, qua Moſes Moſi contradicat, et aperte mentiri videatur? Videatur ſane, inquit; ſed nihil quidquam amplius Moſen ſcripſiſſe mihi quidem conſtat. Quonam igitur pacto, Buxtorfi, Moſen cum Moſe conciliabis? Non conciliabo, inquit, ſi non potero, ſed veto in hodierno cod. Heb. quidquam addi et ſuppleri. Quid ita? Quia, inquit, codices Heb. omnes hic conſentiunt, et illud additamentum ignorat. Quod ſi autem ſcribæ alicujus lapſu, vel etiam plurium excidiſſet, non potuiſſet id fieri in omnibus exemplaribus. Sed Buxtorfium nunc linquimus, Buxtorfianaſque nugas, quoniam eas ſumus non multo poſt confutaturi.* I intended to have laid before you a ſpecimen of his very bold, and, I fear, raſh attempts upon the ſacred texts: but theſe I muſt defer, till I have the pleaſure of ſubſcribing myſelf, on another paper,

Your moſt obliged,

and truly-affectionate friend.

LETTER CXL.

Dear Sir, 1755.

HErewith I ſend you the new edition of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio.* It deſires your acceptance and your prayers, that it may be for the praiſe of the glory of God's grace in Chriſt, and for the edification of his people in faith and holineſs.

You will find dialogue xvi. ſomewhat altered; and rendered, I hope, leſs incorrect, than in the former editions. It contains the genuine ſentiments of my heart. But if they recede a hair's breadth from the unerring ſtandard, if they differ in one jot or tittle from God's holy word, in that jot or tittle, I moſt earneſtly wiſh, the world may not receive them, and that I myſelf may have grace to retract them. What you meet with, that appears contrary to the λογος υγιαινς ακαταγνωστος, freely point out. This will pleaſe, this will profit, and therefore this will oblige,

dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S. You will permit me to keep your manuſcripts a little longer; one of them, the *ſcriptural chroniele,* a perſon is tranſcribing. May the bleſſed Jeſus tranſcribe his word and his image on our heart.

*LETTER CXLI.

My poor fellow-ſinners,

I Received a letter from you, and ſhould have viſited you; but my health is ſo much decayed, and my ſpirits are ſo exceedingly tender, that I could not well bear the ſight of your confinement, your chains, and your miſerable circumſtances, as I can hardly bear the thoughts of your approaching execution, and your extreme danger of everlaſting deſtruction. But becauſe I cannot come in perſon, I have ſent you the following lines, which I hope you will conſider, and which I beſeech the God of all grace to accompany with his bleſſing.

You have been already condemned at an earthly tribunal; you are alſo condemned by the law of God; for thus it is written, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them*†. If every violation of the divine law expoſes you to a curſe, what a multitude of curſes are ready to fall upon your unhappy ſouls!——And remember, this is not the curſe of a mortal man, but of the great, eternal, infinite God. If it was diſmal to hear an earthly judge command you to be hanged by the neck till you are DEAD; how much more terrible to hear the almighty Judge denounce that unalterable ſentence, *Depart from me ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*‡. ——Had you committed but one ſin, this would have been your deſerved doom: *The wages of ſin,* of every ſin, *is death*‖. How much more of thoſe manifold ſins, and multiplied tranſgreſſions, of which your conſciences muſt accuſe you? You are ſoon to ſuffer the puniſhment of the gallows, and you are liable to the vengeance of the moſt high God; for thus ſaith the holy word, *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men*§. If againſt all and every inſtance of ungodlineſs, then how much more againſt your crimes, which have been of the moſt abominable and horrid kind! *The wrath of God!* Tremendous word! who knoweth the

* This letter was wrote from *Weſton-Favell* to two condemned malefactors, in *Northampton* gaol, (namely, *James Smart* and *Joſeph Browne*), about the middle of *July,* 1755.

† Gal. iii. 10. ‡ Matth. xxv. 41.

‖ Rom. vi. 23. § Rom. i. 18.

weight

weight and terror of his wrath? At his rebukes the rocks melt like wax, the earth is ſhaken out of its place, and the pillars of heaven tremble. How then can you endure the furiouſneſs of his wrath, and the ſeverity of his vengeance; and that, not for a day, a month, or a year, but through all the ages of eternity! Yet this is the doom of *them that know not God, and obey not the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, They *ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* What can you do in this diſtreſſed condition? What indeed! if you had a thouſand years to live, you could not atone for one offence. How then can you make ſatisfaction for millions of provocations, in the ſpace of a few days?—Alas! you are loſt, utterly loſt, in yourſelves irrecoverably loſt. May the God of all power make you ſenſible of your undone ſtate! ſenſible that you are upon the brink, the very brink of an amazing, an unfathomable downfal. Perhaps you may ſay, Is there no hope then? is the door of heaven ſhut, and without any poſſibility of being opened to us? Muſt we ſink into unquenchable burnings? and is there not ſo much as a twig for us to catch at? Yes, my poor fellow-ſinners there is not only a twig, but a tree, even the tree of life; a ſure ſupport, which if the Lord enables you to hold on, you may yet, even yet, be ſaved. Oh! beg of his wonderful goodneſs to accompany what you are going to read, with his Holy Spirit.

Chriſt, the all-glorious Son of God, pitied the deplorable caſe of ſuch ſinners. He not only pitied, but reſolved to ſuccour and relieve them. For this purpoſe HE came into the world, and was made man. Nay more, he came into the place, and ſtood in the ſtead of ſinners.——Becauſe we had broke the commandments of the law, he fulfilled them in all their perfection. Becauſe we deſerved the puniſhment of the law, he ſuſtained it in its utmoſt extremity. He became poor, and had not where to lay his head, though heaven and earth were all his own.—He ſubmitted to ſcorn and reproach, though all the angels of God are bidden to worſhip him. Nay he was condemned to death, the moſt ſhameful and tormenting death, far more ſhameful, and unſpeakably more tormenting, than the death which you muſt ſhortly undergo. He ſuffered unknown pangs in his body, and inconceivable anguiſh in his ſoul, from the indignation of God. In a word, he ſuffered all that ſhame, all that torment, all that vengeance, which the unnumbered ſins of the whole world deſerved. Here then is your door of hope.—Sins are borne by Chriſt; and though there be much iniquity, there is no condemnation to them who are in Chriſt Jeſus *.——Wrath is borne by Chriſt, ſo that ſinners who deſerve eternal vengeance, are reconciled to God, and ſaved from wrath through him †.—A righteouſneſs is wrought by Chriſt, a perfect and everlaſting righteouſneſs, ſuch as brings incomparably-greater honour to God's law, than all our tranſgreſſions bring diſhonour. By all this he has merited and obtained a full deliverance, and a complete redemption.—Are you not ready to cry out, O bleſſed Saviour! O precious redemption! What a happineſs, if we might be intereſted in this Saviour, and partake of this redemption? Millions of worlds, for ſuch a bleſſing! You need not give millions of worlds, no, nor any individual thing. Theſe bleſſings are given freely without money, and without price, without any deſerving qualifications in us. All that are juſtified, are juſtified freely through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus.——But we are ſinners, vile ſinners; we have not only nothing good, but much and grievous guilt.——The Lord convince you of this more and more! Yet remember for whom Chriſt died, he *died for the ungodly.*——What ſays St *Paul? In due time Chriſt died for the ungodly* ‡.—He died for the unjuſt.—What ſays St *Peter? Chriſt hath once ſuffered for ſins, the juſt for the unjuſt* *.—What ſays our Lord himſelf? *The Son of man is come to ſave that which was loſt.*——Are you not ungodly men? are you not unjuſt perſons? are you not loſt creatures? For ſuch, even for ſuch the divine Jeſus died. Wonderful love! adorable compaſſion! The Lord enable you to lay hold on this hope ſet before you!—Perhaps, you may ſay,—We are not only ſinners, but the chief of ſinners.——O! that you were convinced of this!—To be the chief of ſinners, makes you unpardonable before men; but this is no difficulty with Chriſt, and ſhould be no hinderance of your coming to Chriſt. Chriſt's merit and righteouſneſs are infinite. They are as able to ſatisfy for a debt of ten thouſand talents, as for a debt of a ſingle farthing. Hear what the ſcripture ſaith upon this ſubject; *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners, of whom I am chief* †. He came not to ſave ſinners only, but the very chief of ſinners. And he is *able to ſave them to the very uttermoſt.*——But our ſins are heinous, they have been often repeated, and long continued in.——What ſays the apoſtle? *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin.* Another apoſtle declares, *By him*, by the divinely-excellent Redeemer, *all that believe are juſtified from all things*; from all accuſations, be they ever ſo numerous; from all iniquities, be they ever ſo enormous. Nay, ſo wonderfully efficacious is the power of his death, that, through his great atonement, ſins which are as crimſon, are made white, white as ‡ ſnow.——But will Chriſt vouchſafe his great ſalvation to us? Hear his own words, *Him that cometh to me* for pardon and ſalvation, *I will in no wiſe caſt out.* Be his guilt ever ſo great, this ſhall be no bar. I will not on any conſideration reject or deny his ſuit. Only let him come as a poor undone creature, and he ſhall find me willing and mighty to ſave; nay, he invites you to come. Theſe are his gracious words, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden*, heavy laden with ſin and miſery, *and I will give you reſt* ‖. I will deliver you from going down into the pit, I will deliver you from the vengeance of eternal fire. All your ſins ſhall be upon me, and all my righteouſneſs ſhall be upon you.—Go to a great man on earth, beg of him to uſe his intereſt in your behalf; he would ſcorn to take notice of you. But your dear, tender, compaſſionate, moſt condeſcending Saviour, invites you to come to him, and aſſures you he will not abhor nor caſt you out.——Go to your earthly judge, entreat him on your bended knees, to pardon you.——He perhaps cannot, muſt not: the laws forbid him. But it is not ſo with Jeſus Chriſt; he has made a full ſatisfaction for ſin: he has made an infinite atonement for ſin; and were your ſins ten thouſand thouſand times greater than they are, before the power of his death they would all vaniſh away; by the waſhing of his blood, they would all be as though they had never been.

This then ſhould be the one deſire of your ſouls, your inceſſant prayer to God, that you may come to Chriſt, that you may believe in Chriſt, that you may be found in Chriſt: then you will not periſh, though you deſerve it, but have everlaſting life, through his name; then you will have juſt the ſame foundation for your hope, as I muſt myſelf have when I ſhall depart this life. When I ſhall be ſummoned to the great tribunal, what will be my plea, what my dependence? Nothing but Chriſt! Chriſt, would I ſay, has been wounded for my ſins, therefore they will not be puniſhed in me. Chriſt has fulfilled all righteouſneſs in my ſtead, therefore I truſt to be juſtified when I am judged. I am a poor un-

* Rom. viii. 1. † Rom. v. 9. 10.

‡ Rom. v. 6.

* 1 Pet. iii. 18. † II. i. 18.

‡ Matth. xi. 28. ‖ 1 Tim. i. 16.

worthy

worthy ſinner, but worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, for whoſe ſake I ſhall receive both pardoning mercy, and everlaſting glory. This is my only hope, and this is as free for you as it is for your friend and fellow-ſinner

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S. What I have written, I ſhall beg of God to bleſs; and will attend you with my prayers, though I cannot viſit you in perſon.

LETTER CXLII.

Weſton-Favell, Sept. 10, 1755.

My dear Friend,

YOU may juſtly wonder, that I have not acknowledged the favour of your laſt, long before this. Do me the juſtice to believe, that it is not owing to the leaſt diſeſteem of your correſpondence, or any inſenſibility of your kindneſs. I hope my heart is, though ſadly depraved, yet ſincerely grateful; and I am ſure, I eſteem your letters as treaſures. Though I deſtroy almoſt all I receive, every one of yours is preſerved. Let me, therefore, earneſtly beg that you will not follow my example, but ſuffer your letters to be much more ſpeedy in their arrival than mine.——You would more eaſily excuſe me if you knew me. The graſshopper is a burden to me. Every blaſt blows me down, or my continual indiſpoſition and inconceivable languors pierce through me. I now hang a ſwelled face over my paper; occaſioned only by taking the air yeſterday in my chair, and finding a ſharper atmoſphere, than for many weeks I had been accuſtomed to. Pray for me, dear Sir, that eſtabliſhed in Chriſt, and ſtrong in his faith, I may be looking for, and haſting to the coming of the day of God; when this poor, enervated, crazy body will (to the everlaſting glory of free grace) be made like unto Chriſt's glorious body.

I live with my mother and ſiſter. Our method is, every morning at nine, when we breakfaſt, to read a verſe or two from the Bible, and make it the ſubject of our converſation. The other day, we were reading in *Pſal.* lxxxiv. 4. Immediately a doubt aroſe in my mind, how the fact, which is here affirmed could poſſibly happen. Could the ſparrows and ſwallows build their neſts, lay their eggs, and hatch their young, on God's altar, which was every morning and evening ſtatedly, and I ſuppoſe many other times in the day occaſionally, ſurrounded by crouds of worſhippers, on which the ſacred fire was conſtantly burning, and which was in a manner covered with flame and ſmoke, whenever the ſacrifices (אשים) were offered. Now to have birds lay aſide all their fear of man, the greater dread of fire, and make ſuch an altar their houſe, is ſtrange, is ſcarce credible, and muſt, if true, be miraculous.——Conſulting *Houbigant*, I find, he was ſenſible of the difficulty, and ſolves it, not from any manuſcript, but from his own invention, thus:—*Nos vero, ne oratio irrumea maneat, ſupplemus ante* תמיד, *hæc duo verba,* ואשי יהוה, *Ego vero quando tandem, tacito verbo* אשיה; *adero ad, quod ſolet reticeri.*

I have met with other bold ſtrokes in this commentator, which I want to ſubmit to your examination. But theſe let me poſtpone, in order to deſire your opinion concerning the plan of my new work; which, with a weak hand and deſponding heart, I have ſketched out, determined to try, (though with very little hope of being enabled to execute), reſting ſatisfied in this perſuaſion, that the iſſue of things is in the hand of the Lord, and he will fruſtrate or accompliſh, as he knows to be moſt expedient.

The PLAN *of the Supplement to* Theron *and* Aſpaſio.

Pleaſure and happineſs of Chriſt's religion, (for I am of the ſame mind with Mr *Marſhall* in his *Treatiſe on ſanctification*, namely, that we muſt partake of the comforts of the goſpel, before we can practiſe the duties of the law).——*Theron* oppreſſed with fears, on account of his numerous ſins.——Diſcouraged with doubts, on account of his imperfect obedience.—The cordials of the goſpel re-adminiſtered, with ſome additional ſpirit and ſtrength.——Objections to aſſurance of faith ſtated, diſcuſſed, anſwered. Vital holineſs; its nature, neceſſity, excellency. Its grand efficient, the bleſſed Spirit. Its principal inſtrument, true faith; mixed with which, the ſcriptures, the Lord's ſupper, prayer, the divine promiſes, are powerful and effectual means; diſunited from which, they are a dead letter and inſignificant ordinances. The evangelical principles of holineſs, ſuch as, *I beſeech you by the mercies of God, Ye are bought with a price, Ye are the temples of the living God*, &c.——All theſe privileges, though not hereditary, yet indefeaſible; or the final perſeverance of the believer.—Our friends part; renew their correſpondence; *Theron* deſires to glorify the God of his ſalvation, aſks advice concerning the beſt method of family-worſhip, educating children, inſtructing ſervants, edifying acquaintance.——On each of theſe particulars *Aſpaſio* ſatisfies his inquiry, enlarges on the ſubject of education, eſpecially of daughters; as that ſeems to be moſt neglected, or the proper way of conducting it leaſt underſtood.——Letter on the covenant of grace, compriſing the ſubſtance, and being a kind of recapitulation, of the three foregoing volumes.—*Aſpaſio* ſeized with a ſudden and fatal illneſs; his ſentiments and behaviour in his laſt moments.

If, dear Sir, you ſee any thing in this plan that is improper, correct it; any thing that is defective, ſupply it; and if any thoughts occur on any of the topics, be ſo kind as to ſuggeſt them.——Pray have you ever ſeen a book, lately preſented to me, and entitled, *The marrow of modern divinity*, with notes by Mr *Boſton?* If you have ſeen it, you will not deny me the ſatisfaction of knowing your ſentiments concerning it. Yeſterday a learned miniſter (a ſtranger) called upon me, and among other ſubjects, we talked of that remarkable paſſage in *Iſaiah*, *She hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her ſins.* What do you think is the exact meaning of the prophet? כפלים is a peculiar word. *Houbigant* tranſlates the clauſe, *Poſtquam pro peccatis ſuis multis dedit Domino duplices pœnas;* and ſuppoſes the two captivities, *Aſſyrian* and *Roman*, to be the double puniſhment. My pious viſitant referred it to the ſatisfaction made by Jeſus Chriſt. I objected, that God, not the church, received this. To which he replied, That the church receives the benefit of the ſatisfaction; and the expreſſion might be ſynecdochical, the thing purchaſed for the thing purchaſing. This interpretation, I fancy, would have been clearer and leſs exceptionable, if he had uſed the word *puniſhment*, inſtead of *ſatisfaction.* Then, as Chriſt and the church are one, his ſufferings might be called hers, and his righteouſneſs is reckoned hers.——*Vitringa* gives a future ſignification to the verb קבלה. She ſhall receive, not double puniſhment, but double bleſſings, agreeably to that doctrine taught by St *Paul*, *Where ſin hath abounded, grace ſhall much more abound.*—I ſhall be glad of your opinion on this point; glad of your

your assistance in my purposed work, and above all, glad of your fervent prayers for,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged and faithful friend.

LETTER CXLIII.

My dear Friend, *Friday Evening.*

AS to the matter of defending ME, I think *non est tanti.* I am ten thousand times more for your conversing like a Christian on every occasion. Take all proper opportunities of glorifying your divine Master, and be spreading abroad the savour of his blessed name. It would bring dignity to your character, I am persuaded, and would command reverence even from gainsayers, if you was sometimes to make a frank declaration on this head, and act accordingly. Don't scruple to bid your patients seek to God for a blessing; when they are recovered, remind them of their obligations to the almighty Physician; they are restored to health, not for the poor purposes of eating and drinking a little more, but to acquaint themselves with Christ Jesus, to prepare for eternity, and make their salvation sure. This would be truly graceful, might do much good; and should any one find fault with this practice, he must not pretend to the piety of a Christian; he has not the religion of a Heathen. Such a one should remember the conduct, and consider the sentiments of your brother *Iapis.*

Non hæc humanis opibus, non arte magistra
Proveniunt; neque te, Æneа, mea dextera servat;
Major agit Deus, atque opera ad majora remittit.

Virg. Æn. lib. xii.

No mortal work is THIS; no cure of mine;
Nor art's effect, but done by hands divine:
'Tis God *Æneas* to the battle sends;
'Tis God preserves his life for greater ends.

Thanks for your advice about what I recommended to your consideration, and about my own health; God has been better to me, than my apprehensive heart expected. O! that so long as I have breath, it may be employed to his honour, who forgiveth all our sins, and healeth all our infirmities, and when he heals them not, will make them a blessing.

Do, my dear friend, persist in a prudent way, to bear your testimony for a Master, who has bought you with his very life, and intends to make you partaker of his everlasting kingdom. If this does you or yours any real harm, reproach me with it, when we shall both stand in the presence of the whole world, and before the tribunal of our Judge.

Ever yours, while, &c.

P. S. You tell me, that "your business has lain so "wide, and you have been so much hurried this sickly "time, that you have scarcely had a quarter of an hour "to yourself for these last three weeks."—Oh! my dear friend! how much soever you may be hurried by the distance and the multiplicity of your avocations, don't forget to pray for that wisdom which is profitable (or useful) to * direct us even in the smallest matters, much more in all great and weighty affairs.—You who move in so conspicuous a sphere, so large a field of action, must have very particular occasion, very pressing necessity for divine direction; and therefore that important ejaculation, DIRECT ME, O LORD, should ever be uppermost in your thoughts.—*Take ye heed, watch and pray*, this is the kind admonition of the blessed Jesus, who well knows the human frame, and sees how very liable we are to be drawn aside by a variety of temptations with which we are daily surrounded.

LETTER CXLIV.

Dear Sir,

AS the interval between the hour of our dissolution, and the day of resurrection, will, in all probability, be very considerable, much longer than the time of our continuance on earth; it is a very reasonable and important inquiry, to examine into the circumstances of this state. The scripture, our infallible director, which is (so copious upon all the grand articles of religion, and) silent upon nothing that relates to the true happiness of mankind, has not left us without information in this particular. Whereas, all other writers grope in the dark; not one of them has been able to draw back the curtain, or give us (any) the least insight into the invisible world: it is to them, and in all their systems, an absolute *terra incognita.*—A few of the scriptural discoveries may be seen in the answer to the following queries.

1*st*, When the souls, the souls of the righteous, depart from the body; by whom are they received?—By holy angels. The angels were ministering spirits to them, in the days of their flesh, and will be their guard and their convoy, when they relinquish the earthly tabernacle. When *Lazarus* died, he was carried by angels.—What a comfortable privilege is this! not to be left solitary and desolate, like a shipwrecked mariner on some unknown coast; but to be under the guidance and protection of those benevolent beings!

2*dly*, In what place are they lodged?—This is described, not from our ideas of locality, or any properties of space, but from the society and the enjoyments. It is not very material, whether they are above or below, in the heaven of heavens, (which, I think, is most probable,) or in some separate mansion. A disembodied spirit, if under the wrath of God, must every where be extremely miserable; if surrounded with his favour, will every where be exceedingly happy. To such a spirit, that has no longer any connection with sensible things, God's smile must be heaven, God's frown must be hell.—Where-ever this region lies, we are sure it lies under the beams of the Sun of Righteousness; Christ is there, and where he is present, happiness cannot be absent. *Thou shalt be with me*, is his promise to the penitent thief.—*Abraham* is there, the friend of God, and father of the faithful. *Lazarus*, we are told, was carried into *Abraham's* bosom: and where he resides, where all the children of God, and heirs of glory dwell, there must be pleasures;—such pleasures, that the place is called *paradise*; *Thou shalt be with me in paradise.* The delightful garden of *Eden*, which the Lord himself planted, and which innocent man inhabited, was incomparably the finest, noblest spot in this sublunary world; and this is used to give us some faint representation of those blessed abodes, where the souls and spirits of the righteous

* Eccl. x. 10.

remain till the ſhout of the archangel and the trump of God ſummon them.

3dly, How ſoon are they lodged in this deſirable ſituation?—Without delay. I find no mention of any intermediate purgation, or of any period for inactivity and forgetfulneſs. *To day ſhalt thou be with me*, is our Lord's expreſſion; and it is obſervable, that the *Jewiſh* day was very near cloſing, when our Saviour gave up the ghoſt; nearer ſtill when that converted malefactor expired. *I have a deſire to be diſſolved*, ſays St *Paul*, *and to be with Chriſt*; he ſpeaks of his releaſe from clay, and his introduction into the Redeemer's preſence, as inſtantaneous. No ſooner does the former commence, but the latter takes place.—What an encouragement is this to fight the good fight of faith, and finiſh our courſe with alacrity and diligence! ſince we are not to wait in wiſhful but diſappointed expectation: No, the very moment our warfare is accompliſhed, our reward begins.——— Which reminds me of another inquiry.

4thly, What is the condition of holy ſouls, in this ſeparate ſtate?

1. They reſt from their labours; from all the diſorders that afflicted their bodies, from all the temptations that diſquieted their ſouls. They are no longer ridiculed and perſecuted by ungodly men. They have no more conflict with the powers of darkneſs and their own corruptions; ſin and ſorrow ceaſe eternally. They are freed, entirely freed, from every evil.

2. They enter into peace. They have then peace with God, peace in their own thoughts, peace with fellow-ſaints, which paſſeth underſtanding.———Peace implies a poſitive happineſs.———Peace, in the ſcriptural language, denotes all manner of bleſſings, and ſuch is its import in the preceding paſſage. In this large extent will it be made good to the righteous. When they relinquiſh the earthly tabernacle, the ſcales of ignorance fall from their underſtandings; their will is wonderfully conformed to Chriſt's; every weight drops off from their affections; and their holineſs is exceedingly confirmed. They are honoured with nearer approaches to God, they are favoured with clearer manifeſtations of his glory, they feel richer emanations of his love, and are more and more transformed into his image; every doubt vaniſhes, and they rejoice in the proſpect, the aſſured and refreſhing proſpect of receiving all the fulneſs of their everlaſting felicity. I ſaid fulneſs; for though the felicity of the ſoul upon its diſmiſſion from mortality is great, is high, is to us inconceivable; yet it will not be complete till the body is reunited to it, reanimated by it.———Then that will not only be reſcued from corruption, but made like unto Chriſt's glorious body, will be dignified with divine approbation, and that before the largeſt aſſembly of men and angels; they will receive a crown of righteouſneſs, they will ſit on thrones, and judge the apoſtate angels; they will then poſſeſs the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

What is ſaid of the righteous may lead us to ſome proper conceptions with regard to the wicked and their ſtate;—the one is the reverſe of the other; as they were quite diſſimilar in their life, in their death they are equally different. If the righteous are committed to the care of benevolent angels, the wicked, it is very probable, are abandoned to the inſults and rage of malevolent ſpirits. If the righteous are admitted into manſions of bliſs, the wicked are conſigned over to the places of horror and torment, where is all the miſery which is expreſſed by weeping and wailing; all that ſelf-condemnation and anguiſh, which is expreſſed by gnaſhing of teeth. If the righteous enjoy the calm of uninterrupted tranquility, and the light of perpetual ſun-ſhine; the wicked are reſerved in chains of darkneſs unto the judgment of the great day; wearied by their own ungovernable paſſions, ſtung by eager but unſatisfied deſires, haunted by a ſtern upbraiding conſcience.—In a word, while the righteous are looking for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and their Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; they are trembling under the diſmal apprehenſions of that dreadful day, when Jeſus Chriſt ſhall be revealed in flaming fire.

I add only a remark on that text of St *John*, to which we are ſo much obliged in this inquiry, "Bleſſed are "the dead which die in the Lord," *&c.*—The Lord muſt certainly ſignify, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.—To die in him, muſt, I think, imply dying in his faith, ſo as to be one with him; intereſted in his mercy, renewed by his Spirit, and conformed in ſome prevailing degree to his image. May this be the ſtate of our ſouls, while we live here, and when we depart hence. Then that will be fulfilled to our unſpeakable and eternal comfort, which is ſpoken by another apoſtle, *To me to live is Chriſt, and to die is gain.*

I am, dear Sir,

yours ſincerely.

LETTER CXLV.

Weſton, Saturday Morn.

My dear Friend,

I Thought of you in a particular manner on *Thurſday*, being the ſad anniverſary on which your late excellent lady reſigned this life; and at the ſame I thought on thoſe tender lines,

Jamque dies, ni fallor, adeſt; quem ſemper acerbum,
Semper honoratum, ſic Dii voluiſtis, habebo *.

Virg. Æn. lib. V.

I cannot but take notice of the wiſdom and piety of my favourite poet; he teaches his hero to reſolve all afflictive and dark diſpenſations, into the gracious will of God; and to derive his conſolation from this belief. *Sic Dii voluiſtis*, is a ſort of imitation of the good old prieſt *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good.* It is not not much unlike the exemplary acknowledgment of the patriarch *Job*, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord!*

I am thankful for your preſent of *Vanierii prædium ruſticum.* It is a very beautiful piece: *uni Virgilio ſecundus*; the moſt elegant and correct *Latin* compoſition, that I have met with among the moderns.

I have no fault to find, and no alteration to offer, with regard to the little tract that you ſubmit to my correction.——But what ſhall I ſay to my dear friend himſelf? Oh! what opportunities of doing good, ſubſtantial and immortal good, do you loſe, do you ſquander away! Opportunities, that are flying from you upon the ſwifteſt wings of time; and when once gone, are never to be recovered.——I don't ſo much as think of your neglecting buſineſs; but do let the world ſee, that buſineſs may be managed, great buſineſs managed, and yet Chriſt and eternal ages not forgot. Let men ſee, that the comforts of Chriſtianity, the privileges of the goſpel, are ſo truly delightful, as to be the moſt effectual ſovereign refreſhment, under the fatigues of a burthenſome employ. Thus doing, you would be a credit and high recommendation to religion; and bleſſed would you be, if your Maſter, when he cometh, ſhould find you ſo doing.—You will excuſe my freedom; and in return, I will not ceaſe to pray, that *the love of Chriſt may conſtrain you*, 2 Cor. v. 14.—I am, *&c.*

* The *Engliſh* of which is,—"Now the day, if I miſtake not, "is at hand, which (ſuch as has been the will of heaven) I ſhall "always account a day of ſorrow, always a day to be honoured."

LET-

LETTER CXLVI.

My dear Friend, *Tuesday Morn.*

WELL might Dr *Doddridge* say, "that in *Saurin*'s * sermons, the excellencies of *Demosthenes* and *Cicero* were united."———Never did I meet with any thing equal to the passages which the Doctor was so obliging as to translate, purposely to give me some ideas of this celebrated writer.——He seems to have understood the gospel well, and all the powers of oratory were combined in him.—I dare say he preached from his heart, and the grace of God accompanied his words.———If I have been so much affected merely by this desultory translation, how much more should I be transported, was I (like you) sufficiently skilled in the *French* language to read the original itself! *Saurin*, it seems, was a Protestant; and I am told, that in *Holland*, where he exercised his ministry, the streets were so crouded for several hours before the service began, that it was very difficult to gain admission.———Is it not astonishing, that the sermons of so popular a preacher, and so eminent a writer, should not as yet be put into an *English* dress?—But this I presume is owing to the difficulty of doing justice to an author of his extraordinary genius.——I am well aware, that few are equal to such an undertaking; but if there was a spirited translation of these animating sermons, published in weekly numbers, they would be well received, and might, through the divine blessing, be the means of doing much good to the community.

I have been enabled, blessed for ever be God! to perform my office, and preach to a crouded congregation. *Jesus said the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* was the text. O! that it may be the power of God to the salvation of the hearers!——I hope, my disorder in my head, and pain in my teeth, are not increased, though I felt the cold air breathe upon my face; for the church was so thronged, that it was not practicable to shut the door. Oh! for faith in the almighty Guardian, the almighty Physician!——

This, I presume, will find you safely returned from *London* to your own habitation; but though come back to your resting-place, yet more and more sensible that we are but strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

I hope ere long to see you at *Weston;* for I can assure you, my dear Sir, that amongst the many, many friends that dearly love you, no one can have a more affectionate regard for you than

Yours unalterably.

LETTER CXLVII.

Sept. 25, 1755.

Dear Sir,

I Lately received a letter from my very valuable friend Mr * * *, an extract of which I here transcribe, as he has made some just remarks on Mr *Burnham*'s *blameable behaviour in refusing the help of a physician.*———I believe you can answer for me, that I shall never be guilty of that fault: as I think altogether with the wise son of *Sirach*, that *the Lord hath created the physician, and that such are to be regarded for the uses we may have of them.*——*The Lord likewise hath created medicines out of the earth, and he that is wise will not abhor them.* Ecclus xxxviii.

"I have" (says my correspondent) "been reading "*Burnham*'s *Pious Memorials*, as it was published with a "recommendatory preface by you, in behalf of his distressed widow. The dying behaviour of Dr *Andrew Rivet*, page 212. and Dr *Peter du Moulin*, page 263. charms me exceedingly.—Every word has its weight, and shines like a well-set diamond in a ring; or, as *Solomon* expresses it, *like an apple of gold in a picture of silver.*———Mr *Burnham* was undoubtedly an excellent man, but he does not seem to come up to these in divine knowledge. Methinks I don't so well approve of his refusing the help of a PHYSICIAN, page 431, and the slight with which he treated such a proposal. ——It does indeed shew, that he lived quite above the fear of death; but at the same time it shews great weakness of mind.—Life and health are mercies in the esteem of heaven; and the dying Christian ought to esteem every thing as GOD esteems it. Suppose such a one desires to die, yet still he ought to use every lawful means to live, to make the will of God his own, and to be willing to continue even out of heaven, as long as his heavenly Father pleases.——The same weakness of mind appears in his desiring his friends not to pray for his life, and in his being sorry that they made so much ado, page 433.———Had he requested them to pray for him importunately, yet in humble submission to the will of God, and to be sure to acquiesce in it, whether for life or death, methinks it had been better.—An earnest desire of a speedy dissolution has led some pious martyrs, and some dying Christians too, into a mistake, which it is proper to take notice of, but more proper to avoid."

How do you approve of the following method in conversing with the survivors after the loss of a dear child, or friend?—It is merely a sketch; yet a due regularity is preserved by the three divisions; and some of the heads on each division are to be enlarged upon or omitted, and others added occasionally.——The use of such sketches may be seen in the preface to Mr *Richard's Hints for religious conversation with the afflicted;* whose plan, tho' some of his hints are not sufficiently adapted to the case described, I highly approve; as it cannot but be serviceable to every Christian, who is desirous of entering into spiritual discourse: and more particularly to young clergymen, who would do well to transcribe, study, and improve those hints; as they are too often at a loss how to exhort, admonish, or comfort, as various dispositions and circumstances require.—When you send me your opinion, make such alterations as occur to you.

The consolation.

It is God's will,—who still continues many comforts to us.—
His will always wise, good, best.
We are his creatures.—He has a right to us, as we have to our cattle or lands.
It is the Lord's doing.—This was the support of *Eli*, *Job*, *Hezekiah*.

The improvement.

"For us men sicken, and for us they die." (Dr *Young*'s *Night-Thoughts.*)
To wean our hearts from the world.
To set our affections there, where true joys are to be found.
To excite us with greater diligence to prepare for our own great change.

Our own preparation.

The only preparation is to secure the favour of Christ, and an interest in his merits, by which we are pardoned and justified. A par-

* *Saurin*'s sermons were originally wrote in *French*;—have passed through various editions;—and are now printed in twelve octavo volumes.

A participation of the Spirit of Chriſt, by which we are made fit for heaven.

I hope you remember, not without a pleaſing mixture of gratitude and joy, your divine, yet bleeding Lord. I hope you feel a more comfortable truſt, that your ſins are done away through that all atoning blood; and that you pray with a more ſteady faith for that moſt bleſſed Spirit, which was ſealed to our enjoyment in the holy ſacrament, of which we were ſo lately partakers.

I deſire you would enter into ſome ſpiritual converſation with the bearer, whom I have recommended to you; you will then ſee the more than rocky hardneſs of the human heart, and the abſolute need of prayer, and almighty grace, in order to make it ſuſceptible of ſaving impreſſions. I dare ſay you will draw ſeveral uſeful concluſions from this interview, though your attempts for his benefit, I fear, will prove ineffectual.

A gentleman yeſterday told a ſtory, well atteſted, which you'll be pleaſed to hear, as it ſhews in a very ſtrong light the uſe of thoſe paſſages of ſcripture, which the unthinking are too apt to conſider as uſeleſs. A certain libertine, of a moſt abandoned character, happened accidentally to ſtroll into a church, where he heard the fifth chapter of *Geneſis*, importing that ſo long lived ſuch and ſuch perſons, and yet the concluſion was, they died. *Enos* lived 905 years, and he died;—*Seth* 912, and he died;—*Methuſelah* 969, and he died. The frequent repetition of the words, *he died*, (notwithſtanding the great length of years they had lived,) ſtruck him ſo deeply with the thought of death and eternity, that it changed his whole frame.—He attended the remaining part of the divine ſervice with the utmoſt ſeriouſneſs;—went home, and prayed earneſtly to God for forgiveneſs, and the aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit;—and became from an infamous libertine, a moſt exemplary Chriſtian.—By this chapter we ſee, how ſoon youth, health, and all worldly delights muſt end. This, to a worldly-minded man, caſts a damp upon all theſe deſirable things; but to a ſoul acquainted with Chriſt, and in affliction removed from hence already, no thought is ſo ſweet as this. *Enos* died, *Seth* died, *Methuſelah* died, and (bleſſed be God for the privilege of death) ſo ſhall I.—It helps much to carry us chearfully through wreſtlings and difficulties, through better and worſe. We ſee the land of promiſe near.—We ſhall quickly paſs *Jordan*, and be at home.—There will be an end of the many vexations of this life,—an end of ſin,—an end of temptations,—nay an end of prayer itſelf; to which will ſucceed new ſongs of endleſs praiſes. Oh let us often reflect on what St *Peter* advances: *The end of all things is* therefore *at hand, be ye ſober, and watch unto prayer.*" 1 Pet. iv. 7.

I hope you will well weigh this,—and introduce ſpiritual diſcourſe whenever a fair opportunity preſents.—Set your face as a flint amongſt the great.—Eſtabliſh your heart as a rock; and let nothing, nothing divert you from furthering the intereſt of Chriſt, where-ever you yourſelf have any intereſt.—It is like plunging into cold water perhaps at firſt, but afterwards comes a glow all over you. Remember what I now ſay, ſhould you live thirty or forty years longer, yet when you come to die, take my word for it, you will wiſh you had converſed more on and for Chriſt.

—I am ſatisfied from the ſacred oracles, as clear as light, concerning the origin of evil. And if any one, without having recourſe to revelation, can ſatisfactorily ſolve that queſtion, *erit mihi magnus Apollo.*—My dear friend, let the word of Chriſt dwell in us richly.

—Thanks for the uſe of *Wharton's* and *Pitt's Virgil*. All the Syrens ſing in his lines, but the JOYFUL SOUND is no where heard. Was the ear of our ſoul tuned aright, there would be more muſic in this one ſentence from the King of heaven, *I have called you friends*, (John xv. 15.) than in all the *Iliad* and all the *Æneid*.

I am ever and
Affectionately yours.

LETTER CXLVIII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Sept.* 20, 1755.

YOU threaten to put my patience to the trial, by a very long letter of ſcriptural criticiſms. I ſhall only reply, Oh that my patience may ſupport all other trials with the ſame complacency and chearfulneſs, as I am perſuaded it will ſupport itſelf under this!—Your obſervations I very much value, and take a ſingular pleaſure in reading. The Lord Jeſus enable you to multiply them, and me to profit from them! and help us both to love his holy name, ever more and more!

I am entirely of your opinion with regard to the worth, the inеſtimable worth of the preſent life; eſpecially when there is a comfortable proſpect of being uſeful in our generation. This ſtate affords the only opportunity of doing good to immortal ſouls. The dead ſerve not their Lord in the work of the goſpel. The living, the living only, are entruſted with the precious office of turning ſinners from darkneſs to light; therefore the living ſhould value this diſtinguiſhed prerogative at a high rate.—Perhaps, you think, that I was the writer of Mr *Burnham's* life.—From a queſtion propoſed to me very lately by a clergyman, I fancy, that others think the ſame;* but I neither was the author, nor do I know the author's name.

I have ſent you the third edition of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*; you will obſerve, that I have made ſome alteration in dialogue xvi. and that I ſtill adhere to my firſt opinion, with regard to faith. I aſſure myſelf, you can bear with me, though I ſhould continue, in this particular point, to vary ſomewhat from your way of thinking. I ſhall be truly glad and thankful, if you will examine me with the rigour of a critic, and muſter up againſt my doctrine the ſtrongeſt objections you can conceive; for I do earneſtly wiſh and frequently pray, that not any notion of mine, but the holy truth of God may prevail.—You will alſo obſerve, what advantage I have made of your remark on *Vitringa's* interpretation of *Iſ.* xxx. 18.

I ſhall expect your animadverſions on Mr *Maſhall* with eagerneſs; and though he is my counſellor, my comforter, and my favourite, I truſt I ſhall not be blind to his faults, nor refuſe to ſee his miſtakes. May the wiſdom of heaven guide, direct, and teach,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate and obliged friend, &c.

LETTER CXLIX.

My dear Friend, *Weſton-Favell, October* 23, 1755.

I Have received, and am very much obliged for your remarks on Mr *Marſhall's* treatiſe of *Sanctification*.

* Mr *Hervey* was ſolicited to write the preface to *Burnham's Pious Memorials*, which he complied with as an act of compaſſion to the widow, who thought his name might promote the ſale of the book for her benefit. See this preface, above, 531.

They

They are truly judicious; and ſeveral of them command my aſſent. You will wonder to ſee, how ſtrongly I have recommended this book in the 16th Dialogue of my *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, p. 342. of the [preſent] edition. It has been eminently bleſſed to my own ſoul: there is no religious treatiſe I read, which does me more good. Pray be ſo kind as to execute what you propoſed.--Shew me how Mr *Marſhall*'s method may be improved; for I would gladly tread in his ſteps on this account, as well as on others, that I may have an opportunity of acknowledging his miſtakes, and cautioning my reader.

Downhame's *Chriſtian warfare*, againſt the devil, the world, and the fleſh, I will immediately endeavour to procure. I ſhould be glad, if you would point out other excellent books. I am ſometimes aſked to give a friend or a ſtudent a catalogue of the moſt excellent authors (particular of religious authors.) To do this, ſeems to be a valuable piece of ſervice, eſpecially as it is ſo unhappily neglected by the conductors of our youthful ſtudies.

Your laſt paragraph is particularly kind and obliging: but however your benevolence may regard and repreſent it, I ſhall always eſteem and acknowledge it as a ſingular favour to receive your critical obſervations. In which, as in the threads made of ſilk and gold, there is always a moſt agreeable mixture of learning and devotion.

Pray what do you apprehend to be the meaning of St *Paul*? 1 Cor. ix. 26. ὡς οὐκ ἀδήλως. Dr *Doddridge* tranſlates the paſſage thus: "Not as one who is to paſs undiſ-"tinguiſhed." In the ſame chapter, verſe 23. another difficulty occurs, ἵνα συγκοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι.—1 *Cor.* xii. 31. ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ κρείττονα, Dr *Doddridge* underſtands as a reprehenſion, not as an encouragement. He tranſlates the words, "Ye contend earneſtly about the beſt gifts;" and interprets the clauſe, "envying, and, it may be, "detracting from the ſuperior endowments of others." Is this right? See chap. xiv. 1.----I am at ſome loſs to make out the propriety of τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον. *Col.* ii. 14. How is the hand-writing of ordinances ſaid to be contrary to us? The ceremonial law, which I ſuppoſe is meant by δόγμασιν, was not contrary to, but promotive of the comfort and peace of the *Jewiſh* worſhippers. The moral law indeed ſpoke terror, and nothing but terror to impotent man. But the law of ſacrifices and waſhings brought the glad tidings of atonement and purification, which muſt be very conſolatory. What is the preciſe ſignification of ἐξαλείψας, αἴρει, προσηλώσας? Do they refer to any uſages cuſtomary and current in thoſe times?

Let me now ſubmit to your examination a very ſingular criticiſm or two of Father *Houbigant*'s. On *Iſ.* ii. 22. he ſays, *Non dubitamus, quin fuerit olim ſcriptum,* נשב תוא בי כבמת, *Nam altitudinem ſtatu dejecit. Homo, cujus ſpiritus eſt in naribus ejus, eſt ipſe filius hominis, Meſſias, de quo in toto hoc capite vaticinatur Jeſaias. Quem Meſſiam Judæi, niſi violare timent, monet eos non impune laturos. Quia Meſſias, homo factus, volvit naribus ventos et tempeſtates, quibus ipſorum et urbem et rempublicam ſit everſurus.* Again, chap. iii. 10. he ſays, אמרו צריק: *Plerique, poſt Vulgatum, dicite juſto, qua interpretatione peccant dupliciter. Nam* 1. *legitur* צריק *juſtus vel juſtum, non* לצריק *juſto.* 2. *Parum ad rem terribilibus minis, quæ anteceſſerunt et quæ ſequuntur, interſeritur iſte ſermo ad juſtum habitus. Nobis ſatis eſt* אמרו *pro* אמרו. *Nempe erat futurum, ut Judæi juſtum ligarent, Romaniſque vinctum traderent.*———His verſion is, *Alligant juſtum, quia bonus eſt.*—You will begin to think, that our author is extremely fond of the ſpiritual ſenſe, and deſirous to find Chriſt or Chriſtian ſentiments in every place. But he is ſeldom (however it has happened in the aforecited texts) liable to err on this ſide of the queſtion. Hear what he remarks on *Iſ.* xxxiii. 24. חלח *Agitur præda rxertitus Aſſyriorum, poſt eorum fugam, dividenda inter eos, qui vicinis in locis habitant. Nihil ad eam prædam iniquitas: nihil etiam ad antedicta, qui habitat in ea. Nam ea, de qua habitatione dicatur, neſcitur. Nihil denique ad rem* חלח, *æger ſum. Non promiſerat Deus, nullos fore in regione ægrotos, aut in lecto jacentes tum, cum dividenda eſſet præda. Sed omnia plana et commoda erunt, ſi pro* חלח, *legas* בלח, *prohibitus ſum; ſi pro* בם, *in eis, ſi denique pro* עם, *legas* עם *prædam ſuam,* שכן בם העם חלח אשר שכן בל, *Non dicet vicinus, prohibitus ſum; populus qui habitabit apud eos, tollet prædam ſuam. Quibus verbis prænunciatur, prædam de Aſſyriis fore tantam, ut omnes licentiam habituri ſint prædandi, et abducendi domum prædas ſuas.*

Hoſ. vi. 3. ונדעה, *et cognoſcamus. Parum commode cognoſcamus, ubi ſequitur, et perſequamur cognitionem. Propterea non dubitamus, quin Oſee ſcripſerit* ונרעה, *et conveniamus, ut deinde apte veniat, et ſequamur, ſive curramus ad cognoſcendum Dominum.* The next verſe he thus tranſlates: *Quid faciam tibi, Ephraim, quid faciam tibi, Juda, ut adſit vobis miſericordia, velut matutina nubes, et ut res quæ mane effunditur? Certe ego, quod volui, feci prophetis tuis; interfeci eos per verba oris mei, et ex judiciis de te meis lux orietur.* He changes העבתי into הרעתי.

I was not a little puzzled about *Jer.* xviii. 14. *Houbigant*, according to his cuſtom, firſt alters, then interprets; thus he would read the paſſage: היסי קרים שדי, נילים הישב השור שורשלג לבנון. אם ינטשו ינטשו. *An deſerit calx pætram, vel nix Libanum? An relinquunt aquæ ſcaturientes defluxus currentium aequarum?*

When you have leiſure and inclination for critical ſtudies, I ſhall be greatly obliged for your opinion on theſe points; as I am for your very friendly and very ſolid defence of me in the *London Magazine*.—May the King of ſaints proſper the works of your pen, and return the acts of your kindneſs into your own boſom!——Let me once more beg of you to direct me to the moſt improving books you have met with. No longer ago than yeſterday a young clergyman, whom I had never ſeen before, made me a viſit, and attended a lecture which I gave my pariſh in *Weſton* church on a *Wedneſday* evening, at ſeven o'clock. An amiable gentleman truly! He ſeems mighty well inclined: wonders, that his brethren don't make edifying ſubjects, ſuch as juſtification and ſanctification, the favourite topics of their diſcourſe. Now I don't know what more ſubſtantial ſervice I could do ſuch a perſon, than to recommend to his ſtudy ſome proper books. The tidings therefore of a judicious evangelical author, with a little ſketch of his character and diſtinguiſhing excellency, might be a bleſſing to others, and a bleſſing to myſelf. A favour, a welcome favour, I am very ſure, it would be to,

Dear Sir, your much obliged,

and truly-affectionate friend, &c.

LETTER CL.

My dear Friend, *Weſton-Favell, Dec.* 13. 1755.

I Received your laſt valuable favour in due time. I ſhould have made my acknowledgments ſooner, but I ſtaid to get the incloſed little pamphlet *, which I want much to have you peruſe, and to have your opinion concerning it. There ſeems to me to be much good ſenſe and ſolid argument, much more than, I apprehend, could have been produced on the occaſion.—I read your remarks with great attention; and I humbly truſt that God will execute the office, and accompliſh the bleſſing mentioned in the portion of ſcripture, which gave a reliſh to our breakfaſt this morning.

ותלשר אזם רעת. *Pſal.* xciv. 10.

I read the paſſage in a ſmall *Hebrew* Bible without

* A little pamphlet on the *marks and evidences of faith*, wrote by Mr *Cudworth* of *Norwich*.

points; and the first word of the verse seemed to me, not מכר, but מכין which, in my opinion, yields the best sense; *He that made, upholds, establishes the nations*, &c. I have consulted *Houbigant*, but he makes no alteration.

Indeed we have need of divine teaching. Amidst the variety of opinions, which ever did, and perhaps ever will subsist in our imperfect state, he only who is the wonderful Counsellor possesses the unerring clue.—A letter from *Dunfermline* in *Scotland*, received by the last post, and written by a stranger, informs me,——that, upon the doctrine of sanctification there is a standard-book; and this standard-book, he adds, is *Marshall's gospel-mystery*.——Mr *Moses Browne* tells me, he is publishing a little piece of poetry, entitled *Piercy Lodge*, the Duke of *Somerset's* seat, [wrote at the desire of the late Duke and Duchess in the year 1749. Had they lived, poor *Browne* would have met with the encouragement he deserves. They loved him, and fully intended to have served him]. When it makes its appearance, I will desire you to accept of a copy.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLI.

Dear ——,

THIS letter will come to your hands, as the blessings of the everlasting gospel are offered to our souls, without money and without price.

Be under no concern about the report you mention; it gives me not one moment's uneasiness. We have acted, I trust, as faithful stewards of our Master in heaven; and if he approves, how very insignificant is the censure of men! And what,——ah what is a little misrepresentation, or a few lashes from tattling tongues, compared with those cruel mockings, which our divine and dying Redeemer bore!

You are, I find, as I too often am, in poor *Peter's* condition, when our Lord addressed him with that tender rebuke, *O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*——Wherefore indeed do we doubt? Is he not an all-sufficient Saviour? Is not his death a complete atonement, sufficient to take away the sins of a whole world?——Is not his righteousness a perfect righteousness, able to justify even the most ungodly?——Does not his Godhead impart an infinite dignity to both? rendering them more powerful to save, than millions, unnumbered millions of sins are to destroy?

Is he not a willing Saviour?——How willing was *Joseph* to give the good of the land of *Egypt* to his aged father?—How willing was *Jonathan*, to screen his beloved *David* from *Saul's* wrath?—How willing is an indulgent parent, to deal our bread to his hungry child? Equally willing, abundantly more willing is Christ to give himself to our souls, to reconcile us to his almighty Father, to fit us for his kingdom, and take us to his glory.——A parent does not chuse to die for his child:—*Jonathan* never spilt his blood for *David*,—nor did *Joseph* lay down his life for that good old man *Jacob*. But this, all this, the Lord Jesus Christ freely undertook, freely underwent for us. What could he do more to assure us of his love?—Let us contemplate the story of his bitter, bitter passion. Let us view him prostrate, in an agony of sorrow, on the cold ground; extended with racking torture, on the accursed tree; laid, all pale and mangled with wounds, in the gloomy sepulchre. And sure we shall have a stronger proof of Christ's willingness to save us, than the testimony of ten thousand ministers preaching on earth, or of ten thousand angels speaking from heaven.

Is he not a faithful Saviour? Having loved his own, he loveth them even unto the end. As his eyes never slumber, nor sleep, so his care for his people is never intermitted; he has written their names on the palms of his hands, and their eternal interests are ever before him; he will never, never, never leave nor forsake them; no, not in any circumstance, nor on any account. They are his peculiar treasure, and the ransom of his own dear life; they are the recompence for all his sufferings, and are to be the jewels in his mediatorial crown; therefore they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand.——Neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate them from his love, from his bosom, from his heart.——*Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord? who is the shield of thy help, and the sword of thy excellency. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; surely then thou mayst dwell in safety*, Deut. xxxiii. 27. &c.

Are we unworthy sinners? We readily own it, and oh! that we may deeply feel it! But did not Christ chuse to converse with publicans and sinners? Did he not come to seek and to save that which was lost?——The same spirit which actuated him on earth, he retains now he is exalted into heaven; let not therefore our deplorable vileness be our hinderance, but our incitement to apply to the ever-gracious Friend of sinners.——Indeed, if we were not sinners, we should not be proper objects for the Saviour. *They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick*; for such he made his soul an offering, and for such he brought in everlasting righteousness; he makes intercession, not for the righteous, but for transgressors; and those that are afar off, in rebellion and apostasy, are brought nigh;---nigh to God, and home to heaven, by the blood of Christ.

May these considerations sink into our hearts, and be made the seed of a lively, growing, and joyful faith!——And *may the Lord direct* us both (as we both groan in this tabernacle, and are burthened) *into the love of God, and the patient waiting for of Jesus!* when this languishing, this corruptible body will lie down in peace, and rest in hope; and the soul, delivered from every conflict, cleansed from every stain, will be ever, for ever with the Lord.——Amen and amen, says

Yours, &c.

LETTER CLII.

My dear Friend, Weston Favell, Dec. 15, 1755.

I Return you my best thanks, for sending me a copy of so smart and sensible a letter, which came to me very apropos; and which I think is so likely to do good in this disputatious age, that I wish it was printed in some of the magazines and public papers.——I am much obliged to you for your kind caution against my being drawn into a controversy, particularly by the very warm and overbearing Mr ***, who is now grown impatient of the least contradiction, and far from being a desirable companion or correspondent.

Controversy is as much my aversion as it can be yours; for where that begins, religion too often ends; and I shall not enter the lists, I promise you, with any one, unless I am absolutely necessitated to it. But if I am compelled to appear in print on such an occasion, I shall endeavour to pay due regard to *Solomon's* excellent advice, *viz.* "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger," *Prov.* xv. 1.—Instead of exasperating my adversary by cutting reprehensions, I will,

will, if poſſible, conſtrain him by a candid and reſpectful treatment, to moderate his temper; and, by a coercive propriety of arguments, perſuade him to relinquiſh ſuch tenets, as I think erroneous.

God grant that I may never behave with an indecent reſentment, how great ſoever may be the provocation of my gainſayers; but that, in all my writing and converſations, I may avoid the haſty ſpirit, leſt I injure my own peace of mind, and diſgrace my profeſſion as a Chriſtian and a miniſter.

It is a rule with me, always to ſpeak well of the good qualities even of bad men, eſpecially when others are cenſuring them with an unmerciful ſeverity;—and I could wish, that every controverſialiſt would learn ſo much candour, as to put the beſt conſtruction on his opponent's book, and to embrace what was in general good in it, however he might doubt or cenſure ſome *particular* opinions of the contending author.

To live peaceably with all men, is my earneſt deſire and my daily prayer; and in order to do this, I am more and more convinced of the neceſſity of candour, humility, and a conſcientious regard to the example of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

I am, my dear friend,

Affectionately and inviolably yours.

A copy of the letter above mentioned, never before printed.

Dear Sir,

I Have a ſtrong and ſettled averſion to all manner of diſpute, in things that relate to a meſſage of peſect peace and love. The kingdom of God is no more opinion, than it is meat and drink;—and argumentation can have little to do where a new heart, and a right ſpirit is the buſineſs, or work to be performed.

If we prevail in our diſputes, (though I believe there is not a ſingle inſtance in which either of the antagoniſts ever condeſcended publicly to own himſelf in the wrong,) our adverſaries then become baffled worldlings:—if they prevail, then they become worldlings triumphant.—When we deal much in diſputes, we ſoil our ſouls, and endanger the temper of meekneſs and love, which we are ſo frequently injoined to cultivate, and which are the very badge of Chriſtianity.

As for amicable diſputes in religion, 'tis as errant cant as an amicable ſuit at law.—A diſpute about the ſacrament, as naturally removes the mind out of its ſtate of perfect charity, as a quarrel about a whore.—The ſubject alters nothing; 'tis the temper of mind where with we handle theſe matters, that defiles the man; and 'tis morally impoſſible to meddle to any purpoſe, without having the mind diſordered.

St *Paul* was plainly of the ſame opinion, when he wrote thus to *Timothy*; "If any man conſent not to wholeſome words, even the words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to the doctrine which is according to godlineſs, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about queſtions and ſtrifes of words, whereof cometh envy, ſtrife, railings and ſurmiſes, perverſe diſputings of men of corrupt minds, and deſtitute of the truth, ſuppoſing that gain is godlineſs: from ſuch withdraw thyſelf." 1 *Tim.* vi. 3, 4, 5.

This is the conſtant caſe of all the diſputers in the goſpel itſelf.—The more they argued, the further they were always from the point; inſomuch that even thoſe who are ſaid to believe on Chriſt, at the beginning of the chapter of diſpute, before the end of it take up ſtones to caſt at him.

In ſhort, till a man be a Chriſtian in ſome meaſure, he has neither ability, nor any right in nature to walk about it.—'Tis more abſurd than a controverſy between a fiſh and a fowl, about the beſt and moſt commodious element to breathe in.

The peace and purity of our own minds, is of more value than of every other endowment.—For my own part, I had rather be able to bear patiently the nick-name of fool or madman, than to become famous for all the wiſdom and prudence which the world knows how to commend and eſteem.

In this poverty of ſpirit, I would heartily entreat all my friends, earneſtly to ſeek after that love and peace, which is only to be found in the face or ſimilitude of our dear Maſter, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.—The want of this moſt amiable and Chriſtian diſpoſition in ſome eminent profeſſors, for I never admired a rough and boiſterous zeal, has often ſtartled and chagrined him who is,

Dear Sir,

Yours very ſincerely,

R. W.

P. S. We may talk what we will about religion, it is nothing leſs than a divine temper.—What is ſhort of this is PRATING about religion, and that's all.—I meet with many doctrinal Chriſtians, who are very dabs at chapter and verſe, and yet very bond-ſlaves to earth and ſelf.—Spriritual Chriſtians (which are the only true ones) are almoſt as ſcarce as phœnixes.

LETTER CLIII.

Saturday Morning.

My dear Friend,

LET me exhort you to live as on the borders of eternity, and often to reflect where the late fall from your horſe might have hurried you. Eternity is at hand.—*He that cometh will come, and will not tarry.*—Oh that your ſoul may proſper; for without that, what are all the riches, pleaſures, and honours of this earth! But it cannot proſper, unleſs the world be under foot, and your affections fixed on Jeſus. What beſides him, my dear friend, deſerves a thought? And how tenderly has he dealt with us, notwithſtanding all our ingratitude and provocations? I can ſay no more than I have ſaid to you; but I pity you, and I pray for you, that you may conquer this fear of man.—I wish you would every day, for the next month, read ſome part of Profeſſor *Franck's Nicodemus*, or, *The fear of man*. Dr *** told me he had a great regard for you, and wiſhed you would ſet your face as a flint; exert your lively talents to promote the goſpel, and confeſs the Lord Jeſus boldly before men on every proper occaſion: and when they talk obſcenely, or take the Lord's name in vain, you ought genteelly to reprove them, or leave the company. This would be acting like a Chriſtian!—But while you are thus ſilent, meally-mouthed, ſtand ſo much upon your politeneſs, and have ſuch a fear of being cenſured by worldly-minded people, you may take my word for it, you'll do very little good, and be a ſtranger to the comfort and peace, which others, who ſtick cloſer to Chriſt, daily experience;—that comfortable peace of God, which (as Archbiſhop *Secker* finely obſerves, page 132, of his Nine ſermons) is that ſenſe of being in friendſhip with him,

him, that feeling of comfort and joy flowing from him, which paſſeth all underſtanding; exceeds the conception of thoſe who have not experienced it, and will exceed hereafter the preſent conceptions of thoſe who have. Adieu, my dear friend.——Think well on what the Archbiſhop has ſo pathetically deſcribed, and then meditate on this alarming text, and reconcile it with your own puſillanimous conduct, which you miſcall prudence; *Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me and my words in this adulterous and ſinful generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with his holy angels*, Mark viii. 38.——Once more adieu!—Remember that this is the declaration of the Lord who bought us with his blood, and ſuffered the unknown agonies of crucifixion to ſave you, and

Yours very ſincerely.

P. S. When people come to viſit me, they expect to hear of Chriſt; and few come to *Weſton*, but thoſe to whom ſuch diſcourſe is agreeable; nor do I deſire the company of any others.——Talking of Chriſt is my touch-ſtone, to ſee whether a perſon is worth my acquaintance.——If YOU was once to take this method, you'll tell me, perhaps, that ſuch and ſuch a one will abuſe you, and all the principal gentlemen will ridicule and forſake you.——And what then?—You are much better without them.——In their ſtead you will have the eſteem and friendſhip of thoſe who love our Lord Jeſus in ſincerity; and Chriſt himſelf will be in the midſt, who has laid up for you, and all ſuch as love his appearing, a crown of righteouſneſs.—Has this conſideration no weight with my dear friend? Don't let me apply to you what St *Paul* ſays of *Demas* to *Timothy*, chap. iv. 10. *Demas has forſaken me, having loved this preſent world.* Read the cxixth *pſalm*, and ſee whether you, and your worldly-wiſe company have this ſpirit of the pſalmiſt.——He, though a king, delighted to *talk* of God.—He not only *talked* of him, obſerve, but *delighted* to do it; and it was pain and grief * to him to forbear.

LETTER CLIV.

Dear Sir, *Saturday Morning.*

IN reply to your queſtion, *why ſo many learned and very clever men in all worldly affairs, ſhould treat religion with ſo much indifference, and remain unaffected by every argument that can be urged to rouſe them from ſuch a ſtate of deluſion?* I ſend you my opinion in a few words, *viz. Becauſe they do not pray for the aſſiſtance* † *of the Holy Spirit.*—And I ſend you an anſwer more at large, extracted from a book of the celebrated Dr *Bates*'s, which I was lately reading, entitled, THE SOVEREIGN AND FINAL HAPPINESS OF MAN, *with the effectual means to obtain it* ‡.

"The efficacious influence," ſays the Doctor, of the "Holy Spirit, is requiſite to change the WILL, that, "with a free and full conſent, OUR WILL may deſire "and proſecute the ſpiritual, eternal good.——Without this, the conviction of the mind is not powerful "enough to convert the ſoul from the love of the world, "to chuſe heaven.——There may be an enlightened "conſcience, without a renewed heart. Though the "JUDGMENT aſſents that God is the ſupreme good, "yet *till the heart be circumciſed*, and the ſenſuality of the "affections taken away, *divine love* (which directs our "life to God as our bleſſed end) can never poſſeſs it. "*If* men had a ſenſible and ſtrong aſſurance of the "eternal ſtate hereafter; *if* all thoſe who lived godly in "a *viſible* manner aſcended with *Elias* to heaven; and *if* "all who continued in their ſins *viſibly* deſcended into "hell (as *Corah* and his company were ſwallowed up "alive by the earth before the *Iſraelites*); *if* men could "hear the joyful exultations of the ſaints above, and "their high praiſes of God; then hear the deſperate "cries and deep complaints of the damned; nay, *if* one, "according to the deſire of the rich man, was ſent from "the doleful regions below, and with his fiery tongue "ſhould preach a ſermon on thoſe torments, not deſcribing them at a diſtance, but by a ſenſible demonſtration in himſelf, yet THIS ALONE would not be "ſufficient to draw off mens hearts from the *deceitful* "and tranſitory happineſs of this world, and to faſten "them on the *perfect* and *eternal* happineſs in the next. "Indeed, they could not then indulge their vices ſo ſecurely; but yet they would be *ſtrangers to the life of God*, ſuch an inveterate alienation of heart is in men "from *real* holineſs; for till the quickening Spirit of "God (by a directing perſuaſive light, that repreſents "the truth and goodneſs of ſpiritual things) transforms "the ſoul, and makes it ſpiritual in its valuations and affections, it is *inwardly* averſe from grace and glory.

"How earneſtly therefore ought we all TO PRAY, "that this Holy Spirit may direct our hearts to the love "of God, and to the patient waiting for of Chriſt Jeſus, "when he ſhall come to be glorified in his faithful ſervants, and admired in all them that believe!"

In another place Dr *Bates* expreſſes himſelf in theſe very momentous terms: "Worldly men, when death is "near, are not ſo much affected with the loſs of the "crown of glory, and the kingdom of heaven, as with "their leaving the preſent world, and its vanities.—— "This makes death intolerably bitter.—In ſhort, till the "love of God inflames and purifies the heart, the fruition of his glory is not eſteemed nor deſired."

Your queſtion will be ſtill further anſwered by conſidering thoroughly two tracts, wrote by PROFESSOR FRANCK; one of which is entitled, *A ſhort introduction to the practice of the Chriſtian religion*; and the other is entitled, *Nicodemus*, or *A treatiſe againſt the fear of man*; wherein the cauſes and ſad effects thereof are briefly deſcribed, with ſome remedies againſt it, dedicated to the Honourable ſociety for reformation of manners.

And now having mentioned PROFESSOR FRANCK, and his *Treatiſe againſt the fear of man*, I cannot conclude without obſerving, that I think him one of the moſt eminent Chriſtians, and moſt extraordinary men I ever heard of, as his *Pietas Halleníis*, which I read with admiration and deep humility, ſufficiently demonſtrates; and had I been a member of the ſociety for reformation of manners, when the dedication of his NICODEMUS had been preſented to them, I ſhould have made a motion to have had an hundred pounds expended in a proper diſtribution of that moſt important book, as there can be no material reformation, till the fear of man is removed; and as nothing can be better calculated to extirpate ſuch fear, and promote all the other laudable ends of the ſociety.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S. The title of the book I recommended to your ſon, pleaſe to tell him, was *Henry*'s *Pleaſantneſs of a religious*

* See *Pſal.* xxxix. 3.

† See Chriſt's own words, *Luke* xi. 13.—which the generality of mankind diſregard; no wonder then the world ſhould lie ſo much in darkneſs, and be thus dead to vital religion.

‡ See Dr Bates's works, folio, p. 466.

gious life. The author designed it particularly for young people; and, in my conversation with them, I generally mention it. Indeed, I am the more solicitous of having it put into their hands, as they are too apt to look upon religion in a gloomy view, considering it as destructive of every enjoyment.

LETTER CLV.

My dear Friend, *Weston-Favell, Feb. 22.*

THE three volumes of *Theron* and *Aspasio* desire you first to accept them, then freely to animadvert upon them; and above all, to implore the blessing of God for them.——I think, when people's sentiments differ so excessively as Mr ***'s and mine, it is best to be at a distance. O! may we all be kept close to our divine Head; and, in a little time, that which is imperfect will be done away. We shall see him as he is, and know as we are known.——I hope you prosper in your health, and are blessed in your ministerial labours. The book you inquire after, which Mr *** saw in my study-window at *Weston*, and described to you as a well-thumbed Lilliputian of two or three inches high, was written by one Mr *Bogatzky*, a *German*; in which language it passed nineteen editions, from which it is now translated, and entitled, *The golden treasury for the children of God, whose treasure and hearts are in heaven*; containing select texts of the Bible, with practical observations in prose and verse, for every day in the year.—It is pretty well thumbed, for there is rarely a day passes that I do not make use of it; and particularly when I am so languid, as to be incapable of attending to my usual studies. The author very properly calls it a *golden treasury for the children of God*, who esteem the word of God more than gold, and much fine gold,—and from which they may be daily supplied with proper advice and relief in all manner of spiritual necessities, as thousands have happily experienced already.—The verses are elegant, and edifying on most of the subjects;—and it was his earnest desire and prayer, that the Lord, in his infinite goodness, would please to bless his endeavours to the good of many souls, and to the glory of his holy name.—Mr *Bogatzky* observes judiciously, that it is not to be expected, that a performance of this nature, will suit the taste of those who unhappily mistake mere outward morality for true Christianity, and go no further than natural reason and strength will carry them: but such as either have, or desire to have real experience of the kingdom of God in their souls, will find much in it to the awaking, comforting, and encouraging their hearts in the right way.

That we may know, and ever continue in that right way, is, my dear friend, the frequent and ardent prayer of

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

LETTER CLVI.

Wednesday Morning.

Dear Sir,

THE grievance you complain of is, like many other grievances, irremediable; for, according to the old proverb, what is every one's business, is no one's. It is the same in numberless instances.——How many turnpikes are erected, where the money taken will scarce defray the expence of the gates; and where the roads neither are, nor ever will be mended, and consequently they are nuisances instead of benefits? yet our nobility and members of parliament pass frequently through such turnpikes, complain of the grievance, but take no pains to redress it.—And even in an affair of the highest consequence, how negligent is the community? I mean, in the long-expected reformation of our liturgy; in which, excellent as it is upon the whole, there are some passages so justly* exceptionable, that every Bishop in the kingdom will tell you he wishes to have them expunged; and yet I know not for what political or timid reasons it continues just as it did. Had our first reformers been thus indolent, we still had been Papists.—Our laws are daily complained of, and might most certainly be obliged to the great benefit of the nation; this is allowed by every individual; but the parliament, you see, will not exert themselves in bringing this important affair to pass.

I have often wondered, that in this age of humanity, (for such with all its faults it certainly is,) while infirmaries are erecting in different parts of the kingdom, public bridges building, and large collections making for charitable uses, there should be no societies established *for redressing grievances.* To found such kind of societies, would be truly laudable and highly beneficial. May God, of his infinite goodness and unerring wisdom, put it into the hearts of the active, the benevolent, and the powerful, to set in good earnest about the institution of societies for the redressing our grievances; some for public, and other for private grievances.—Were such once established, what a world of good might be done! Then the fatherless, the widow and the injured, would have substantial friends always at hand, who would rescue them from their oppressors, by taking them under their own protection, and defending their cause out of the subscription-fund. From these funds likewise, the expence of procuring useful acts of parliament, or of getting ineffectual ones amended or repealed, might be defrayed.

I know you will be pleased to hear that Mr *** has lately wrote very seriously to Mr ** about his religious concerns, and pressed him strongly "to DETERMINE "(as his expression was) and set about religion in good "earnest."——"Pray, dear Sir," said he in one part of his letter, "take care and do not hurry away life.—— "Give that affair a serious thought; I am sure it is "worth it.—I wish you well, (sorry am I to say I think), "better than perhaps you wish yourself.——I should "be glad to be mistaken.——Would to God I could "persuade you resolutely to fall in love with religion, "and espouse its cause with all your interest, and with "all your might—Was that once and thoroughly to be "the case, what an instrument might not YOU be, in "the hand of God, to rouse men from their lethargy; "to animate them in the pursuit of their own eternal "welfare; and to encourage their zeal for that of others? "—Oh Sir! a man with your capacity, your fortune, "your opportunities, what could there be too hard for "him,—except himself!——By your irresistible argu-"ments and spirited behaviour you knock down others "on every occasion, and carry almost every point you "undertake; why don't you knock down yourself?— "*Aude sapere incipe.*

"What *conscience* dictates to be done,
"Or warns you not to do,
"This as your hell with horror shun,
"That as your heav'n pursue."

Pope's universal prayer.

* Mr *Hervey* used to complain, that the baptismal service, and that for the visitation of the sick, were very defective, and much wanted amendment.

In another part of his letter, he thus interrogated Mr **.—"Will not every wise man frequently ask himself some such questions as these?——Am I, or am I not, in the right road?——How long shall I halt between two opinions?——Is not to-day certain, and to-morrow uncertain?—Am I ashamed of being religious?—Have I courage to stand it out against God, and not against the world?—Do I take proper care of my children's religious principles?—If I destroy myself, shall I destroy my offspring too,—and eternally?"

Towards the conclusion he added; "You have recommended several books to me, let me recommend *Rymer's Representation of revealed religion* to you;—though if I was to advise Mr **, it should not be TO READ, but TO DETERMINE.—resolutely and unalterably TO DETERMINE to be a religious man.——You want no instructions, and the time of life with you is gone a great way.——Some people, I can tell you, suspect you for a Deist; if you are so, I then ask, Do you act devoutly on your own principles? do you pray to God daily? This every Deist will allow to be neceffary; and till you have habituated your mind to prayer, I shall have little expectations of doing you that important service, which you must be sensible, by my writing this letter, I am very desirous of doing, as far as in me lies.—The rest must be left to a superior agency, I mean the operation of God's Holy Spirit on your heart."

No answer has yet been returned by Mr ** to this letter. I believe he is puzzled how to act. He cannot well pass it by in silence, and to give any thing under his hand on so interesting a subject as religion, will be, to a man of his turn, very ineligible.

You see by the papers that our great wit is dead.—— Is it not a little remarkable, that, so long before his death, he should be deprived of his senses?——deprived of them at the very time he was about writing a most pernicious book, which, I am told, he intended to have published, with this ludicrous title, *The memoirs of the Reverend Mr* Jephtha Quixote, *Saint-Errant; the true and undoubted son of the renowned Don* Quixote, *Knight-Errant; who inherits all his father's virtues.* The design of which was to burlesque things sacred, and to set in a ridiculous light, some of the most exemplary Christians, under the notion of saint-errantry.——This would have been a most malicious piece of wit; and being the production of so celebrated a genius, would have spread like wildfire, pregnant with infinite mischief; for, as *Horace* has justly remarked,

——— *Ridiculum acri*
Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res *.

Hor. Sat. X. lib. 1.

When you reflect on this and other attempts to discourage good men, and to render religion contemptible in the eyes of worldlings, are you not apt to say with the *psalmist*, *The Lord that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn* †? He, though unseen, directs the whole by his wise providence; turneth men's hearts as seemeth good unto him; and in his hands are the appointments of life and death.—To his guidance, and to his protection, I commend you, my dear Sir, and

Yours very sincerely.

LETTER CLVII.

Dear Sir, *Weston,* 1756.

I Confess I am covetous, and, like covetous people, unreasonable; I was in hope of receiving another

* Thus translated by Mr *Francis*,
"For ridicule shall frequently prevail,
"And cut the knot, when graver reasons fail."

† Psal. ii. 4.

favour from your pen, before I troubled you with a fresh solicitation.—But an affair has lately happened, or rather a project has started in my mind, which I will lay before you.—On *Sunday* last a neighbouring clergyman sent me for my perusal, a sermon preached by Dr *T* **, before the House of Commons, on the late * public fast. When I perused it, and saw not a single mention of *Christ*, nor a single hint of an evangelical nature, I was surprised and grieved: and so much the more, as it was preached by one of the most celebrated divines in the kingdom, and before the whole kingdom convened in their representatives. I thought it was a pity, that such a notorious slight put upon our most glorious Redeemer, should pass without animadversions. I could not forbear wishing, that the Lord would enable me, even me (the least and weakest in my heavenly Father's house) to bear my testimony for Jesus who was crucified. I therefore conceived some thoughts of publishing a sermon preached at *Weston*, upon a subject somewhat similar to his; for though mine is designedly plain, and destitute of the polite Doctor's embellishments, yet it has more of Christ and his gospel. I also apprehend, if to this were prefixed or subjoined some remarks upon the Doctor's performance, it might not be unseasonable, nor unprofitable—Now, my dear friend, if you approve the design, would you draw up some remarks upon the Doctor's discourse, while I am endeavouring to retrieve my sermon, from a few hints, which I happened on that occasion to put down in short-hand? I will own to you, my heart almost trembles at the prospect of appearing in print against so eminent a man. And if you do not think it proper to be my helper and abettor, I must drop the design. May the Lord Jesus, whose honour is concerned, whose blood and righteousness, whose Spirit and grace have been disregarded, and treated as cyphers; may he direct your determination, fructify your invention, and give you all knowledge and all utterance! What think you of this method of proceeding?—Making remarks upon the unevangelical passages;—pointing out the places where an opportunity offered of enlarging upon gospel topics;—exemplifying this gospel-manner, and shewing that it would be no prejudice, but give infinite weight and force to the argument. But I leave all to the blessed God, and my dear friend.—Your last, I think, is a most masterly piece of controversy, for which I am your debtor. May you now be enabled to outdo yourself. The subject and the occasion are of the last importance, and if you are inclined to exert yourself, pray let it be in the courtly manner. Your last pen was dipt in vinegar, let this be dipt in oil.

My sermon was on that text, *Ezek.* xviii. 27. I shall wait, with incessant prayer to him, whose name is WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, till I receive your answer; and am most affectionately yours, &c.

LETTER CLVIII.

Mr Hervey's Friend, *on considering the proposal in the* preceding *letter, wrote the following; and addressed it to Dr* T**, *the preacher of the fast-sermon in* 1756, *on* Jer. xviii. 7. 8.—*It is here printed, as the observations therein contained may possibly be in some measure productive of the good which Mr* Hervey *intended by such like remarks* †.

Rev. Sir,

SOME time ago was put into my hands a sermon of yours on *Jer.* xviii. 7. 8. preached before the Hon.

* The public fast in *February*, 1756.

† See preface to the letters, above, p. 547.

House

House of Commons, on the day of the late public fast; wherein I thought I saw some very material omissions and mistakes, which I feared might hinder the success of your ingenious performance; and therefore, as I would neither have you to labour in vain, nor the best use of such alarming calls of divine providence neglected, I could not but give you the trouble of a letter upon this occasion.

Nothing can be more proper, at such seasons, than serious discourses upon repentance and reformation. Times of affliction are most likely to be times of reflection; and when it pleases the Most High thus to open the heart, it is then the time for his servants to sow the good seed of his word. To prepare men for this, God's judgments fly swift as the light. To prepare men for this, he hews by his prophets, and slays by the word of his mouth: And happy, eternally happy, are those who are influenced thereby, to return from their evil ways, and to make their ways and their doings good: for thus runs the divine promise:——*At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy; if that nation against whom I have pronounced this, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.* Jer. xviii. 7. 8.

Such is God's gracious declaration, which no gospel-minister can read, but it must remind him of two things. First, that this promise is made in Christ Jesus, and therefore can belong to none but those who forsake their sins, and return unto God by him. Then, this return from evil must be accomplished through the grace and Spirit of Christ. And,

First, The mention of this, and every other promise in the book of God, must remind the gospel-minister that it is made in Christ Jesus. St *Paul* hath assured us, that *all the promises of God in him are yea* (made), *and in him amen* (confirmed); and if all the promises of God are made and confirmed in him, then this as one must be made in him. The Redeemer himself has informed us,—that *he is the way, and the truth, and the life*, and that *no man can come unto the Father but by him.*—But to turn from evil, and to come unto the Father, are terms of the same import. Besides, we know that it is only through Jesus Christ that we have peace with God, and that it is only through Jesus Christ that God has reconciled the world to himself. Can two then walk together except they are agreed? Can God sheathe the sword of his justice before he is reconciled to us? If not, how can he repent of the evil that he thought to do unto us? And if he repents not of the evil which he thought to do unto us, where is our interest in the promise?——But what need of any more words, when it is most evident, that it is the Son of God who here speaks by the prophet? The same person promises mercy, who had threatened to destroy with the severest judgments: now we know that *the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son; that all men should honour the Son, as they honour the Father.* It is very plain then, that all who return from evil, must return by Christ; they must return with his price in their hands, and his robe upon their backs; and then, and not till then, they are safe, safe for time and eternity.

Again, when the gospel-minister reads this gracious promise, he will remember that such a returning from evil must be accomplished through the grace and Spirit of Christ. How can we, who are not sufficient of ourselves, to think a good thought of ourselves, think of returning to God and holiness? Can the captive who is in love with his chains long for liberty? Can the sinner who is fond of his sins, desire to relinquish them! No; it is as possible for the *Ethiopian* to change his skin, or the leopard his spots, as for us, who are accustomed to do evil, to learn to do well. Nay, far more possible; for to accomplish this, they need only to change their hue; but before we can attain to holiness, we must change our nature: we must *make ourselves a new heart and a new spirit*, (Ezek. xviii. 31.); we must quit the grave, and arise from the dead, and who is sufficient for these things? Therefore the Master says,—— *No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hat sent me, draw him.*—And again,—*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and have ordained you to bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.*——*For without me ye can do nothing.*——And his apostles assert,—that *by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God*: that every grace is the fruit of his Spirit, of whose fulness we have received, and grace for grace; and that *we are created* anew *unto good works, which God had before ordained, that we should walk in them.*

Now, Sir, are these the true sayings of God? are these the very words of our Lord, and his apostles?——Then undoubtedly to refuse them, is to refuse Him who speaks from heaven: and if so, how comes it to pass, that you have unhappily forgot to take notice of these things upon this solemn occasion? God promises security to all who forsake their sins, and return unto him in Jesus Christ, and yet Jesus Christ is never mentioned in your sermon. Without divine grace, and the sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit, we can do nothing, and yet there we hear nothing of divine grace, or the Holy Spirit. *Joab* ready to take *Rabbah*, the royal city of the *Ammonites*, so ordered the campaign, that his master *David* might have the honour of the victory; but here is a Christian minister, who attacks a citadel of human corruption, and never so much as once thinks of Christ, through whom he must conquer. Here is a Christian minister, who, leaving the lively oracles, undertakes spiritual wickednesses with the carnal weapons of a *Tully* and *Demosthenes*. Mistake me not, I speak not against oratory as such; but if a *Roman* or a *Greek* philosopher, who had never heard of Christ, can say as much against the vices of the age, as you can who have from your infancy been educated in the Christian religion; what say you more than others? Is not this too much to slight that bleeding dying Lamb of God, who alone can take away the sin of the world?

But the slight put upon our Master's words is not all; your not taking notice of these things, has unhappily led you into mistakes that are utterly inconsistent with his undertaking.——You call upon us "by every act of hu-"miliation and repentance to deserve the protection of "heaven;" and throughout your whole discourse you labour hard to fix our hopes upon this basis, and our after obedience. But can the sincerest repentance, or the deepest humiliation, deserve the favour of God, and the remittance of punishment? If so, then fallen *Adam* might have broken in pieces the chains of eternal death, in which he was holden: and then, what need of shedding the blood of the promised seed? what need of such a sacrifice to appease God, if he was already appeased, or could be appeased by the relentings of man? Briefly, if the death of Christ was necessary to purchase eternal redemption for us, then our repentance and humiliation can never deserve the divine favour.

Nor can our after obedience procure such protection. Perfect obedience is a debt continually due from every creature as such; and the payment of a debt due now, can never be a compensation for the non-payment of arrears: nor can the most exact payment of what is due from one's self, be esteemed the least part of payment of what is due from another; and therefore where the debt is obedience, as all creatures are bound to obey at all times, none but a God can pay off the score of any one delinquent. This is a tremendous consideration, even supposing true repentance, and a thorough reformation, were wholly in our own power: but when as sinners we are entirely *without strength*, Rom. v. 6. 8. when (as I have already observed) these gifts are perfectly dependent upon grace, and the good Spirit of God; surely, to talk of deserving the favour of heaven by them, must be extremely absurd. Nor is it only extremely

tremely abſurd, but extremely dangerous; as it places the merit of works higher than ever the Papiſts placed it, and is utterly inconſiſtent with the humble genius of the Proteſtant religion.

But your neglect of taking proper notice of theſe things, not only leads you to diſregard the expreſs ſayings of our Lord, and to nullify his work, but to heal the wounds of the daughter of God's people ſlightly. You complain of our "profaneneſs and immorality; "of our profligacy and unjuſt oppoſition to lawful "authority; of our diſregard to decency and good "manners, as well as to the laws of our country; of "that unlawful purſuit of pleaſure, that luxury and ex-"travagance, which inſenſibly preys upon the conſti-"tution, debaſes the ſenſe, and corrupts the morals of "our people."———And theſe are evils that you ought to complain of; they are the ſure ſigns of a declining conſumptive ſtate, and can never be enough lamented. But then, you never touch upon that root of bitterneſs which bears this gall and wormwood: you ſay nothing of our *unbelief*, which keeps us at a diſtance from God, from whom we muſt receive every good and perfect gift: you ſay nothing of *faith*, without which it is impoſſible to pleaſe him, to turn from evil, or return to him. Nor do you take the leaſt notice of our *enmity to the bleſſed Jeſus*, and his holy goſpel; of that *proneneſs to rebellion* and naughtineſs of heart, from whence proceeds every evil thought, and word, and work. Theſe things you ought to have remembered, and not to have forgotten the other.

Had you remarked upon theſe evils in the moral view you have taken of your national vices, it would naturally have led you to point out ſuitable remedies. You muſt then have perſuaded us to labour after an union with Chriſt, the fountain of grace, by faith; and this radical union with him would have produced a moral union, and have transformed us into his likeneſs: where faith had been implanted, love would have flowed; and where love had flowed, there muſt have been ready and chearful obedience; for the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and faith unfeigned. But without theſe gracious habits internally wrought, what will all the outward reformation in the world do for us? Have you not read of the *Phariſees*? did not theſe people keep clean the outſide of the cup and the platter? Far from being guilty of any ſcandalous immorality, they prayed in the ſtreets, made broad their phylacteries, faſted twice a-week, and gave tythes of all that they poſſeſſed: yet were their inward parts ſo filthy, that they finally became obnoxious to a judgment ten thouſand times worſe than what has befallen the unhappy inhabitants of *Liſbon*. Let us not deceive ourſelves; neither outward reformation, nor outward morality are ſufficient; neither outward profeſſions, nor outward duties will make a man a Chriſtian. The King's daughter is all glorious *within*, as well as *without*; and if we belong to the Redeemer, we muſt be ſanctified by him both in ſoul and body, and ſpirit.

If you would reform the world, PREACH THE GOSPEL. The goſpel contains the only motives, that can poſſibly prevail upon any to embrace it. People may talk of the amiableneſs of the divine Being, and the charms of virtue, thereby to allure us to return to the one, and to embrace the other; but without a true faith in the promiſes of pardon and acceptance, true repentance can never be attained; and a free and gracious pardon and acceptance is no where promiſed, but in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The goodneſs of God freely offering pardon and peace, muſt lead us back to him, or we reproach him no more. Earthquakes, famine, peſtilence, or any other evils, have their uſe only as they diſcover to us our preſent condition, and greatly enhance the offered kindneſs: but we love God, becauſe he firſt loved us; we love Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe he obeyed and died for us; and his great love thus manifeſted, does not urge, but conſtrain us to love him again; *becauſe we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and he died for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them, and roſe again.* Theſe are *the cords of a man, and the bands of love*, wherewith we are drawn to our heavenly Father. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins*; and if God ſo loved us, ſurely we ought to love him again, and to teſtify our love by a ſuitable obedience. When no creature (as I have hinted) could furniſh a righteouſneſs that might be imputed to us, who can but ſtand amazed, that the Father ſhould ſend his only-begotten Son to obey in our ſtead? When no creature could bear the wrath of an offended God, and by dying overcome death, who can but ſtand amazed, that the Son of God ſhould be ſent to ſuffer and to die, that we might live through him?—Who can but ſtand amazed, that the Son of God ſhould take our nature upon himſelf, that he might thus obey and die for us? How can we behold him thus dying for us, and not die to that ſin for which he died? When love ſo unprecedented ſpeaks ſo loud, who can but hear, and wonder, and return to the Lord?

What I have ſaid, I think, plainly ſhews, that your diſcourſe might have been far more evangelical; and as plainly ſhews, what ſuperior motives to repentance and reformation would have occurred if it had been ſo. So that, humbly recommending my remarks to your ſerious conſideration, I might here have concluded my letter: but as you allow, that the late earthquakes "have hitherto been the merciful warnings of a kind "and good providence, to diſpoſe us to hear the rod; "and to conſider, with that awe which becomes us, the "hand which hath appointed it;"——a few eclairciſſements upon one of the leſſons which you have advanced under that head becomes abſolutely neceſſary, leſt, by miſtaking the caſe, we ſhould loſe the benefit of our neighbours afflictions.

You recommend upon this occaſion,—"our guarding "ourſelves againſt any hard cenſures, which a reflection "upon theſe extraordinary calamities encourages in "minds too readily diſpoſed to judge with ſeverity;" and conclude, "that it is certain that we have no right "to determine what are the particular intentions of pro-"vidence in this diſpenſation."———But certainly we have a right to determine, that ſuch puniſhments are inflicted becauſe of ſin: elſe how do they (in your own words) "ſpeak to us the language of the divine diſplea-"ſure?" elſe how can they be conſidered as puniſhments to correct ſome, and to warn others? elſe how can they be conſidered as the louder calls of anger; or of what uſe to bring us home to ourſelves? This you muſt grant, or you pull down all that you have before builded, and make yourſelf a treſpaſſer. I allow, that we have no right to conclude theſe unhappy people to be greater ſinners than ourſelves, becauſe of their greater ſufferings. This would lead us phariſaically to cajole ourſelves in our iniquities, rather than to take warning by others; yet we are allowed to look upon them as very great offenders. Our Saviour does not reprove his diſciples for thinking thoſe *Galileans*, whoſe blood * *Pilate* had mingled with their ſacrifices, to be very great ſinners; but for thinking them to be greater ſinners than themſelves, which is indeed a temper of mind utterly inconſiſtent with true repentance.

We are allowed then to ſuppoſe the *Portugueſe* to be great ſinners, and that the *Liſbon* earthquake was a puniſhment inflicted for ſin; and if we can diſcover any thing in their conduct, that might tend to bring down this divine judgment upon them, it will be our wiſdom to take warning by it, and carefully to avoid it as a fatal ſnare: and ſurely we may ſee ſome things in them,

* See *Luke* xiii. 2.

which

which God has, in all ages, punished with the most severe chastisement. As,

First, Idolatry. It is impossible but that you, Sir, must have heard of the stupid profaneness and idolatry of these people; of their mock processions, and barbarous mimicry of the Redeemer's sufferings, such as was a scandal to human nature, and such as never tarnished the most profane rites of Heathenism. Such fopperies, this horrible punishment should caution us carefully to avoid; and to avoid every means that would lead us into them. It should make us carefully abide by the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God to salvation to every one that believes; and wherein is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith. It should make us careful to live up to it, lest, for neglecting so great salvation, God should give us up to strong delusions to believe such lies, and to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.

Secondly, Persecution. We all know, that at *Lisbon* the barbarous inquisition reigned in all its horrors, and that thousands have there fallen a sacrifice to it, whose blood has long cried aloud for vengeance; and we know, that persecutors have been most severely punished in all ages: so that, taught by this dreadful judgment, we should carefully avoid this crime; a crime of so deep a dye, that in its highest stage, when it strikes at the truth as such it becomes irremissible, and can never be forgiven either in this world, or in that which is to come. I allow, that these people are connected to us by every tie but that of religion; but this of itself constitutes so vast a difference, that whenever we are disposed to speak most favourably of their failings, and attribute them to the prejudices of education, or the weakness of human judgment, we should still remember, that we are Protestants, and they were Papists: and indeed, to us, as Protestants and Christians, there is something in this divine judgment so very remarkable, that, if rightly considered, it may greatly confirm us in both.

As Protestants, we all look for the destruction of Antichrist and his kingdom; and here we behold a city whose unequalled trade, in gold, and silver, and precious stones, was a proper type of that spiritual merchandise so many hundred years vended by her mother *Rome*; like whom she was built upon seven hills; like whom, as a most obedient daughter, she was a nest of idolaters and persecutors! And as she was so like her mother in every thing, we have all the reason in the world to think, that *Rome* like *Lisbon* should one day be punished. Most remarkable it is, that on the day which she had abused to rob the eternal God of his honour, and to give it to the whole host of heaven; on the day which she had abused in shedding the blood of thousands; on that very day God came down to hold his *auto de fe*, and her own blood was required. Thus, when her mother *Rome* shall say, *I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow; in that very day shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burnt with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.*

As Christians, we all look and wait for the coming of our Lord unto judgment, and therefore should pay a special regard to every token of his approah. He himself has told us, that, before his coming, *there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth, distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after things which are coming upon the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.* When therefore we see any such things come to pass, we should lift up our heads, for our redemption draws nigh. Nor need we to fear, if Christ dwells in our hearts by faith; if we are rooted and grounded in love, though the heavens and the earth fly away, and their place be found no more; for the Lord of hosts is with us, and Jesus Christ is our refuge. In whom

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your sincere wellwisher, &c.

LETTER CLIX.

Dear and Reverend Sir,

YOU need no apology for delaying your answer to my letter. You have a precedent to plead, which must, if not satisfy, yet strike me dumb: but I propose, if the Lord assist, to be more punctual for the future, in acknowledging the favours I receive from my valuable and valued correspondents; among whom I shall always reckon Mr **.

I am much obliged for your very just and very important remarks. They give me such an idea of your knowledge in the things of Christ, and your acquaintance with experimental religion, that I must beg leave to lay before you the plan which I have sketched out for my treatise on *gospel-holiness*; with an earnest request, that you will rigorously examine it, and freely pass your judgment upon it; suggesting, where-ever it is improper, the means of rectifying it; where-ever it is defective, a method for completing it.

The PLAN.

Pleasure and happiness of Christ's religion.——We must partake of the comforts of the gospel, before we can be fitted to practise the duties of the law.——*Theron* oppressed with fears, on account of his numerous sins; discouraged with doubts, on account of his imperfect obedience; the cordials of the gospel are re-administered, with some additional spirit and strength.——Holiness, gospel-holiness, its nature, necessity, excellency.——The endowments necessary to fit us for the practice of holiness; a persuasion of our reconciliation to God, the hope of everlasting happiness, and an assured expectation of grace sufficient for us.——The grand efficient of holiness, the blessed Spirit; the principal instrument, faith. This renews the dispute concerning the assurance of faith. Objections to it stated, discussed, answered.——Holiness more particularly delineated in its several branches, and deduced from, or founded upon, evangelical principles; such as, *I beseech you by the mercies of God: Ye are bought with a price: Ye are the temples of the living God: God hath forgiven you*, &c.——All these privileges, though not hereditary, yet indefeasible; or the final perseverance of believers. This eminently conducive to holiness.——The scriptures, prayer, Lord's supper, when mixed with faith, are effectual means of holiness.——Our friends part, and renew their epistolary correspondence. *Theron*, desirous to glorify the God of his salvation, asks advice concerning the best method of family-worship, educating children, instructing servants, and edifying his acquaintance.——On each of these particulars *Aspasio* satisfies his inquiry; enlarges on the subject of education, especially the education of daughters, as that seems to be most neglected, or the proper manner of conducting it least understood.——*Letter on the covenant of grace*; comprising the substance, and being a kind of recapitulation of the preceding volumes.——*Letter*

on the way of living by faith in the Son of God, or the way of reducing all the gospel-doctrines to suitable practice.—*Aspasio* seized with a sudden and fatal illness. His sentiments and behaviour in his last moments.

This, dear Sir, is my rough draught. Apply the compasses and plummet: examine it with your rule and line. Improve my plan; assist me, with your advice and prayers, to execute the work; and may the great Master-builder enable me to bring forth the top-stone, for the honour of his holy name, and for the edification of his chosen people.

I am, dear Sir,

With unfeigned affection,

Your brother in Christ.

N.B. *As* Mr Hervey *did not live to finish his plan, and as he was himself apprehensive that he should not, he desired, in his preface to* Marshall *on* Sanctification, *that* Marshall *might be considered as a supplement to* Theron *and* Aspasio, *and as a kind of substitute for what he intended to write on the same subject, according to the plan here proposed.*—*His words are,* "*I do by these presents depute* Mr Marshall *to supply* "*my lack of service.*"—See above, p. 471.

LETTER CLX.

My dear Friend, *Feb.* 12.

I WISH take a hundred of *Jenks*'s *Every man's ready companion*; for my mind is not altered, since I promised this,—nor my charity-purse drained.—'Tis a useful book to give away.

I am glad *Jenks*'s *Meditations* sell, and I hope, the Lord will make them a blessing to the reader: 'tis pity they cannot be comprized in less than two volumes octavo.

Does M ** want amusement? Let him take your friend Dr *Young*'s advice:

Retire, and read his Bible to be gay.

Does Mrs *** want it? You should teach her to delight in God, and to rejoice in Christ Jesus. A certain gentlewoman in *Miles*'s-*Lane*, whom you once reproved, has been taught to find her consolation, not in the entertainments of the stage, but in the assured hopes of heaven.

Have you given, so and so, to the poor? Ask your heart, whether you gave out of love to your dying Saviour? Was this the motive? It would then be *universally* influential; and you would think you could never do enough for his honour.

If an earthquake should happen, ask Mr ***, (that advocate for the theatre), if he would like to be found in the play-house, and go from the boxes, or pit, to the great tribunal? Indeed, indeed the stage * is indefensible.

* See *Law*'s absolute *Unlawfulness of the stage fully demonstrated.* And likewise *Witherspoon*'s *Serious inquiry into the nature and effects of the stage*, being an attempt to shew that contributing to the support of a *public theatre* is inconsistent with the character of a Christian.—This was reckoned by Mr *Hervey* the most masterly piece ever printed on the subject.—'Twas wrote by the same gentleman who published the valuable *Essay on the connection between the doctrine of justification and the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, and holiness of life.*—He wrote likewise *The Characteristics*, which have been much admired for the keenness of the satire and liveliness of the diction.

Thanks for delivering my message. I wish you a safe return, and the continual guidance of heaven.

Yours most cordially,

My messenger waits, pardon haste. JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CLXI.

Madam,

I AM pleased not a little, to hear a lady of your fine sense and blooming years, declare, That an inquiry relating to everlasting salvation "has taken up much of her thoughts." Let me entreat you to go on, and imitate that excellent woman, whose panegyric is uttered by wisdom and truth itself; *Mary hath chosen that better part, which shall not be taken from her.*

You inquire, "Whether the elect of God have not "an inward assurance, that they shall be saved?"—Your casuist takes leave to answer the question, by asking another. Why should not you and I, Madam, have this assurance?—Is it not a blessing intended for Christians in general? *We know*, says the apostle, *that we are passed from death unto life.* He says not I and some eminent saints,—but *we*; including those believers to whom he wrote, those among whom he preached, and all those who hereafter should believe through his word.

Is not this a most desirable knowledge? On the other hand, can any thing be more afflicting, than a state of suspense with regard to this all-important affair? To be in suspense whether my final lot will fall, in the regions of endless misery, or the mansions of eternal glory?——Insupportable!——Can it be the will of our most indulgent Creator, that we should spend our days, in this sad uncertainty and distressing anxiety?—Impossible!

But have we a warrant for this assurance?—We have the best of warrants, the gift of God. If your papa gives you a pair of diamond ear-rings, or (which, rightly improved, will be much more ornamental) a neatly-printed Bible; do not you look upon this as a sufficient warrant to call these presents your own? Do not you rest fully assured, that, by virtue of your parent's gift, they are your unquestionable property?——Perhaps you will say, where has God Almighty done any thing like this? where has he given salvation or life eternal to me?——Be pleased to consult 1 *John* v. 11. * and you will find an answer; which, I hope, will prove perfectly satisfactory and highly delightful.

Is this spoken to me?——To you, Madam; to the young ladies of your acquaintance, and to every one that reads it. Life eternal is given, just as the manna was given in the wilderness. The manna, that each hungry *Israelite* might gather and eat it. Life eternal, that every poor sinner may receive and enjoy it.—But I have no merit, nothing to deserve it.—Then you have just as much as the all-gracious God requires. *Without money, and without price*, is his bountiful declaration. Freely and abstracted from all deserts, are his generous terms. You have no merit, Madam, and I have less than none. But has our divinely-excellent Redeemer nothing meritorious? For his sake, this magnificent and glorious gift is conferred. Not we ourselves, but Jesus Christ the righteous has obtained eternal redemption for us.

May I then assuredly believe, that God gives eternal

* *And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life: and this life is in his Son.*

life

life to me?———May you glorify God's truth? may you glorify his grace? may you glorify the death and obedience of his beloved Son? If ſo, then you may, you ought, it is your privilege and your duty, to believe, —that God Almighty freely gives to you eternal life.

When you receive this gift, look upon it as your portion; live in the moſt comfortable expectation of it; relying on nothing valuable in yourſelf, but depending entirely upon the faithful promiſe of him who cannot lie. ———Then you will feel your heart inclined to love your moſt adorable Benefactor,—then you will ſtudy to pleaſe him in all your converſation,—then you will be truly holy.———All which is, with great ſincerity, wiſhed by, amiable Miſs ***,

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CLXII.

Dear Sir,

I Keep Mr *E*—'s ſermon for no other reaſon, than to prevent its going into other hands. I am aſhamed and ſorry to ſee, that ſo celebrated a college as — ſhould ſend out ſuch a teacher of divinity. However, I muſt acknowledge one excellence in this gentleman. He acts prudently at leaſt, in not over-loading his pages with quotations from ſcripture. Thoſe ſtubborn pragmatical things might, perhaps, have riſen up, ſtared him in the face, and confronted his notions. Mr ***, he rightly judges, will ſerve his turn, much better than St *Paul*.———Who is *Philalethes * Ceſtrienſis?* I ſee nothing valuable in his work, but what comes from the paper-mill and the printing-preſs; the paper and type are indeed very beautiful. What a wild propoſition is that, page 124, namely, "That by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, "we underſtand the perſuaſion of the mind, that Jeſus "Chriſt was ſent from God to redeem, and to inſtruct "mankind?" At this rate, the very devils are endued with the Spirit of our God: They believe with this perſuaſion of the mind, that the Chriſtian revelation is true. —Amidſt ſo many palpable errors, who ſhall lead us into truth? He that is our gracious Maſter, and our wonderful Counſellor. Dear Sir, let us look unto him, that he may, according to his promiſe, *guide us continually.* —Next to the holy word of God, let us ſtudy *Marſhall* on *ſanctification.* For my part, I am never weary of reading that incomparable and moſt comfortable book.

Are you, dear Sir, always thinking, how good may be done? I ſay with *David; The Lord God of Abraham, Iſaac, and of Iſrael our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of his ſervant!* 1 Chron. xxix. 18.

As the public ſervice of our church is become ſuch a formal lifeleſs thing, and as it is too generally executed by perſons ſo dead to godlineſs in all their converſation, I queſtion, whether it will be *operæ pretium*, to publiſh the exhortations to miniſters and to a devout attendance on the church-ſervice, which you propoſe. I ſhould much rather ſee from your pen two or three lively and animating forms of morning and evening prayer, with clear and ſhort directions, how to pray aright, and a proper method of daily ſelf-examination. This printed in a halfpenny pamphlet, we might give away to any body, indeed to every body; And if one in twenty, or even one in fifty proved ſucceſsful, our pains and expence would be abundantly recompenſed. We ſhould alſo hereby have ſome handle to lay hold on hypocritical, ſelf-deceiving ſouls. We might ſay, Neighbour, have you got thoſe prayers by heart? do you conſtantly uſe them, and examine yourſelf daily by thoſe queſtions?—Indeed, indeed, the exhortations you propoſe, would only exaſperate the clergy.———'Tis dangerous to meddle with them, or their proceedings.———You are, I hope, in the way of duty, and that is the way of peace and ſafety. You may do much good by dropping a word for Chriſt, on proper occaſions. You don't know, how YOUR words are, by the generality, regarded; and it is impoſſible for tongue to tell, how kindly our condeſcending MASTER will take the leaſt attempts, which proceed from the love of his name.

I intend ſoon to return Dr *Watts on the love of God.*—I wiſh it was reprinted.——Pray did you ever read Dr *Delaune*'s ſermons? He was preſident of *St John's College, Oxford*; and famed, I am told, for being a moſt accompliſhed gentleman. He really has more of the truth of the goſpel in his twelve ſermons, than in all the polite ſermons I ever read in my life. For my part, I ſet no ſtore by our modern diſcourſes; nay, I can hardly bear to read ſuch inſipid unevangelical harrangues. Much rather would I read an oration in *Tully*, or a diſſertation of *Seneca*'s.

When you can ſpare the Rev. Dr *Browne*'s *Eſtimate*, and likewiſe his two ſermons preached at the cathedral-church of *Carliſle* in 1746, juſt favour me with a ſight of them. I preſume, they will not tell me of Jeſus which was crucified, therefore I ſhall ſoon be ſatisfied, with their company; for though I may find ſome amuſement from his fine ſtyle, and ſtriking ſentiments, yet I can find no conſolation in any name, nor in any thing, but only in the grand propitiation and everlaſting righteouſneſs of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. ———Thanks for Dr *Akenſide*'s *Ode to the country gentlemen of England.*——He wrote this with a very good intention, and he is certainly a man of genius, but to me this ode reads ſomewhat flat: I fear, it will not rouſe and animate, like the poems * of *Tyrtæus.*

This probably will find you returned in ſafety from your journey.—When the journey of life is over, I hope we ſhall ſit down together in everlaſting reſt; and ſee his glory, who endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame. Till then, and then much more, ſhall I be

Moſt affectionately yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CLXIII.

THANKS to my dear friend for the peruſal of Dr *Glynn*'s poem, entitled, *The day of judgment.* It is not void of elegance and ſpirit; but, methinks, it wants that energy and pathos, which, on ſo intereſting and ſolemn an occaſion, ſhould awe, tranſport, and agitate our ſouls. But the great deficiency is, that neglect of Jeſus Chriſt. He is, indeed, ſlightly mentioned, juſt at the cloſe; but he ſhould have made the diſtinguiſhed figure throughout the whole piece. St *Paul* calls the day of judgment, the day of Chriſt. We muſt all ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt; then ſhall we

* *Philalethes Ceſtrienſis*, is the feigned name of a gentleman, who wrote the book Mr *Hervey* here mentions, entitled, *An impartial inquiry into the nature of that faith which is required in the goſpel, as neceſſary to ſalvation.*

* *Tyrtæus* was a poet, of *Athens*, who by his poems, pronounced at the head of the army, inſpired the *Spartans* with ſo much courage and contempt of death, that they obtained a glorious victory.

behold

behold the glorious appearing of the great God, even of our Saviour Jesus Christ. But not a glimpse of this is seen in Dr *Glynn*'s poem.

—— Do you ask, what I think of the polite ***'s sermon? It is a mere moral essay, not a sermon;——it wants the light of Christ.——To speak the truth, I think it an errant Cyclops.

Monstrum horrendum, cui lumen ademptum.

A hideous, eyeless monster. *Virgil, Æn.* b. III.

From such preachers and such sermons, good Lord deliver us! Is any remedy for sins comparable to the blood, the righteousness, the intercession of a divine Redeemer? Pity, ten thousand pities, so great a man (for so the author really is) should not know, or should totally overlook the grand peculiarity of the gospel. It grieves me to think, such unchristian doctrine should be thus propagated. If a fair opportunity offers, I would gladly bear my testimony against such enormous perversion of the gospel of Christ.

I cannot think the manuscript sermon which you have now sent me, is of such distinguished excellence, as to deserve a publication. It does not seem calculated either to alarm, to comfort, or impress.——There is nothing of the orator, no searching application, no striking address.——The preface is not so judicious as I could wish; it anticipates what is said under the following heads, and renders some part of them tautological.——The text is not exhausted. Of several emphatical words no notice is taken. *I* say unto you, Ye shall *in no case*; of the kingdom of heaven nothing particular is said. Indeed, there is a hint or two in the conclusion, referring to this subject; but too rambling, indistinct, and not with such a similarity to the text as might be observed.——The preacher supposes all his hearers to be of the same character, and ranks them all in one class. A practice which discerning people will not admire, and which is hardly consistent with the apostolical rule, *rightly dividing the word of truth*; or with our Lord's direction, *to give each his portion*, suited to their respective states.—I love Mr *R**** as a worthy good man, but I declined the office of revising his sermon, because I was sensible I could not make it such, as I should chuse to see printed. However, if it is printed, I heartily wish the blessing of the Lord may attend it; that true religion may be promoted, and immortal souls edified.

When the Pope is installed, he is reminded of this most weighty truth; *Sancte Pater, dies æternitatis cogita.* Let me say,—*Vir dilectissime, dies æternitatis cogita.*—We were all pleased with your last conversation. It was like your book, and like yourself.——Remember, my dear friend, when you are in company, that you have written a pious book, and do not invalidate all your exhortations to others, by forgetting them in your own conversation. 'Tis this, ah! 'tis this, that destroys what we build; confirms people in lukewarmness, and does unspeakably more mischief than can be enumerated in this letter.——*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth*, says St *Paul, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.*

The paper you inquire after is lost in the *immane barathrum* of my loose papers. If ever it emerges, it shall be restored.—May my friend's soul be not as the present state of the pastures and meads, but as a watered garden, whose waters fail not.

—I have perused Mr *Witherspoon*'s *Essay on imputed righteousness?* may we every day experience that sanctifying efficacy, on which his discourse turns. *Sanctify them*, saith our Lord, *by thy truth.*——I thank you for your admonition. I will bear it in my memory, and may our divine Master enable me to observe it!

—Oh, for a candid spirit! It gives gracefulness to our cause; it diminishes not the weight of our argument, and surely it does honour to the Christian character.

—Thanks for Mr *Mason*'s * *Odes*. Polished performances; but not equal, in my judgment, to his *Isis*, or his *Monody* on *Pope*. I think, I could point out a defect or two in these poems, but nothing defective could I discern in those. 'Tis pity but gratitude to the supreme Benefactor actuated our hearts, and guided our pens. The rich benefits of *Memory* displayed by the elegant Mr *Mason!* and not one acknowledgement to the blessed Author of all. The poet shines, but where is the Christian?

I am ever yours.

LETTER CLXIV.

Dear Sir, *Tuesday Morning.*

I Should think my friendship very weak, and quite unfledged, if I could be offended with the freedom, for which you apologize. Those who were anciently united in the bonds of Christian friendship, had this generous sentiment for their motto,—*Amicorum* † *omnia communia, præter uxores.*

I rejoice with you in the hopeful young gentleman's recovery; a pledge, I trust, of his eminent proficiency, and extensive usefulness, in the gospel-cause.

I acquiesce entirely in Dr *C***'s reasons; perhaps, if there was much of the pure evangelical peculiarity in the recommendatory verses, it might be a forbidding circumstance to some readers.

Mr *** is very obliging; his cautions are very friendly. I will not speak so plainly to Mr *W.* as to him. I wish, if it be God's gracious will, that your little treatise may be like Dr *Doddridge*'s works, acceptable to every reader. You see by the expressions I have taken the liberty to underline, that Mr *** sees the great truths of Christianity inverted, just as we see objects in a concave speculum. The good works, according to his scheme, are the recommending cause, and the blessed Redeemer only like the master of the ceremonies, merely to introduce them with a *good grace.* No, we have not so learned Christ; he is our righteousness, as well as our sanctification. We are accepted in the Beloved: *In him shall all the seed of* Israel *be justified, and in him shall they glory.*—This is the epidemical mistake, but I hope God will send out his light and his truth, and rectify our misapprehensions.——I dare say, that amiable and accomplished gentleman, that exemplary and shining Christian, that very zealous and successful preacher, Mr *T*——*n*, will be highly pleased to receive the present of your little treatise; his good heart will exult to see your open acknowledgment of the Saviour whom he so dearly loves. I hope to see you, or hear from you, before you take your journey; and am, with increasing esteem and affection,

Most cordially yours.

LETTER CLXV.

My dear Friend,

YOUR very kind present is come to our hands, and has made its appearance. You give me, as *Theron* says, ἡκαλμβοι συναζοιαν.

* *Odes* on memory—independency—melancholy—and the fate of tyranny.

† Friends have every thing in common except their wives.

All

All I can ſay, is, May the Lord ſupply your every need (both bodily and ſpiritual) according to his riches in glory by Chriſt Jeſus.

I am ſorry, my brother wrote ſo warm a letter to Mr *A—y* about his attempt to purchaſe the cloſes at *Weſton*, which lie ſo commodious for us.——The world's maxim is, Catch as catch can. But our Saviour's direction is, *Be anxious for nothing*.——Never fear, but we ſhall make a ſhift without theſe cloſes to paſs through the wilderneſs, and arrive at the heavenly *Canaan*. Were not your thoughts upon that eternal home, when you attended Mr *L****'s corpſe to the tomb? One of the texts, to which I directed my people on *Sunday*, was * 2 *Cor.* v. 1. and which, I hope, the omnipreſent God is now impreſſing on their conſciences, and mixing with faith.

The elegant *Paterculus* I here return; and the evangelical *Marſhall* I recommend to your repeated peruſal. I wiſh you ſtudied him more: for then you would like him better than you ſeem to do at preſent; you own there are many excellent directions in him; and thoſe parts which you now think obſcure, would not appear ſo on a more intimate acquaintance with the author.

I am glad to hear ſuch a character of Mr **. I hope you will be an inſtrument in our Lord's hand, of improving his valuable diſpoſitions, of ripening the man of honour, into the ſervant of Chriſt.——I think Dr *Akenſide* † has, if not ſpoiled his ode, much injured the dignity and beauty of his ſentiments, by writing in *Spencer*'s meaſure, and ſometimes in his drawling ſtyle.——"While he doth riot's orgies haply ſhare."——For an ode, where we expect all the harmony of numbers, and the higheſt poliſh of language, this manner ſurely is improper.—I keep it a little longer, perhaps it may pleaſe better on the ſecond reading.

—I wiſh you and your lady much joy at *Chriſtmas*, or rather all joy in Chriſt. He is come, he is come to judge the earth; to do that for enſlaved and ruined mankind, which the heroic judges of old did for *Iſrael*,—to deliver them from bondage, and eſtabliſh them in peace. Is not this the ſenſe of *Pſal.* xcvi. 11. 12. 13,?——Ah! what pity! that, while ſo many heroes are celebrated, Jeſus *the deſire of nations*, and *the brightneſs of his Father's glory*, ſhould be totally diſregarded. Thou high and holy one, ſince authors of genius with-hold the tribute of praiſe, glorify thy name by a worm, by impotence, by

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CLXVI.

Weſton, June 7. 1756.

Rev. and dear Sir,

DOn't you take it amiſs, that I have anſwered your laſt kind letter no ſooner! I have ſuch a multiplicity of epiſtolary engagements, and ſuch a poor pittance of ſtrength, that I cannot be ſo punctual in my acknowledgements, as my friends may expect, and as I myſelf wiſh.

You deſired to ſee Mr *Boyſe*'s letter to me.——I here incloſe it; and it ſhould have been ſent to you earlier, but I could not find it amidſt the confuſed heap of my papers till yeſterday.——I am very ſorry to hear he is ſo ill, as there is little probability of expecting any thing further from his maſterly pen.——I really think his little poem, entitled *Deity*, (in which he is not unmindful of the great Redeemer), is as uſeful and fine a piece of poetry * as moſt in the *Engliſh* language.——I ſo much admire it, that I have inſenſibly as it were got it by heart. God grant that it may be influential on every reader.

I was reading the other day a curious book written by Mr *Fleming*, and entitled, *The fulfilling of the ſcriptures complete*: in which I met with a valuable quotation from *Luther*'s letter to *Melanchthon*, who was then in much anguiſh on the apparent hazards of thoſe times. "If this" (ſays *Luther*) "be the cauſe of God, and not of man, then all the burthen ſhould be caſt on him. Why doſt thou afflict and torment thyſelf, ſeeing God hath given his Son for us?——Why do we tremble or fear! Will he forſake us in ſmaller things, who has given us ſo great a gift?——Is Satan ſtronger than God?——Should we fear the world, which Chriſt has overcome? If the cauſe we contend for be not the truth, let us change; but if the cauſe be holy and juſt, why do we not credit the promiſe and faithfulneſs of God?——It is certain Satan can reach no farther than this preſent life; but Chriſt reigneth for ever, under whoſe protection the truth now is; he will not fail to be with us unto the end.—If he be not with us, I beſeech you tell me where he ſhall be found?—If we be not of his church, do you think that the Biſhop of *Rome* and our adverſaries are of it? We are indeed ſinners; but Chriſt is true, whoſe cauſe we have in hand; which he hath hitherto maintained without our counſel, and ſo he will do unto the end."—Mr *Fleming* then juſtly obſerves, that *Luther* reſted on Chriſt, when all viſible props broke under him.

What animating conſiderations are theſe under all the diſcouragements we meet with in our miniſterial labours?——How does the work of the Lord proſper in your hand? May you be in this reſpect as a fruitful bough by the wall; may your people ſit under your ſhadow with great delight, and your fruit be ſweet unto them.

I am yours, &c.

The following is a genuine copy of Mr *Boyſe*'s letter † to Mr *Hervey*.

Rev. and dear Sir,

FOR your tender admonitions and excellent advice, I am truly indebted to you; as they diſcover a generous and compaſſionate concern for my better part.—I bleſs God I have reaſon to hope, that great work is not to do; for of all the marks of infatuation I know amongſt men, there can be none equal to that of truſting to a death-bed repentance.

I do not pretend to vindicate my own conduct,—nor can I ever forget the very Chriſtian ſenſe of my condition and misfortunes, which (notwithſtanding all my miſbehaviour) you have ſo pathetically expreſſed.——The follies of my youth have furniſhed a plentiful harveſt of reflection for my latter years. As I have been now for a long time in a manner buried from the world, ſo it has been my endeavour to ſpend that time in lamenting my paſt errors, and in purſuing a courſe of life void of offence towards God and man.

* *We know, that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

† See Letter CLXII.

* See Letter XXXIX.

† Mr *Boyſe* died ſoon after he wrote this letter to Mr *Hervey*.—His poem entitled *Deity*, has paſſed through ſeveral editions.

I have learned to truſt in God as my only portion, to bleſs him for his fatherly corrections, which have been much gentler than my demerit; and by which I have been taught to know him and myſelf; his infinite mercy and goodneſs; my own ingratitude and unworthineſs, ſo that I may truly ſay with the returning prodigal, *Father, I have ſinned againſt heaven, and againſt thee, and am not worthy to be called thy ſon.*

My health is in a very precarious ſtate; and the greateſt hopes of recovery I have (which are very ſmall) ariſe from warm weather and the country-air.———I thank God I am abſolutely reſigned to his holy and bleſſed will. I have ſeen enough of the vanity and folly of earthly things, and how inſufficient they are to ſatisfy the deſires of an immortal ſoul. I am ſenſible of my own wretchedneſs and nothingneſs, and that my only hope of ſalvation is through that bleſſed Redeemer, who died to ſave loſt ſinners.———This is my rock of hope againſt an approaching eternity.

May you long, Sir, taſte thoſe true and unfading pleaſures, which attend the practice of religion and virtue; and may you, by your ſhining example, be a means of turning many to righteouſneſs. This is the ſincere and ever-grateful wiſh of

Your moſt obliged,

and faithful ſervant,

S. Boyse.

LETTER CLXVII.

Dear Sir,

THE following is an extract of a letter, wrote by a young creature, labouring under an incurable diſtemper, and languiſhing in the near approaches of death.

I am at this time more happy than tongue can expreſs.----Never did I feel ſo much of the love of Chriſt ſhed abroad in my heart, as now. He has given me full aſſurance, that he has, out of love to my ſoul, caſt all my ſins behind his back, (Iſa. xxxviii. 17.) *And oh! why need I fear death, when the ſting is taken away?--No! though I am a ſinner, yet I have an advocate with the Father: and though, while I continue in this vile body, I fear, I ſhall too often grieve him, yet is his love ſtill the ſame; which makes me abhor myſelf, that ever I ſhould ſin againſt ſo kind, ſo compaſſionate a Saviour.*

See by THIS how the poor receive, how the poor believe, and how the poor adorn the goſpel of God our Saviour. THIS has indeed no great authority to dignify it, no flowers of eloquence to recommend it; nothing but the tranſparent ſincerity, and the native ſublimity of its piety. It breathes, however, the very ſpirit which I long to attain; and though it comes from a perſon in low life and of no education, yet I believe very few, even amongſt the names of higheſt diſtinction for wit, genius, and learning, will be able, in the ſame circumſtances, to exerciſe the ſame magnanimity of mind.

I am yours, &c.

LETTER CLXVIII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Aug.* 13, 1756.

YEſterday I received the favour of your letter;—was ſurpriſed to find you ſo near me; and grieved to hear of the occaſion. Oh! that both of us may be enabled to caſt all our care upon the Almighty! for ſurely he who gave—not an archangel—not a world—but himſelf—his moſt bleſſed ſelf for our ſins—ſurely he careth for us.

Yes, dear Sir; I think from my very heart, that the grand controverſy which the King of heaven has with our nation, is for our prevailing contempt of his moſt adorable Son Jeſus Chriſt: A gift, compared with which every thing in earth or ſky, is lighter than duſt upon the ſcale: A gift, by which an omnipotent and eternal God not only demonſtrates, but commands his love. Matchleſs then and unſpeakable muſt it be!———See! how the prophet *Iſaiah* exults and triumphs in this glorious gift. With an ardour of gratitude, and with a tranſport of delight, he cries, *To us a child is born, to us a Son is given;* in whoſe perſon is a dignity, and in whoſe righteouſneſs an efficacy, infinitely ſurpaſſing the power of thought. And ſhould not ſuch a gift be the darling topic of our converſation; be the avowed glory and the general joy of our nation? Yet, ſtrange to tell! afflictive to obſerve! this divinely-excellent gift is forgot, is rejected or treated with the moſt cold indifference. Where are the people, who mention it, or can bear to hear it mentioned in their company? Inſtead of being in raptures at the ſound, are they not diſguſted and chagrined?——And does not God behold all this? Did he ever receive ſo horrid an affront, or is it poſſible for his creatures to act a more contumelious and diſdainful part?---But whither am I running? Pardon me, dear Sir, pardon my full heart,—my wounded heart,---which has concurred to aggravate this crying iniquity.———O! that its invariable language, for the future, may be; *God forbid, that I ſhould glory*, or rejoice, or confide, *ſave in the croſs of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord:* in him I have pardon of my ſins; in him I have peace with God; in him I have eternal life. Therefore "him firſt, him laſt, him "midſt, and without end*," will I remember, acknowledge, celebrate.

Now you are come ſo far, could you not make a little farther excurſion? Could you not favour us with your company at *Weſton?* where you would find a plain houſe and a faithful heart open to receive you.———I have no news from the literary world; and my orders to my bookſeller are few.———But having occaſion to write, not long ago, to *Amſterdam*, I ſent for all my favourite author's works: *Witſius* I mean; the polite and pious *Witſius.*———My bookſeller is reprinting in two volumes, at my deſire, *Jenks*'s *Meditations;* which I propoſe to recommend by a prefatory addreſs to the public. ---Let me ſoon hear from you, if I cannot ſee you. And may your letter be in every ſenſe an evangeliſt.

Ever yours, while

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CLXIX.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, March.* 3, 1756.

IN a preceding letter, I begged your ſolution of ſome ſcriptural difficulties. As you always uſed even to prevent my expectations, in a free and ſpeedy communication of your valuable ſentiments; and as I have not enjoyed that pleaſure for a long ſeaſon, I am under ſome apprehenſions, that either you are viſited with ſickneſs, or my diſpatches have met with a miſcarriage. I hope,

* MILTON.

after

after the receipt of this, you will find ſome way to relieve me from my perplexity.

Reading yeſterday, *Exod.* xiv. methought there was ſome appearance of tautology in verſe 7. *Heb.* If in either of the clauſes we might render the word בגבה by *horſemen*, this ſeeming impropriety would be avoided. It would alſo more exactly agree with רכב ושלשים in the 28th verſe.---Is not our method of tranſlating verſe 20, ſomewhat forced, and hardly reconcileable with the genius of the original language?

Hab. iii. 5. לפניו ילך דבר. This ſentence alſo embarraſſed me a little. How does it, as tranſlated in the *Engliſh* Bible, agree with the hiſtory? Is there any account or any hint, that the peſtilence went before the Lord, when he deſcended on mount *Sinai?* There went indeed a wonderful word, דבר το διαγελλομενον φωνη εμμαλων.---- Does this paſſage refer to the plagues inflicted on the *Iſraelites*, for their murmuring and rebellion? I think not, becauſe the ſacred hymn appears calculated for the encouragement of the people, whereas this circumſtance would rather depreſs their ſpirits. Does it point at the plagues and the vengeance executed on the *Egyptians?* This, I believe, is moſt probable, and perhaps, affords us the true meaning of the paſſage.---Pray, favour me, if you have health and leiſure, with your opinion, which, I aſſure you, is highly valued, and always thankfully received by,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged, and

affectionate friend, *&c.*

What precedes was written before the receipt of your laſt.

I thank you, dear Sir, for your letter, and thank you doubly, becauſe it is long. I received it on coming from my *Wedneſday*'s evening-lecture:---have read one ſheet, and entered upon the ſecond, but am now called down to family-prayer.---I ſhall add no more, only let me deſire you to favour me with the criticiſms you mention. I beſeech the bleſſed God to eſtabliſh your health and prolong your life, that you may enrich me and others with many of your letters, and much of your knowledge.

LETTER CLXX.

My dear Friend, *Saturday Morn.*

I Congratulate you on the acceptance of your little tract, and the uncommon demand for it. *Ineſt ſua gratia parvis*, is a maxim of more wiſdom and weight than we eaſily apprehend.——May the bleſſing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt accompany it always and in all places!—I muſt deſire you to excuſe my waiting upon you. The ſeaſon is ſo rigorous, I am afraid to ſtir abroad. I queſtion, whether I ſhall have courage to venture to *Collingtree* to-morrow. You know I am one of the ſnail kind, both in travelling, reading, and writing. My thanks to Mr *Fenwick*; I have juſt peeped upon his * work: I fear it will be thought by the world, too finely ſpun.—You once aſked my opinion concerning Dr *Grey*'s laſt words of *David* divided according to the metre. I had not then read it with due attention. I lately peruſed it very carefully, and am charmed with the importance of his correction and the beauty of the paſſage, as it ſtands amended by that judicious critic. Though I muſt own, I don't admire the alteration ſuggeſted by Biſhop *Sherlock*, in his letter to Dr *Grey*. "A "ſun ſhall riſe as the morning," ſeems to have very little ſpirit, and leſs propriety. Is it not bordering upon *idem* † *per idem?* What is the morning, but the riſing of the ſun! Aſk our accurate friend's opinion. If the other ‡ paſſages of ſcripture, mentioned by Dr *Grey* in the front of this little piece, as what he ſoon intends to publiſh, are as valuably reſtored and as elegantly interpreted as this, the ſuppreſſion of them will be a great loſs ——I will, on your encouragement, go on with my book in my piddling way. Happy if my own heart may be impreſſed with the evangelical truths, even though they ſhould reach, as handled by this pen, no farther.——I had like to have forgot Mr * * *'s letter: and if I had forgot it, you might juſtly wonder at my ſtupidity. What a man is he! Sure, the age does not produce a more genuine copy of his divine Maſter. What a letter has he wrote! what dignity of ſentiment! what true greatneſs of ſoul! what openneſs of heart! what boldneſs of ſpeech, and juſtneſs of reproof, ſweetened with what love! tempered with what humility! How I love the excellent man! Was not your ſoul aſhamed, while you read it?—and did not your heart burn within you, as the diſciples did when talking with Chriſt in their way to *Emmaus?*

I am really afraid to read *Spenſer*'s *Fairy Queen.* He is in fancy ſuperior, perhaps, to every poet, yet ſo luſcious in ſome of his repreſentations, which I have caſually dipped upon, that it is impoſſible, for ME at leaſt, to advert to them, without catching contagion. His pictures of this ſort are drawn with a good deſign. He makes his heroes, victors of the ſoft allurements. But, I believe, few minds are ſo caſe-hardened againſt ſenſual pleaſure, as not to receive diſadvantageous impreſſions. I am therefore determined never to look into it again, never to gather the honey of poetry from the briers of

* Biſhop *Sherlock* ſays, (ſee page 23. of Dr *Grey*'s laſt words of *David*), In the compariſon באור בקר ce-or boker, *&c.* which you render, *Sicut lux matutina, oriente ſole*; it would ſtrike me more to read *orietur ſol.*—The ſenſe then would be, (taking the ſun to be an image, or character of the JUST ONE), this ſun ſhall be like the kind gentle light of the morning, free from clouds, and when the earth, refreſhed by kind ſhowers, is putting forth freſh verdure. ---The paſſage is beautiful, and gives an idea of a ſun that never ſcorches, but is ever gentle, and ſhining with a genial heat: A SUN WITH HEALING UNDER HIS WINGS.

† Theſe paſſages are entitled, *The voice of the ſweet ſingers of* Iſrael;

Being,

The book of Lamentations.
The Canticles, or Song of Songs.
The bleſſing of *Jacob*, *Gen.* xlix.
The bleſſing of *Moſes*, *Deut.* xxxiii.
The ſong of *Moſes*, *Exod.* xv.
The ſong of *Deborah*, *Judg.* v.
The laſt words of *David*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii.
The ſong of *Iſaiah*, chap. v.
The prayer of *Habbakkuk*, chap. iii.
The prophecy of *Balaam*, *Numb.* xxiii.
The lamentation of *David* over *Saul* and *Jonathan*, 2 *Sam.* i.
The prayer of *Hannah*, 1 *Sam.* ii.

With other poetical parts of the Old Teſtament, divided according to the metre. To which will be added, notes critical and explanatory, ſerving both to reſtore the text, and to give light to many parts of it hitherto obſcured. The book of *Job* thus divided, with the ſong of *Moſes*, *Deut.* xxxiii. Dr *Grey* has already publiſhed.

* *Thoughts on the* Hebrew *titles of the* pſalms, endeavouring to diſcover their meaning, and point out their uſe.

contami-

contamination. *Flee temptation*, is the advice of an inſpired apoſtle, and I will pay the due regard to it.

I am, dear Sir,

With great reſpect, your moſt obliged,

And very affectionate ſervant, &c.

LETTER CLXXI.

SIR, *Weſton-Favell, Dec.* 6, 1756.

I Received your obliging and valuable preſent of the ſcriptural * poems, wrote by an *American*. It is an extraordinary performance, conſidering the diſadvantageous circumſtances, under which the author laboured. ——A ſpirit of zeal and devotion animates the whole. ——There are too ſome elevated thoughts, and fine lines in it, particularly in that part of his poems, he entitles *Man's fall and exaltation, or the Chriſtian triumph.*

I hope the ſale of it will anſwer your expectation; and recompenſe the coſt you have beſtowed in printing it ſo elegantly, and on ſo fine a paper.——But be that as it may, you have my beſt wiſhes that it may become the darling of the Public; and you have at the ſame time the ſincere thanks of,

SIR,

Your obliged, humble ſervant.

LETTER CLXXII.

Dear Sir,

TELL our ingenious friend at ——, if I did not give a direct anſwer to his queſtion, it was becauſe he had ſtated it improperly. His manner was like making a raw apothecary's apprentice the proper judge of a doctor's bill. If ſuch a chap ſhould take upon him to ſay, Doctor, your language is unintelligible, your recipes are injudicious, what anſwer would you make? Some ſuch anſwers muſt be made, even to Dr *C*—— and Mr *O*——, if they or Dr *C*—— maintain or would inſinuate, that the myſtery of ſanctification, as delineated by *Marſhall*, is unintelligible and injudicious, merely becauſe THEY do not immediately diſcern its propriety. —I own, the third and fourth direction of Mr *Marſhall* ſeem obſcure †; but this does not ariſe from any improper manner of treating the ſubjects, but from the myſterious nature of the ſubjects themſelves.

This, ſays Dr *C*——, is my firm faith, that, "if we "do well, we ſhall be accepted through the merits of "Chriſt."——I might aſk the Doctor whether he does well? Dare he avow this, even before me his fellow-worm, and fellow-ſinner? How then will he maintain the pretenſion, before that infinitely-pure God, in whoſe ſight the very heavens are unclean?—But I chuſe to aſk him, (what may ſeem leſs offenſive), has he never read of *the righteouſneſs of faith* *?—of being *made righteous by one man's obedience* †?—of *righteouſneſs imputed without works* ‡? Now I ſhould be glad to learn, what the Holy Spirit means by theſe expreſſions? And if our worthy friend pleaſes to ſhew, how his faith can be made conformable to any one of theſe texts, I will undertake to demonſtrate the conformity of my faith to them all.—Ah! why ſhould we hug a deſpicable rag, and reject a ſuit of beautiful apparel? The Lord Jeſus enable us all to diſcern the things that are excellent!

Let me, this *Chriſtmas*, wiſh you and Mrs *** all joy and peace in Chriſt Jeſus. Theſe are the true compliments of the ſeaſon, and theſe are ſent by

Your true friend, &c.

LETTER CLXXIII.

Weſton, Saturday Morning.

MUCH I loved, and much I eſteemed my dear friend before; but now, methinks, I love and eſteem him more, on account of his kind acceptance of my free admonitions.—Do, my dear friend, let us remember how important the hours of our preſent life, and the moments of ſocial intercourſe are.—Dr *W*—— of *Worceſter*, who has a fine taſte for painting, can, tho' engaged in great buſineſs, paint, and talk now and then upon paintings; Dr *C*— of St *Albans*, who has a fine genius for poetry, though amidſt a variety of employs, can write, and give his ſentiments on poetry; and why ſhould not Dr *S****, though in an equally-large ſphere of action, edify his acquaintance, by his tongue and pen, with ſome religious hints. This, I think, is his diſtinguiſhing talent; and when he pleaſes, I am ſure no man knows how to introduce ſcripture better, or to converſe in a more ſtriking manner. Oh! that a ſtricture of it may run through, brighten, and dignify his temper, his buſineſs, his whole converſation!

You are perfectly right in eſteeming thoſe authors, whoſe piety beams through all their pages. And for this very reaſon, I eſteem, admire, and embrace *Jenks*'s works; *Marſhall on ſanctification*; and *Witherſpoon* on the *imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt*; becauſe nothing has ſo efficacious and benign an influence on true piety, as their doctrines. Nothing ſo ſweetly calms the conſcience, ſo thoroughly refines the affection, or, to ſay all in a word, ſo effectually ſheds abroad the love of God in the heart.

I wiſh you and Mrs *S* * *, abundance of comfort in Miſs *Sophia*. It was ſaid of one, *Nabal* is his name, and folly is with him, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 25. So I ſay of your in-

* The author of theſe ſcriptural poems had no other education, than what a country ſchool-miſtreſs could beſtow on him. How far he improved by his own induſtry, notwithſtanding the oppreſſive weight of poverty and diſtreſs he laboured under, theſe ſcriptural poems evidently ſhew, as the ſallies of true genius are every where viſible in his compoſitions. Such a diamond as this, even rough from its native mine, plays a ſprightlier beam, than one of a more languid and feeble luſtre, that has received the higheſt poliſh of education.

† There is confeſſedly ſomewhat of obſcurity in the third and fourth direction; and as Mr *Marſhall*'s directions are of a very evangelical nature, they will undoubtedly appear to be out of the common road; though his method is remarkably inſtructive, as no man perhaps was ever better acquainted with the human heart, and the method he has laid down for the effectual practice of holineſs is admirable.

* Rom. x. 6. † Rom. v. 19.

‡ Rom. iv. 6.

fant-

fant-daughter, *Sophia* is her name, and may wiſdom be with her! even the ἄνωθεν σοφια, *the wiſdom from above*, which St *James* ſo charmingly deſcribes in chap. iii. 17. and not with her only, but with her parents, and with their truly-affectionate friend.

LETTER CLXXIV.

Weſton-Favell, July 26, 1756.

NOW, my dear friend, I have procured your favourite author, *Downame's Chriſtian warfare againſt the devil, the world, and the fleſh.* He is, indeed, a pleaſing, perſpicuous writer. The language, as you obſerved, remarkably pure and correct; he is very experimental, and enters into the diſtreſſes of tempted ſouls; many things are ſweet, comfortable, charming. Sometimes, I think, he draws a little veil over the grace of God, not ſuffering it to blaze out in its full luſtre and glory. Don't you think he is ſomewhat inaccurate, in ſtating the nature of juſtification? *Lib.* ii. *chap.* 50. "Juſtification," he ſays, "conſiſteth in two parts; the "firſt, remiſſion of our ſins for the full ſatisfaction of "Chriſt, by his death and ſufferings: the other, the "imputation of his habitual and active righteouſneſs." —Should it not rather be, juſtification conſiſts of two parts; the firſt, remiſſion of our ſins; the ſecond, being perfectly righteous in God's ſight; and both theſe ſpring from the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to the poor ſinner?

I find, from your manuſcript, it is your opinion, that the antediluvian ſacrifices were ſlain by the ſword of the cherubim, planted and waved at the entrance of *Eden.* This is a very remarkable, and very awful circumſtance, and if true, very worthy of particular notice. But what reaſons have you, dear Sir, for the ſupport of this ſentiment? Be ſo kind as mention them, at your leiſure.

Mr *P****, about a week after his return to *Northamptonſhire*, gave me your letter. I fear, he will become a prey to the allurements of the world.—I believe he is not very zealous for the goſpel of Chriſt. I am pretty ſure, he does not love the ſervants of our Lord; therefore I expect, that, from this quarter, my character will ſoon be put under an eclipſe; nor ſhall I be much diſappointed, if, by this incident, my new friend is put away from my ſight. Thanks for your hints concerning my conduct; it is very ſeaſonable, and ſhall be obſerved.

I have ſometimes thought, that the beſt, ſtrongeſt proof of a future ſtate of happineſs occuring in the *Old Teſtament*, is deducible from the hiſtory of *Enoch*. *Enoch walked with God*, was high in his favour, and had much communion with him; it is recorded as a ſingular reward of his holy and exemplary life, That *he was not, for God took him.* Now, if the ancient people of God had no notion of a future ſtate of happineſs, what ſtrange apprehenſions muſt they form concerning this inſtance of the divine procedure? At this rate, Jehovah muſt appear to puniſh in the moſt exemplary and dreadful manner, his firſt and greateſt favourite. Whereas, ſuppoſe them rooted in the belief of a much happier condition ſucceeding the preſent life, and the caſe is plain, and God is juſtified in his doings.—Pleaſe to give me your opinion, as to this argument.

I hope, you are thinking of your new verſion of *Pſal.* civ. which will be very agreeable, and, I hope, not a little edifying to,

Dear Sir,

Your much obliged and

affectionate friend.

P. S. I here ſend you Mr *Moſes Browne*'s almoſt literal tranſlation of *Luther*'s moſt comfortable hymn, which is in very conſiderable eſteem in the *German* church. *Zimmermanus de cognitiones Chriſti eminentia*, is a comment on it; and is now tranſlating by Mr *Browne* at my deſire.

LUTHER's HYMN.

In eight practical rules.

I.

'TIS not too arduous an eſſay,
To tread reſolv'd the goſpel-way;
The ſenſual inſtinct to controul,
And warm with purer fire the ſoul.
Nature may raiſe her fleſhly ſtrife,
Reluctant to the heav'nly life;
Loath in a Saviour's death to ſhare,
Her daily croſs compell'd to bear:
But grace omnipotent at length,
Shall arm the ſaint, with ſaving ſtrength;
Thro' the ſharp war with aids attend,
And his long conflict ſweetly end.

See *Zimmermannus*, page 5.

II.

Act but the infant's gentle part;
Give up to love thy willing heart:
No fondeſt parent's melting breaſt
Yearns, like thy God's, to make thee bleſt:
Taught its dear mother ſoon to know,
The tendereſt babe his love can ſhow.
Bid thy baſe ſervile fear retire;
This taſk no labour will require.

Zimmermannus, page 11.

III.

The ſov'reign Father, *good and kind,*
Wants but to have his child reſign'd:
Wants but thy yielded heart (no more!)
With his large gifts of grace to ſtore.
HE *to thy ſoul no anguiſh brings,*
From thy own ſtubborn will it ſprings;
That foe but crucify (thy bane!),
Nought ſhalt thou know of frowns or pain.

Zimmermannus, page 17.

IV.

Shake from thy ſoul o'erwhelm'd, depreſt,
Th' encumb'ring load that galls her reſt;
That waſtes her ſtrength in bondage vain:—
With courage break th' enſlaving chain.
Let pray'r exert its conqu'ring pow'r;
Cry in thy tempted trembling hour,
"My God, my Father! ſave thy ſon!"—
'Tis heard,—and all thy fears are done.

Zimmermannus, page 32.

V.

Yet if (more earneſt plaints to raiſe)
Thy God a while his aid delays,
Tho' you don't now *his kind hand feel,*
Thy grief let lenient patience heal.

Or if corruption's strength prevail,
And oft thy pilgrim footsteps fail;
Pray for his grace with louder cries,
So shalt thou cleans'd and stronger rise.

Zimmermannus, page 43.

These next lines within the hooks do not belong to *Luther's* hymn, but are used by *Zimmermannus*, page 52. as an illustration of the preceding stanza.

[*The faster hold my faith on Jesus takes,*
His brighter glories on my spirit breaks.
If then to heav'n I lift my votive hands,
Love's strongest flame my raptur'd soul expands.
Thee, Lord, she loves, and would with zeal forego
A thousand worlds, love dear as thine to know.]

Then *Luther's* hymn proceeds thus:

VI.

If haply still thy mental shade,
Dark as the midnight gloom be made,
On the sure faithful arm divine
Firm let thy fast'ning trust recline.
The gentlest sire, the best of friends,
To thee nor loss, nor harm intends:
Tho' toss'd on a tempestuous main,
No wreck thy vessel shall sustain.
Should there remain of rescuing grace
No glimpse, no footstep left to trace;
Hear thy Lord's voice:—'tis Jesus' *will,*
"Believe (thou poor dark pilgrim) still."

Zimmermannus, page 55.

VII.

Then thy sad night of terrors past,
(Tho' the dread season long may last),
Sweet light shall, from the tranquil skies,
Like a fair dawn before thee rise.
Then shall thy faith's bright grounds appear,
Thy eyes shall view salvation clear.
Be hence encourag'd more, when try'd,
On the best Father *to confide.*
Ah! from thy mind extirpate quite
The silky films that cloud her sight:
See! of how rich a lot, how blest,
The true believer stands possest!

Zimmermannus, page 68.

These lines within the books do not belong to *Luther's* hymn, but are used by *Zimmermannus*, as an illustration of the preceding stanza. See page 74.

[*Loose from hard bonds, my God! a mind*
In chains too fast, too strait confin'd,
I'm beat'd!—set free!—from sin made pure!
Thy blood, my Christ, has wrought the cure.
I feel a pow'r my will controul!
Quench thy long drought, my thirsty soul!
The living fountain now I've found,
Diffusing balmy streams around.]

Then *Luther's* hymn concludes with this eighth practical rule.

VIII.

Come, backward soul! to God resign;
Peace, his best blessing, shall be thine:
Boldly recumbent on his care,
Cast thy felt burthens ONLY THERE.

Zimmermannus, page 88.

LETTER CLXXV.

My dear Friend,

THIS morning I wrote to my bookseller, and therein told him, that I think he need not be much concerned at the scurrilous treatment, which the reviewers have bestowed on my edition of *Jenks's* * *Meditations*. It will injure their own character, and lessen their own credit; not depretiate the works of that excellent man. ——I do assure you, it gives me not the least concern; I don't covet reputation; I desire, every day, to be more and more dead to the honour that cometh of men. Yet it is my sincere opinion, that such very foul and very abusive language would awaken in the generous reader a spirit of resentment. As a proof I inclose a letter from Mr *P*——, a very ingenious young clergyman, whom I sometime ago mentioned to you under this character. The letter, I think, will do him as much honour as it does me: it is fit to appear in print, but I would on no account take any such freedom with a private epistle.—I would not have our friend in *London* give himself any manner of trouble to prevent any future instances of this kind of benevolence from the reviewers. I depend not on their favour, but on him whom heaven, and earth, and hell obey; who constrained even *Balaam* to say, *How shall I curse, whom the Lord hath not cursed?* We are all obliged to my dear friend for interesting himself in our behalf; but we desire him not to take the trouble of writing on *Tuesday*, because it will be too late. The little closes are to be put up for sale on *Monday*, and *A*— will, I suppose, outbid my brother; yet if disappointed in this, blessed be God for a treasure in heaven that faileth not. An inheritance, that is ἀφθαρτος, not perishable, but lasting as eternity; ἀμιαντος, not tarnished, but free from every circumstance of alloy; ἀμαραντινος, not fading, but always in the fullest, freshest bloom of perfection, glory, and joy.——

Poor Mr *H*—*r*, I am informed, has almost lost his sight, is extremely ill; his life, it is thought, will follow his sight. Lord, that he and we may see by faith the Lord's Christ!—Blessed be God, in Christ all fulness dwells, all fulness of merit and righteousness, of grace and salvation; and this is for the unworthy, for sinners, for *whoever will*; therefore, for my dear friend, and for

His ever-affectionate

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CLXXVI.

My dear Friend, *Weston-Favell, Monday Morn.*

I Am much obliged to you for your generous donation of thirty shillings to purchase five hundred of *An earnest invitation to the friends of the established church, &c.* † —I have

* See Mr Hervey's preface to this book, at the end of the volume.

† An earnest invitation to the friends of the established church, to join with several of their brethren, clergy and laity, in setting apart one hour in the *Sunday* of every week for prayer and supplication, especially during the present troublesome times. This pamphlet is wrote with great spirit and a very good intention. It well deserves the most serious consideration of the community; and their hearty concurrence in so laudable and useful a design, may very reasonably be expected. Let us reflect, that our heavenly Father, high and mighty, who from his throne looks down on

—I have put the money into the hands of one who loves our Lord Jesus in sincerity; and who will take care that the pamphlet is properly dispersed according to our desires.—'Tis an excellent design:—I daily beg of God to bless it; for what he vouchsafes to bless, will be blessed indeed.

Inclosed I send you a form of prayer, founded on the plan laid down in the *Earnest Invitation*, &c.——'Twas transmitted to me last night by a very pious clergyman, who, I believe, was himself the author of it. You may get one of your sons to transcribe it, if you have not leisure enough to do it yourself; and permit such serious persons to take copies, as you think will make a proper use of it.

I wish you that promise for your counsellor, which we read this morning at breakfast in *Isaiah* (chapter lviii. 11.), *The Lord shall guide thee continually.*

I am, my dear friend,

Ever yours, while

JAMES HERVEY.

A solemn act of confession and intercession suited to the plan of those London *clergy and other friends to the established church, as specified in* the Earnest Invitation, *&c. requesting all the well-disposed Christians (laity as well as clergy,) throughout this nation, to join with them in a solemn act of humiliation for one hour every* Sunday *evening*, viz. *from eight of the clock till nine, on account of their own sins and the sins of this nation, especially during these calamitous times*, viz. *in* 1757.

1. O Blessed Lord, let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be at this time acceptable in thy sight as the incense, and let this now lifting up my hands be a sweet-smelling sacrifice!—Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come unto thee.

O most great and glorious God! just and terrible in thy judgments to all obstinate and rebellious sinners, but of infinite mercy to such as with true sorrow and hearty repentance turn unto thee; look down, I beseech thee, with mercy and compassion upon me, now presenting myself before thee, owning that I am not worthy so much as to lift up my eyes to the throne of thy glorious Majesty. O Lord, my sins are so many and so great, that it is owing to thy mercy alone that I have not been long since consumed, but yet have another opportunity of humbling myself before thee, and begging mercy for my own soul, who have so grievously sinned against thee: I confess, O Lord, what thou knowest already, but I confess it to manifest thy justice, and to glorify thy mercy, which has spared me so long. I confess and acknowledge, O Lord, that I brought a depraved and sinful nature into the world with me, from whence all my actual sins have flowed and proceeded, as impure streams from a polluted fountain. O blessed God, I beseech thee, for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, to humble me, and that greatly, for this my original corruption! Lord, let me see it in the strongest light, and never give me rest and peace, till from my soul I cry out for, and rely upon the unsinning obedience of my dear Redeemer Jesus Christ, and the assistance of the Spirit for deliverance from it; and grant that this precious balm may be my cure, and restore me again to the image of my God!

O Lord, I have sinned against thee by wilful and actual sins; I have left undone those things which I ought to have done, and have done those things which I ought not have done! particularly—by such—and such—a sin.

As 'tis taken for granted that every one who uses this prayer, has first of all strictly examined himself, and wrote down all the notorious sins, both of commission and omission, which he could recollect that he had been guilty of during the whole course of his life, it would here be proper for him to read over that catalogue of his offences very deliberately, that he may be deeply humbled, and truly penitent.

O Blessed God, I can give but a wretched account of myself.—I cannot remember, I fear, the ten thousandth part of my offences; Lord, save, or I perish; my crimes are intolerable and shameful, and my omissions as well as my commissions are innumerable; Oh! what shall I say unto thee, or what shall I do!——Oh! thou Preserver of men! I am so vile, that I cannot express it; so sinful, that I am hateful to myself, and much more abominable must I needs be in thy sight!

Oh! I have sinned, I have sinned! my sins are grown shameful and aggravated to amazement! Lord! I can say no more, I am ashamed, I am confounded in thy presence!

But yet, O God, thou art the healer of our breaches, and the lifter up of our head; and I must not, I dare not despair. Thou hast opened a fountain for sin and for uncleanness, and therefore I am sure, thou delightest not in the death of a sinner! and though my sins are great and numberless, as the sand which is upon the sea-shore, yet they are infinitely less than thy mercies, which thou hast revealed to all penitent and returning sinners in Jesus Christ!

For his sake therefore be pleased to look down into the dust, and lift up a poor helpless sinner from the dunghill! for Christ's sake let me not perish in my folly, nor be consumed in thy heavy displeasure! for Christ's sake give me time and space to repent, and give me also power to do it by the assistance of thy blessed Spirit!

Support me with an holy hope; confirm me with an operative lively faith; and kindle a bright and burning charity in my soul; give me patience in suffering, and severity in judging, and in condemning my sins! that judging myself, I may not be condemned of thee; that mourning for my sins, I may rejoice in thy pardon; that destroying my sins, I may live in righteousness; that denying my own will, I may always endeavour to perform thine, and that, by the assistance of thy blessed Spirit, I may overcome all carnal and spiritual wickedness. May I walk in thy light! may I delight in thy service! may I perfect my obedience; be wholly delivered as well from the power of sin, as punishment of it; and so be for ever preserved from thy wrath, and at last pass on from a certain expectation to an actual enjoyment of the glories of thy kingdom, through Jesus Christ my blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

2. And now, Lord, as I have been confessing my own sins, and humbling my soul before thee, as a private and particular person, I think myself bound in humility and duty, after the example of thy servant *Daniel*, to look upon myself in a still farther sinful light, *viz.* as an inhabitant of a profligate and rebellious nation; and so, like *Daniel* also, to confess the sins of my people! May I feel the concern of the *psalmist*, when he exclaimed, *Rivers of tears run down mine eyes, because men keep*

on all the dwellers on earth, and sees what multitudes in the different parts of this kingdom, are that hour fervently praying to him in secret; and all united too in the same requests, cannot but be pleased with such a prospect; and may probably for their sakes avert the impending calamities, which are too justly deserved by so irreligious and dissolute a nation. See *Gen.* xviii. 32.

keep not thy law, Pſalm cxix. 130.—And oh! that my ſupplications, and the ſupplications of all thoſe, who at this appointed hour, have agreed ſolemnly to ſeek thy face, and to confeſs their own ſins, and the ſins of the people of this land; oh that they may meet with the ſame gracious acceptance with thee as *Daniel* did! oh that the commandment may come forth at the beginning of our ſupplication, *to make an end of our ſins, and to make reconciliation for our iniquities, that thou mayeſt once more be our God, and we thy people!*

Let thy merciful ears, O God, therefore be open unto our prayers, and ſpare all thoſe who confeſs their ſins unto thee! that they whoſe conſciences, by ſin are accuſed, by thy merciful pardon may be abſolved, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord!

O Lord, the great and faithful God, keeping covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments, Deut. vii. 9. We have ſinned, O Lord, we have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments; neither have we hearkened unto thy ſervants the prophets, nor to thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, nor to his apoſtles, who in thy holy word have ſpoken unto our fathers, and the people of the land!

O Lord, righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of face as at this day, to our kings, to our princes, to our Fathers, and to ourſelves; becauſe of the treſpaſſes which we have treſpaſſed againſt thee; yea, we have all as one man tranſgreſſed againſt thee, by departing from thee, and not obeying thy voice! therefore the curſe is poured out upon us, and thou haſt confirmed the word which thou haſt ſpoken againſt us! Thou haſt brought upon us many and ſore evils, yet made we not our prayer before thee, that we might turn from our iniquity, and underſtand thy truth.

But, O bleſſed Lord, to thee belong mercies and forgiveneſſes, though we have rebelled againſt thee: O Lord, we confeſs our wickedneſs and are ſorry for our ſins; we beſeech thee, therefore, according to all thy righteouſneſs and thy gracious promiſes, and for the ſake of thy dear Son Jeſus Chriſt, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from us! Bow down thine ear, O Lord, and hear; open thine eyes, O Lord, and ſee, and behold our miſeries and our deſolation! for we do not preſent our ſupplications before thee, truſting in our own righteouſneſs, but in thy manifold and great mercies, and of the truth, which thou haſt ſhewed of old time to us thy ſervants; but thou art the ſame, whoſe property is always to have mercy; have mercy upon us, therefore have mercy upon us, moſt merciful Father, for thy dear Son our Lord Jeſus Chriſt's ſake; forgive us all that is paſt, and grant that we may ever hereafter ſerve thee in newneſs of life, to the honour and glory of thy name! And let the conſideration of our ſinfulneſs and unworthineſs, and of thy manifold warnings to us and long-ſufferings towards us, increaſe in us true repentance, that iniquity may not be our deſtruction! and increaſe in us alſo more and more a lively faith and love, fruitful in all holy obedience, that thou mayeſt ſtill continue thy favour, together with the light of thy goſpel, to us, and our poſterity! and this we beg for thy dear Son Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, our only Mediator and Advocate.

3. And now I have here confeſſed to thee, my own ſins, and the ſins of the people, I deſire farther to offer up my prayers in behalf of all mankind, that both *Jew* and *Gentile* may believe in, and glorify thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent! Protect and proſper thy holy catholic church, preſerve it pure in doctrine and worſhip, root out of it whatever is a ſcandal to thy moſt holy religion; unite its profeſſors and enlarge its borders; eſpecially bleſs that part of it in theſe nations to which I belong; and as, in thine infinite mercy, thou haſt been pleaſed to vouchſafe us abundant illumination of thy goſpel, be pleaſed to grant, that by our ſins we may not extinguiſh the light of it.

Inflame the miniſters and ſtewards of thy myſteries with a lively and burning zeal for the converſion of ſouls. Impreſs it deeply upon them, that curſed is he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully;—and be pleaſed, O Lord, to aſſiſt them with thy bleſſed Spirit, and to direct them to the uſe of ſuch means as may be effectual to bring about, and accompliſh that deſirable and happy end.

Be pleaſed likewiſe to bleſs all thoſe our diſſenting brethren, of what denomination ſoever they be, who love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity! Reconcile our hearts to them, and theirs to us! grant that there may be an end of thoſe animoſities, and bitter diſputes, which have ſo long and ſo ſadly diſturbed the peace and hindered the union of Proteſtants! and grant alſo that there may be only this one holy contention between us, whether the miniſters out of the eſtabliſhed church, or they that are in it, ſhall labour moſt for the glory of our common Maſter, and for the ſalvation of thoſe ſouls committed to their care, and for whom he ſhed his blood.

Bleſs likewiſe our Sovereign Lord King *George*, and all his royal family! make them pure and holy in their lives! raiſe up an active and vigorous ſpirit in their hearts, for the puniſhment and rooting out of wickedneſs and vice, and for the encouragement and maintenance of true religion among us.

And be pleaſed, O Lord, to give the ſpirit of wiſdom to all his counſellors, and to the magiſtrates of all ranks through the nation, that they me enabled faithfully to diſcharge that great truſt which is repoſed in them, to thy honour, and to the benefit and advantage of his Majeſty and the nation!

Be pleaſed likewiſe to go forth with our fleets and armies! bleſs all their endeavours againſt our enemies, and give them ſucceſs in the day of battle!

Have mercy upon all the afflicted members of thy church, whether in mind, body, or eſtate! Pity their condition, O Lord, pity it, and lay no more upon them than they are able to bear, but give them deliverance in thy good appointed time, if it be thy bleſſed will! Have compaſſion upon all that are in error, but ſincerely ſeek the truth! on all that are engaged in ſinful courſes, and led captive by their luſts, that they may have grace and ſtrength to break their bonds; and on all thoſe who never pray for themſelves; open their eyes, O Lord, and melt their ſtony hearts; awaken them, though it be even with thunder, to a ſenſible feeling of ther ſad condition, and for thy mercy's ſake ſuffer them no longer to ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death; may they ſee before it be too late, the danger and madneſs of thus living without God in the world.

4. Finally, O Lord, I deſire to return thee my unfeigned praiſes and thankſgivings, for the manifold expreſſions of thy goodneſs and loving kindneſs to me and to all mankind! I bleſs thee for my creation, preſervation, and all the bleſſings of this life, and for all the helps and advantages, which thou haſt vouchſafed me for the obtaining a better; but above all for thy aſtoniſhing love to mankind in Jeſus Chriſt, for all that he hath done and ſuffered for us, and continues ſtill to do for us, by his powerful interceſſion at thy right hand! humbly beſeeching thee, that I thy ſervant, together with all thoſe who have lived and died in the faith of his holy name, may follow the example of his heavenly life, that finally with them I may be made a partaker of the merits of his obedience and death, in a joyful reſurrection to everlaſting life!

All theſe confeſſions, prayers, ſupplications, interceſſions, and thankſgivings, I humbly put up to the throne of grace, in the name and words of our Lord and Savicur

viour Jeſus Chriſt, who in compaſſion to our infirmities hath taught us thus to pray, Our Father, &c.

The Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, &c.

N. B. The above prayer may be enlarged and improved as time and occaſion ſhall offer; and it may not be improper to remind every Chriſtian, that the firſt time he makes uſe of it, he ought to ſet apart at leaſt half an hour for ſelf-examination, and writing down the ſins of which he finds himſelf guilty.—The following *Sundays* he will re-conſider what he has written, and thereby form a judgment what is his progreſs in, or deviation from, the path, which leads to heaven.——After having ſpent ſome *Sunday* evenings in this devout exerciſe, he ſhould be upon his guard leſt he be tempted to leave it off.—Oh may he never be tired of ſuch a good work; the more he prays, the more he will have ſtrength to perſevere. 'Tis humbly hoped, that all who read this, will immediately purchaſe the *Earneſt Invitation*, &c. the price of which, as has been before obſerved, is no more than a penny;—and then, after having weighed it with the attention that a matter of this importance deſerves, they will (to uſe the author's own words) "judge whether it be not a ſeaſonable and a ſafe meaſure, which "we would perſuade you to take; and you will take it if "you are indeed a friend to our preſent happy eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate.—Your love for them will "put you upon the doing every thing that lies in your "power to ſerve them; and here you have a fair opportunity, of which if you make uſe, it cannot but do "you ſervice, and may be a bleſſing to them.—Pray "for them at the appointed hour, (namely from eight "to nine every *Sunday* evening.)—Determine through "God's aſſiſtance, that nothing ſhall hinder you from "joining us.—Break through all engagements, all hinderances to meet at the throne of grace, the Lord's "people.—[Conſider that God knoweth his ſecret ones, "and will reward them openly.]—And moreover for "your encouragement, remember, that he who ſitteth "upon the throne is the GOD WHO HEARETH "PRAYER, and who has invited you (*Pſalm* l. 15.) "to *call upon him in the day of trouble; ſo will I hear thee*, "ſays he, *and thou ſhalt praiſe me.*"—What a comfortable promiſe is here to animate every one to make part of this praying congregation!

LETTER CLXXVII.

My dear Friend,

I Truly ſympathiſe with you in all your calamities; but to be afflicted more or leſs, is the common lot of God's people; and it is frequently their fate to be exerciſed with frowning providences in a remarkably-grievous manner.——Under ſuch circumſtances we ſhould ſuggeſt ſoft hints of admonition, with the ſame friendly intention as actuated the prophet *Jeremiah*, when he addreſſed this exhortation to his countrymen, *Let us ſearch and try our ways, and*, if we are found delinquents, *turn again unto the Lord*, Lam. iii. 4.—We ſhould likewiſe comfort each other, by obſerving, that God, who heareth prayer, has bowels of everlaſting compaſſion, and does not willingly afflict the ſons of men; that this adorable God has given his all-glorious Son to be a bleeding ſacrifice for our ſins; and that if *he with-held not his Son*, his only Son, *but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not alſo with him freely give us all things?—all things that pertain to life and godlineſs*; to ſubſiſtence here, and ſalvation for ever.—Prompted by the infinite benignity of his nature, and engaged by his inviolable promiſe, he never faileth thoſe that ſeek him.—O! how ready is he to give his Holy Spirit! to give all happineſs to thoſe that with an humble ſincerity will apply to him! infinitely more ready than we are to give our children a morſel of bread to ſave them from periſhing with hunger.—Theſe are indeed comfortable conſiderations, and are the ſtrongeſt reaſons why we ſhould continually be making our requeſts known unto him.

I fear Mr *Sm——h* is a very bad man, and too juſtly deſerves the name you give him.—Labourers, I am told, are diſtreſſed by his neglecting to pay them; which I can aſſure you very much grieves me, nor is it in my power to redreſs them.——I wiſh it was;—they ſhould ſoon ſee what it is to have to do with one, *who nameth the name of Chriſt*, 2 Tim. ii. 19.

Pleaſe to lend me Dr *Squire's Indifference for religion inexcuſable.*——I mightily like the title of it.—He bears ſo good a character both as a ſcholar and a man, that I hope it will be an antidote againſt the faſhionable and growing indifference to religion.

Did you ever ſee a ſhilling poem, entitled, *The battle of the ſexes* *? 'Tis wrote in the ſpirit of *Spenſer*, and is indeed one of the prettieſt things I ever met with.---But it is very evident, that the author has taken his plan from *Fletcher's Purple Iſland* †. The celebrated *Pit* of *New College*, who tranſlated *Virgil* and *Vida*, has wrote a complimentary copy of verſes, which are prefixed; a ſpecimen of which I have here ſelected to ſhew you the nature of it.

What muſe but yours ſo juſtly could diſplay
Th' embattl'd paſſions marſhall'd in array?
Bid the rang'd appetites in order move,
Give luſt *a figure, and a ſhape to* love?
To airy notions ſolid forms diſpenſe!
And make our thoughts *the images of* ſenſe;
Diſcover all this rational machine,
And ſhow the movements, ſprings, and wheels within.

* See letter 266.—Compare ſeveral of the perſonified virtues and vices depicted by *Fletcher* in his *Purple Iſland* (*canto* vi. to *canto* xii.) with ſome of thoſe drawn by the author of the *Battle of the ſexes*.

† The following ſtanzas, containing a beautiful deſcription of *Religion*, is ſelected as a ſpecimen of this pretty poem. In the preceding ſtanza, the parties are repreſented as holding a council how to revenge their loſſes, by the attack of *Luſt*; and, as the iſſue thereof, it is ſaid,

Made wiſe by ſmart, a championeſs they ſent,
Whoſe arm alone was equal to the toil;
Sometimes on earth by *Virtue*'s title fam'd,
By wiſer angel-minds divine *Religion* nam'd.

Mild, ſweet, ſerene, and cheerful was her mood,
Nor grave with ſternneſs, nor with lightneſs free;
Againſt example reſolutely good,
Fervent in zeal, and warm in charity:
Who ne'er forſook her faith for love of peace,
Nor ſought with fire and ſword to ſhew her zeal;
Duteous to princes, when they moſt oppreſs;
Patient in bearing ill, and doing well.
In pray'rs and tears ſhe fought and found defence,
Nor rais'd rebellious arms to ſtrengthen Providence.

Her prudent care was fix'd on heaven's height,
Yet by her ſteps on earth that care was ſhewn;
Fearleſs of harm in darkneſs, as in light;
Fearful of ſin at midnight, as at noon:
A bloody croſs was pourtray'd on her ſhield,
Whoſe ſight the monſter * ſcarcely could ſuſtain:
Feeble to gain, yet loath to quit the field;
Blaſted and thunder-ſtruck with chilling pain;
When 'gainſt his head her ſacred arms ſhe bent,
Strict watch, and faſt ſevere, and prayer omnipotent.

* LUST.

As I was looking yesterday at my preface to the new edition of *Jenks*'s *Meditations*, I observed, in the catalogue of his works, that, either through my own or the printer's negligence, two little pieces are omitted: one of them is his *Serious thoughts on the wonderful God*; which is very useful in assisting us to form proper notions of the divine perfections: the other is his *Glorious victory of chastity*, exemplified in *Joseph*'s hard conflict, and happy escape.—'Tis pity that this little piece is not more regarded by parents, as 'tis perhaps the best thing of its size, ever wrote on the subject, and ought to be put into the hands of all young people: for, as St *Augustine* justly observes, *Inter omnia certamina Christianorum duriora sunt prælia castitatis; nam ibi continua pugna, et rara victoria* *.

If another edition of *Jenks*'s *Meditations* should be demanded; and if it should please God to take me to himself before that time, I here desire the favour of you to see, that these two little tracts be inserted in the catalogue of Mr *Jenks*'s writings, given in my preface to that book by

Your ever-affectionate, &c.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

Weston-Favell, April 28. 1757.

WHAT has my dear friend been speaking for the honour of HIM, who saved his life from destruction?—How are you?—how is your lady after your great fright †, and greater deliverance?—Calm now, I trust, and no emotions in your mind, but of gratitude to the great Preserver of men, who kept all your bones, so that not one of them is broken.

Now, I hope, you will be steadily and uniformly serious. You see, God warns you, yet spares you. To others he has appointed such dangers as befel you yesterday, to be the messenger of death; to you he has designed them only as an admonition of love; hear then your PRESERVER'S voice. Trifle no longer with Christ and his salvation; be zealous, I mean, discreetly zealous, for your Saviour, and for that gospel, which you understand better than most of our clergymen.—How can you refuse to speak boldly for such a Master, and to devote yourself to his service in earnest, who forgives all your backslidings, watches over you with such tender compassion, and WAITS—yea, WAITS to be GRACIOUS UNTO YOU!

My dear friend, may the Lord Jesus turn us both to himself, who is our refuge, our salvation, and all our hope; who should be our boast, our triumph, and all our joy.

I long to see your amiable friend the Reverend Mr *Dyer*'s *poem on the fleece* *.—I suppose he will make you a present of it.—When you have done with it, please to send it to me.—I hear it is to be sold at five shillings, which I cannot afford to give for it.

In your last letter you asked me for two guineas out of my charity-purse, for our very deserving and very distressed friend.—Indeed it is quite exhausted;—nay I don't think I have a single guinea in the world, even for my own use; though I forbear every unnecessary expence, and want many of the little conveniences of life, that I may be enabled to succour the worthy servants of Christ.—I have agreed to go halves with *Rivington* in the profits of my book, and I always make it a maxim, not to give till I have gotten.—Be just, before you are generous, is your own rule too.—If the Lord pleases to prosper my work, I will very readily communicate to the comfort of such worthy objects as you may think proper to recommend to the charity of, my dear friend,

Yours very affectionately.

LETTER CLXXIX.

Dear Sir,

MR *Moses Browne* † has, I think, thirteen children. One is settled in the world: and a friend of his has taken another for his clerk, *gratis*.—We propose to put out one of his daugulers to some decent business; by which she may have the means of getting her livelihood. —He has been at a great expence, poor man! by the sickness of his family.—Your contribution on this occasion will be acceptable. Dr —— has offered to augment the collection; and Mr * * * I am sure will readily add his charitable assistance, especially if you recommend the case.

—— We are in daily expectation of our friend *H.* I wish, you could make up the *triumvirate of the guests*. At all our social interviews, our news is fetched from the Bible; Christ is the monarch, and heaven the country, on which we discourse. O! that I may be enabled to improve these precious opportunities! not be like *Pharaoh*'s lean kine, destitute of growth, though crammed with plenty!—My flock would have been peculiarly delighted, to have heard your voice in the pulpit; they would have hung on your lips; and I verily believe, the words would not have been in vain in the Lord. There's no expedient so effectual to warm our hearts as an unremitted endeavour to awaken the love of a bleeding Saviour in the breast of others.

I am truly grieved at the account of yourself. You know who has said, *I will heal their backslidings, and love them freely*; and dare we, by giving way to unbelief, make the God of truth a liar? Hear the words of the Lord

* The meaning of which is, "Amidst all the various and sharp "encounters in the Christian warfare, the attacks on our chastity "are perhaps the most formidable, as the combat is strenuous and "lasting; a complete victory being rarely obtained." How much therefore does it behove us to call in every auxiliary, and to put on the complete armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.—See the fifth edition of *Gurnall's Christian armour*, and *Eph.* vi. 11.

† The gentleman was driving his wife in a one-horse chaise, when the horse suddenly took fright, and flung his hinder leg over one of the shafts, just by the side of a very deep ditch; being thus entangled, and a high-mettled horse, he kicked with all imaginable fury, and several times his hoofs came within a hair's breadth of their heads.—They called in vain on their servant, who had loitered behind; and they must both have inevitably been dashed to pieces, had not the horse, by the violence of his kicking, broke the harness, bar, and shafts, and thus fortunately disentangled himself.—This accident happened near Mr *Hervey*'s house; to which they then went.

* The *Fleece* is an elegant and correct poem, in four books, written by Mr *Dyer*, who published the celebrated poem on the *Ruins of Rome*, at which place he lived many years. He was originally a painter, and afterwards Rector of *Cathrop* in *Leicestershire*.—He was near twenty years writing the *Fleece*.

† The Rev. Mr *Moses Browne* (the author of *Sunday-Thoughts*, and various other pieces) is now Vicar of *Onley* in *Buckinghamshire*, the revenue of which is about fifty pounds, being his only income, and he above fifty years old. See in letter LVII. Mr *Hervey*'s opinion of him and his writings, even before the commencement of their intimacy.

Lord ſpoke by *Jeremiah*, ch. iii. 12. *Return thou backſliding* Iſrael, *and I will not cauſe mine anger to fall upon you; only acknowledge thine iniquities which thou haſt tranſgreſſed againſt the Lord thy God.*

Recommend *Jenks's Victory of chaſtity* to Mr **, and tell him, that though the luſts of the fleſh are inveterate enemies, yet three methods may be preſcribed for a victory over them. 1. A believing application of the Redeemer's death. The ſaints in glory, once men of like paſſions with ourſelves, overcame through the blood of the Lamb. He *bare our ſin in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto ſin, might live unto righteouſneſs.* 2. An habitual reliance on the Spirit of God. *If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live.* Chriſt by his Spirit acts on our depraved, polluted hearts, as a refiner's fire, and as fuller's ſoap. 3. An improvement of the divine promiſes. God *has given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes; that by theſe we might be partakers of a divine nature, having eſcaped the corruption that is in the world through luſt.*

Theſe tell Mr *** to lay up in his memory; on theſe let him meditate; and plead them before our heavenly Father in frequent, frequent prayer. And then let him be of good comfort, the bleſſing of *Gad* will be his portion. *Gad, a troop ſhall overcome him, but he ſhall overcome at the laſt.* See *Gen.* xlix. 19.

Our dear friend preſents his love; and wiſhes you may be very zealous for the Lord God of hoſts.—You have conſtantly an intereſt in my beſt prayers, but I am utterly unworthy to approach the immaculate purity and infinite holineſs of the great God;—yet bleſſed be his adorable name for Jeſus Chriſt.—Oh! let us fly to Chriſt. *Turn ye to this ſtronghold, ye priſoners of hope.* Let us caſt our every burthen upon the Lord Redeemer; have acceſs into the holieſt through his precious blood; and truſt in his ever-acceptable interceſſion; for he intercedes (delightful truth!) he intercedes for TRANSGRESSORS.

I am, dear Sir, *&c.*

LETTER CLXXX.

Dear Sir,

MR *Huyward* and Mr *Pick's Caſes of conſcience*, are printed in two volumes, the firſt of which I here ſend you. I return you *Smollet*'s *Hiſtory of England*, and *Weſt*'s *Pindar*, with thanks. How empty all theſe polite pieces appear, compared with the ſacred page! May this delight our taſte, for this alone can comfort our heart.—What I propoſed to write relating to the ſubject of *viſiting on Sandays*,* was executed the beginning of laſt week: Yet, to ſay the truth, I am in ſome meaſure backward to propagate and enforce it; becauſe till people begin to taſte ſomething of the love of God, and find delight in Chriſt Jeſus, ſuch truths I doubt will only ſtartle, and make them dread religion as burdenſome.

—Thanks for the veniſon. We cannot dreſs it today. All my family are to be at court this morning. The King of heaven has ſent poſitive orders, and will not excuſe either man-ſervant or maid-ſervant.—Won't you give us your company in the afternoon? When Mr *** performs the whole ſervice at my church, I fancy you will not be diſappointed nor unedified; he ſeems to have a ready utterance, a very good voice, and a fervent zeal for the honour of Chriſt; may the arrow of the goſpel go forth from his lips as the lightning!—I hope, you will bring your wife with you; ſuch lively preaching as I expect, may be a bleſſing to both of you.—Oh! that Chriſt may guide us with his counſel, and warm us with his love,—make us uſeful in our generation, and meet for his heavenly kingdom!

Why does our friend talk of not accepting ***, becauſe it is a paltry living? Surely he would not reckon that a paltry thing, which gave him an opportunity of preaching Chriſt, and winning ſouls. If he did, he would not be able to ſay, with a certain miniſter now in glory, *I ſeek not yours, but you.*—The bleſſed hope of that glory, is enough, is enough: Lord, ſtrengthen it, brighten it, increaſe it, ever more and more.—Oh! that miniſters may work for their dying Lord, while they have health; remembering, that ſickneſs may confine them to their chamber, and death will impriſon them in the grave.—God almighty give us courage, that we may fight the good fight of faith, and prudence, that we may not diſhonour our high calling. Ere long eternity receives us, and then we reſt from our labours: then we forget our tranſient toil, amidſt innumerable ages of perfection, and glory, and joy.—For all this, not unto us, O Lord Jeſus, not unto us, but unto thy love, thy righteouſneſs, thy interceſſion, be the praiſe!

—What ſay you to my late well-meant admonition? You are not offended, I hope. We muſt be faithful to each other, or elſe how can we expect to meet with comfort, at the great tribunal; to meet with tranſport, amidſt the angels of light?

—I have not heard from *Biddeford*; as ſoon as I receive information, it ſhall be communicated to you.—And may the Lord fulfil that promiſe to us both; *I will inform thee, and teach thee, in the way wherein thou ſhalt go.*

—Pray have you got Dr *Armſtrong*'s poem on health? It is highly extolled by Mr *Wharton* the tranſlator of *Virgil*, as a moſt correct and (which with him ſeems to comprehend all excellency) a claſſical performance. I ſhould like to peep upon it by way of amuſement; for as to the bleſſing it celebrates, I expect it not, till this vile body is made like unto Chriſt's glorious body. Bleſſed be God for this delightful hope; may it every day be brighter in you, and brighter in

Your moſt affectionate, *&c.*

LETTER CLXXXI.

My dear Friend,

SIncereſt thanks for your benevolent offices; may they, through our great High Prieſt, and the incenſe of his atonement, go up as a memorial before God; not as a demand, (we may deſerve,) not as a bill drawn upon heaven, but only as a memorial!

I had a very reſtleſs night, tore almoſt to pieces by my cough. Strange! that theſe flimſy veſſels can bear ſuch violent ſtraining! that none of them will burſt, and let the battered ſoul ſlip away, to her eternal reſt in Chriſt!

—Here are two ſets of the *Meditations*, with which you may gratify ſome of your acquaintance. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt grant, that they may promote his glory. Do not you often wiſh, often pray, that the ſame bleſſed effects may be produced by your book? We authors ſhould not be like the oſtriches in the wilderneſs, cruel and forgetful of their young. *Lam.* iv. 3.

——If you have Dr *Grey*'s tranſlation of *Hawkens Browne*'s *Latin* poem on the *immortality of the ſoul*, favour me with the ſight of it; it is a grand ſubject; it is a glorious

* See above, p. 525.

glorious ſubject; and when conſidered in connection with Jeſus Chriſt, it is a delightful ſubject. O! that it may incite us to aim, not at the things which are ſeen, for they are temporal; but at the things which are not ſeen, for they are eternal.

I have found the little treatiſe, entitled, *Recovery from ſickneſs*. It is one of the moſt pertinent and rational, the moſt animating and encouraging, that I have ſeen on the occaſion.—Few properer pieces, I think, can be put into a ſick perſon's hand. May the Lord God, omnipotent and gracious, accompany it with his bleſſing!

—I am always complaining; complaining of my poor body, but I truſt more and more reſigned to the unerring and gracious will of my Lord.

I beg, I entreat you, if you value the honour of the goſpel, that you will diſſuade thoſe polite perſons you mention, from coming to hear me to-morrow.—My ſpirits ſink more and more.—I am viſited with ſome returns of my hacking cough; perhaps, I ſhall not be able to ſpeak at all. Such diſagreeable circumſtances will only expoſe me, and create in them very unpleaſing ideas of what I ſhall deliver. My imagination is gone; —I am ſenſible my ſermons are flat, and my voice ſpiritleſs.——Why therefore ſhould you bring perſons of taſte to ſee the nakedneſs of the land?——The poor country-people love me tenderly, and therefore bear with my infirmities; elſe I ſhould no longer attempt to preach, even before them.——I am now unfit to appear in the pulpit.

I hope Dr *Swan*'s journey will be bleſſed to the reſtoration and eſtabliſhment of his health. I wiſh I may never forget the text, on which he heard the miniſter of *Weſton* preach: I wiſh, we may all enjoy the bleſſing compriſed and promiſed in it. *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.*——Don't you, my dear friend, think of ſuch things? talk of ſuch things to your lady, and inſtruct your children in ſuch things?—O! let us remember, the Judge is at the door, and eternity is near.—I heartily wiſh Mrs * * * a ſpeedy recovery, and a ſanctified improvement of her affliction. See, my dear friend, how all fleſh is graſs; but Jeſus and his great ſalvation endureth for ever; here is indeed an everlaſting poſſeſſion. The text particularly fit for me and for you to meditate on, (*viz. Heb.* i. 2. 3.) I will preach on next *Sunday*.—Can any be more grand in itſelf, or more conſolatory to us ſinners?

How go you on? do you ſee any opening in the affair we laſt talked about? are you come to any determination? Remember him, who ſees, this very moment, all the conſequences of every ſtep we take; and who hath ſaid, in tender compaſſion to our ignorance, *The Lord ſhall guide thee continually*.—Pray, beware of precipitate reſolutions, *Feſtina lente*.—Whatever we do, whitherſoever we go, may we ſay with the pſalmiſt, *This God is our God for ever and ever; he ſhall be our guide even unto death*.—My weak ſtate of body diſpirits my mind, and enervates my hand.—Oh! that I may be ſtrong in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity!—and not I only, but my dear friend, whoſe I am

Cordially and inviolably, while, &c.

LETTER CLXXXII.

Dear Sir,

I Should be glad to ſuggeſt any thing, either for your improvement or conſolation.—But what can I ſuggeſt, while you entertain ſuch hard thoughts of Chriſt, and will not be perſuaded out of this ſtrange notion, "that the curſe of God has lighted on you, and will "follow you to the grave?" Such a thought (and it muſt be taken up without any real foundation) not only renders you extremely miſerable, but will blaſt all your future uſefulneſs.—Suppoſe you had rebelled againſt God, even in a more extraordinary degree than even your own imagination can paint; and ſuppoſe you was rejected by him at the preſent, yet what ſays the apoſtle St *James*, chap. iv. 10. *Humble yourſelf in the ſight of the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

As to the quotation from Mr * * *'s letter to you, wherein he obſerves, with a kind of triumphant malignity, "that the devil had taken an advantage of you, in "relation to ſome imprudent management in the affair, "at * * *, *&c. &c. &c.* and dragged you, as he expreſ-"ſes it, through a horſe-pond, dirtied and wet, to the "great diverſion of the ſpectators;" I aſk of what ſpectators? Of the worldly-minded only, and the envious, to whom your former flouriſhing ſtate as a firſt-rate Chriſtian, was a conſtant and viſible reproach; yet Chriſt (though you are now thus depreſſed) is ſtill your friend, and will break Satan's teeth; and though dirty will cleanſe you; though wet, will receive and warm you.

Now let me put a queſtion to you:—Would you reject your child, becauſe when dreſſed in its beſt cloaths, he had met with a like misfortune?—Or ſuppoſe he had rambled out in the ſnow, and ſcratched himſelf with briers, and come to you bleeding and cold, would you turn him out of doors, when he claimed your pity?——We do not KNOW Chriſt well enough!—How kind! how good he is to us!—What is my kindneſs and compaſſion for you (on which you ſeem to place ſuch a high value) in compariſon of Chriſt's?—Have I been nailed to the croſs for you?——Oh pray earneſtly to HIM, for

——To HIM, *to* HIM, *'tis giv'n,*
Paſſion, and care, and anguiſh to deſtroy;
Thro' HIM *ſoft peace and plenitude of joy*
Perpetual o'er the world redeem'd ſhall flow.

Prior's Solomon.

He has ſatisfied God for all your ſins;—he is your advocate,—and has procured for you the ineſtimable gift of the Holy Spirit to ſubdue your iniquities.——Cultivate the love of God in your heart, and he will make your path of duty plain before you. I dare ſay, God will make you more abundantly uſeful than ever. Oh bring your mind off from this deſtructive notion, "That "the curſe of God follows you."——This is a ſuggeſtion of Satan's to prevent your uſefulneſs;—but remember that text, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation*, 2 Pet. ii. 9. and he will certainly deliver you out of this, and reſtore you to his wonted favour.

Don't ſelect ſuch terrifying texts for your meditation, as in your letter you tell me you have done.——It is as improper, as if you ſhould eat the coldeſt melon, or uſe the moſt ſlight covering, when ſhivering with an ague. Chuſe, the morning after you receive this letter, (by way of antidote to the texts of your own ſelecting), the following for your meditation; *His mercy is greater than the heavens*, Pſal. cviii. 4. *His mercy endureth for ever*, Pſal. cxviii. 1. Put together theſe two expreſſions, and ſee whether they don't amount to more than either your imprudences, or your diſtreſs.——You have, to be ſure, done amiſs, and dealt fooliſhly in the matter of * * *. God forbid I ſhould juſtify your conduct;—but oh let it not be ſaid, let it not be once ſurmiſed, that it is beyond the reach of God's unmeaſurable goodneſs to pardon, or of Chriſt's immenſely-rich merits to expiate. The Lord loves you with an everlaſting love; and take,

if

if you please, the latter part of the xxxth of *Isaiah*, ver. 18. for your contemplation;—the words are, *For the Lord is a God of judgment, blessed are they that wait for him.*

None can tell, none can think, what mercy there is with the Lord; with inconceivable tenderness his bowels yearn toward the weakest, frailest believer in his dear Son.—We have dishonoured his holiness, and violated his law; but let us not, to accumulate our follies, derogate from the boundless riches of his mercy in Jesus Christ, to all those who seek and entreat it.—There is a wide difference between humiliation and despair.—Draw near to Christ with an humble boldness.

May you see many, many years on earth; and when the earth shall be no more, may you be received into the *New Jerusalem*; where dwelleth righteousness, consummate righteousness and everlasting happiness.—This, my dear Sir, is my earnest wish and fervent prayer for you, and for myself; who am, with great compassion and true regard,

Your obliged humble servant and friend.

P. S. My favourite author *Liborius Zimmermannus*, whispers to me on this occasion the following passage; "Said I not unto thee, If thou wouldst BELIEVE, thou "shouldst SEE the glory of God, and experience his "goodness, when least deserved, or rather notoriously "forfeited?" Hence may we be convinced, that his loving-kindness is unbounded, is unwearied, is infinite; as much surpassing all our follies and all our thoughts, as the world of waters exceeds the drop of a bucket.—Oh for a spirit of steady faith, to live under the continual BELIEF of this precious, precious truth.

LETTER CLXXXIII.

Dear Sir, *Saturday Morning.*

I Am sorry to hear, that Mr *** should think my doctrine tends to the introduction of licentiousness.——Far, very far from it!—Mine is the genuine doctrine of the scriptures; and the only doctrine to reclaim mankind, as it encourages sinners not to continue in their sins, but to turn unto their injured Lord, and receive salvation at his beneficent hand. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*, are our blessed Master's own words; and all my writings, preaching, and conversation, are founded on that comfortable declaration to my lost, undone fellow-creatures; that tender invitation to those, in whom there is no health.

But Mr *** is offended at this.—He, like the *Egyptian* taskmasters of old, requires men to make brick without straw.—"Let us (says he, unmindful of our impotence) make ourselves better, and then go to Christ, who will receive us favourably for our works sake."—But in this view our works, even if we could perform them, without the grace of Christ, would be ineffectual.* Are *these* capable of expiating the guilt of a polluted race, and of procuring salvation?——If our works could do THIS, then *these* and not *Christ* would be our Saviour.—If we had a right to demand a recompence for our works, even on a supposition they were perfect, then a Redeemer and his death would be useless; surely therefore Mr ***'s notions are contrary to the whole tenor of the gospel! May the divine Spirit open his eyes, and incline his heart to discover that Christ offers himself to all who will come. The vilest of men have just the same right to Christ and his merits, as the best of men; a right founded not on their awakened desires, not on any thing in themselves, but purely, solely, entirely on the free grant of a Saviour.——We are all sinners, though in a more or less degree; and we must all flee to Christ for spiritual blessings, not as deserving, but as guilty creatures; a sad mortification this to the proud worldlings, or to the self-righteous moralist, whom it is the design of the gospel to humble.

Mr *** (as I dare say you have often heard him) speaks of heaven made easy, *upon condition of obedience to the gospel-commands.*†—This would not be very easy to *me*, whatever it might be to *him*. But if heaven and eternal life be *the gift of God through Jesus Christ*, and given us on account of his obedience unto death, then it is easy indeed.——What love is here! Well might the apostle *Paul* say, that *the love of Christ constraineth us*. Christ makes us free; and those whom HE makes free, are † free indeed. This is the way of salvation pointed out to us by the wisdom of the Almighty!——May our eyes be enlightened to see this way, which many wise men overlook, at which many great men are offended!

I wish Mr *** would study his Bible more, and the classics less.——There is little good to be got by reading the scripture carelessly: but he who humbly applies to God for direction, and exercises himself therein constantly and conscientiously, will find such an efficacy, as is not to be found in any other book whatever:—and therefore it is called by way of pre-eminence THE BIBLE (or THE BOOK;) importing, that as this, and only this, is a divine work, no other books can be compared, or even so much as named with it. It is the Book of books; the Book of GOD. Mr *** however neglects this book, I fear; and indeed, if I may speak my sentiments to you freely, I look upon him to be so puffed up with pride, and the conceit of his own abilities, that his passions run away with him, and he fires at every thing which thwarts any of the notions he has imbibed.—Is not such a one disqualified for friendship?—Can a man of his disposition attend coolly to arguments against his preconceived opinions, how modestly or forcibly soever such arguments may be urged?—This surely is not the spirit of the gospel; nor are these the qualities of one who professes himself a disciple of that Master, whose exhortation is, *Learn of me, for I am lowly and meek.* I have no hopes of doing Mr *** any good; and as we think so very differently, the less we have to do with one another, perhaps, the better. He really is not now fit even for a companion, much less for a bosom-friend. No man can be a proper associate (as a writer of no small penetration has judiciously remarked) in whom these, or such like infirmities are predominant; namely,

1. If he be reserved, or be incapable of communicating his mind freely.—2. If he be haughty, and proud of his knowledge, imperious in his disposition, and fond of imposing his own sentiments on us.—3. If he be positive, and will dispute to the end, by resisting the clearest evidence, rather than be overcome.—4. If he be fretful and peevish, ready to take things in a wrong sense.—5. If he affect wit on all occasions, and is full of his conceits, puns, quibbles, jests, and repartees. These may agreeably entertain and animate an hour of mirth, but they have no place in the search after truth.

6. If he carry about him a sort of craft and cunning, and disguise, acting rather like a spy, than a friend. Have a care of such a one as will make an ill use of freedom in conversation, and immediately charge you with

* See Luke xvii. 20.

* Mr *Hervey* had seen so bad an use made by the *Socinians*, of *conditions* and *requisites*, in opposition to the doctrine of free grace, that he could by no means allow even *faith*, much less our *obedience*, to be called *condition*.

† John viii. 36.

ſhocking tenets, when you happen to differ from thoſe ſentiments which authority or cuſtom has eſtabliſhed.

7. In ſhort, avoid the man who practiſes any thing that is unbecoming the character of a ſincere, free, and open ſearcher after truth. And above all things, pray and work againſt all evil qualities in your own breaſt.

I had a letter lately from our old acquaintance in the weſt, who complains grievouſly of his burthens, as he calls them. It ſeems he has ten children; and is hipped to death, leſt he and his family ſhould be reduced to beggary. His income to be ſure is ſcanty and precarious; but I conjured him not to be diffident of providence, reminded him of our bleſſed Maſter's charge (*Matt.* vi. 25.) againſt being too anxious about our ſubſiſtence in this life; and I ſent him likewiſe the following paſſage from a poem of the Rev. Mr *Oneſy*'s; aſſuring him at the ſame time, that if he would have a due concern for the things that are God's, then God would alſo be careful of him and his.

But daughters, ſons—alas! thy weakneſs ſcan;
Know preſcience never was deſign'd for man.
Their wants you dread, ſome able hand ſupplies;
Their wealth you build, ſome accident deſtroys.
From thee ſome ills, and honeſt fame be giv'n;
The reſt—from virtue, and the care of heav'n.

He ſays, IF HE HAD NOT BEEN DEPRIVED OF FORESIGHT, he had never married; and by way of explanation ſent me an odd quotation, which I have here tranſcribed. "I cannot but admire the wiſdom of nature, in "denying to men and women that *foreſight* when they "are young, which they acquire at a greater age; for "without that, I believe, the world could not ſubſiſt "above fourſcore years, and a new creation of men "would be wanted once every hundred years at leaſt; "ſince the inconveniencies of marriage, are *experimentally* known to overbalance the conveniencies.——— "This YOUNG FOLKS will not believe, and thus the "world is peopled."

Your friend Colonel *** has made a preſent of *Steel*'s *Chriſtian Hero*, to all his officers.——I wiſh, when he had been in ſuch a diſpoſition, that he had given to all the common men, Dr *Woodward*'s *Soldier's Monitor*.—This book was wrote by the command of Queen *Anne*, as I have been told, and delivered to every ſoldier at the government's expence. The *Sailor's Monitor*, wrote by the ſame hand, was given to every ſailor.——And I think it very impolitic in the government, to diſcontinue ſo well-judged a donation.——If I was chaplain to a regiment, I would preach before the ſoldiers on this text; *I have ſet the Lord always before me: becauſe he is at my right hand, I ſhall not be moved.* Pſal. xvi. 8.

Your reflections on ſeeing the ſkeleton at *Oxford*, and on your near view of death (in the emblematical ſhape of a ſkeleton with an hour-glaſs and a dart) advancing towards you in your late ſickneſs, have ſuch a ſimilarity with thoſe of a worthy friend of mine, as I think will both ſurpriſe and pleaſe you.——"Oh! my dear Sir," "ſays he, to *talk* of death, and to enter in earneſt upon "dying, are two different things.——To view the "meſſenger, who comes from the JUDGE of all, as "actually approaching with his open commiſſion in one "hand, and his uplifted dart to execute it in another, "(an expecting grave and eternal judgment in his im"mediate train) is as different as to view a painted lion, "who is only terrible on canvas, and actually to ſee "him with his rolling eyes, and really to hear his tre"mendous roar."

Have you ſeen the Rev. Mr *Adam*'s *practical lectures on the Church-catechiſm?*——He is an experienced Chriſtian,—and a ſpirited performance it is.—The ſame gentleman wrote the preface to Mr *(Truro) Walker*'s *heart-ſearching ſermons*.—Dr *S*** made me a preſent of it; and wrote in the blank leaf before the title-page, "What "betwixt the frenzy of anger, the ague of hopes and "fears, the fever of love, the conſumption of envy, "our diſtempered minds are kept under a continual diſ"eaſe, againſt which theſe lectures are a certain ſpeci"fic."——Mr *Adam* is rector of *Wintringham* in *Lincolnſhire*;—and has made, I am told, an amazing reformation amongſt the people of that neighbourhood, who before his ſettlement amongſt them were remarkably diſſolute and ignorant.———He ſpares no pains in diſcharging his miniſterial duty. His congregations are very large, I hear; and men, women, and children, come ten or a dozen miles to attend his preaching.

A gentleman lent me the other day Dr *Leland*'s *View of the principal Deiſtical writers*: amongſt which is one MORGAN, who ſtyles himſelf a MORAL PHILOSOPHER; a character which is of late grown very faſhionable amongſt our modern Deiſts; but THEY might with equal propriety call themſelves MIRACULOUS HEALERS; for THEY could as ſoon heal a decayed body by their *moral philoſophy*, as THEY could cure the ſin-ſick ſoul by it.—Miſerable teachers are all ſuch, who *thus* pretend to reform either themſelves, or mankind.——He only can caſt devils out of the ſoul, who can ſay to the leper, *Be thou clean*; and to the ſtorm, *Be thou ſtill*.———He only can heal the decayed body, who hath ſaid to the paralytic, *Take up thy bed and walk*.

I am, dear Sir,

With great reſpect, and much eſteem,

Your moſt obliged, and very humble ſervant,

P. S. I have a particular reaſon for deſiring you would give me your well-weighed opinion of the amiable Dr *Watts*'s ORTHODOXY and CHARITY UNITED.——It is wrote with an excellent deſign.——The gentleman who perſuaded me to purchaſe it, is a perſon of great candour, learning, and piety. He is ſo fond of this book, that he has recommended it to all his diſtant acquaintance; and rarely goes into any company, without introducing it in the converſation; he extols it in the ſtrongeſt terms, as a piece which no Chriſtian ought to be without, ſince its grand end is to promote charitable ſentiments and practices towards one another, amidſt the numerous follies and errors of the time.—Would to God our religious differences were properly ſettled on a ſure foundation, that the contending parties were reconciled in love; and that *all we who call ourſelves Chriſtians, might hold the faith in unity of ſpirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteouſneſs of life.* Amen, and amen.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

Weſton-Favell, Nov. 4. 1757.

Dear Sir,

YOU wonder at my delay in anſwering your very friendly letter. This is the true cauſe. When I received your favour, I was very buſy, in diſpatching to the preſs my three faſt-ſermons, lately publiſhed. By ſome accident your letter was miſlaid, and could not be found. This day it came to light; and, the moment I looked upon the date, it ſtruck me with a painful regret, a regret almoſt equal to the pleaſure I enjoyed in your edifying converſation.

Your

Your lady has ſhewn the moſt welcome complaiſance to me, and to the * roſe; to me, in accepting what is leſs than a trifle; to the roſe, in putting it to ſuch a uſe. Could that poor vegetable be ſenſible, it would rejoice to be a remembrancer of its moſt amiable Creator. The prophet calls upon the whole creation, inanimate as it is, to exult and triumph in the grace of our incarnate God. *Sing, O heavens; be joyful, O earth; break forth into ſinging, ye mountains; O foreſts, and every tree,* whether cultivated or wild; *for the Lord,* by his incarnation, blood, and righteouſneſs, *has redeemed Iſrael and glorified himſelf,* moſt magnificently diſplayed all his divine perfections, *in* the ſalvation of *Jacob.*

I heartily wiſh, that Mrs ** may become, every day, more and more acquainted with the *Roſe of Sharon;* that his loveline's, riches, and glory may be revealed in her heart, by the Holy Ghoſt. Happy the ſouls, in which this flower of heaven bloſſoms; which are charmed with its beauty, and refreſhed with his odours. Their happineſs will not fade as a leaf, but like the merits and mercy of their Lord, will be new every morning; new every moment, new through eternal ages.

I wiſh I could gratify your benevolent temper, by giving you a comfortable account of my health. But nothing adminiſtered for its ſuccour and reſtoration, ſucceeds. It ſeems to be the will of our great Phyſician, that my ſtrength ſhould be labour and ſorrow. May his holy will be done; only may my faith in his blood be ſtrong, and my love of his name be warm. Then I ſhall meet you, ere long, amidſt the innumerable company of angels, and no more complain, *My head, my head;* no more ſay, *I am ſick.*

How ſhall I recompenſe my generous doctor, for preſcribing without a fee? By wiſhing, that he may never want the aid which he ſo kindly tenders to his

Affectionate friend, and

Brother in Chriſt, &c.

LETTER CLXXXV.

Dear Sir,

UPON a repeated review of your ſketches for inſtructing your family on *Sunday* evenings, I really don't know how to improve them.—I think they are well digeſted;—but when you exerciſe your talent in ſpeaking from thoſe ſketches, don't forget to implore a bleſſing on what you are going about.—Stir up the gift of God which is in you by a zealous uſe of them, and you yourſelf will improve them better than I can for you.——I ſhall only ſuggeſt, that as ſoon as you have finiſhed, ſet down as freſh heads for another occaſion, what new thoughts occurred to you while you was ſpeaking. Oh! let us work while the day laſts! My dear friend, the Judge is at the door, and eternity at hand. May we watch and pray always, that we may be found worthy to ſtand before the Son of man at his coming.

I incloſe part of a letter, ſent by a clever man and no mean ſcholar.

"This with infinite pleaſure I can inform you, that I "am now brought to a ſenſe of my duty, to which I "was an entire ſtranger till lately.—Glory be to God, I "have now ſome concern upon my mind, ſome ſerious "thoughts of a future ſtate!—How amazing is it, that "a perſon ſhould arrive at my years, without knowing any thing of the religion he profeſſes? Strange as "it is, this was my caſe; for, till within theſe ſix "months, I was as much in the dark as to ſpiritual affairs, as one who had never heard the name of Chriſt. "The Bible was to me the ſame as an unknown lan"guage, and all my pretences to religion were nothing "but a mere lifeleſs formality. Oh that the inexpreſ"ſible marks of the love of my God and his goodneſs "to me, may increaſe the love I owe to him, more and "more every day!"

Our friend Mr *H*——, who you know is a great favourer of the myſtic writers, has deſired me to read Mr *Law's Spirit of prayer*, and *Spirit of love*, which is an appendix to it. I ſhall aſk him, whether he deſigned it to puzzle or edify me?—I am ſure it has done the firſt to me, may it do the latter to him.——Oh! what need have we to pray for that bleſſed Spirit, which may lead us into all truth!

I begin to be weaned from human writings, even from the moſt applauded.——The pure milk of the divine word my ſoul covets. Don't you reliſh its ſweetneſs, and taſte its power more and more? The apoſtle injoins us *in every thing to give thanks, for this is the will of God,* (1 Theſſ. v. 18.) and if we are to thank him for every thing, how ought we to thank him, how can we ſufficiently thank him, for ſuch a treaſury of bleſſings as the holy Bible contains for us?—And yet,—is it credible?—there are, there are thoſe, who neglect theſe gracious tidings of a reconciliation with God, through the mediation of his own Son Jeſus Chriſt.

But whatever be the conduct of others, let you and I, dear Sir, eſteem it as it deſerves, and ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *I will delight myſelf in thy ſtatutes, I will not forget thy word. Make me to underſtand the way of thy precepts, ſo ſhall I talk of thy wondrous works.*——*David*, you ſee, prayed to God for illumination, and talked of divine things. That this may be accompliſhed in us, and that we may follow *David's* example, I dare ſay you will add amen, to the amen of,

Dear Sir,

Yours very ſincerely.

P. S. I am told, and grieved I am to hear it, that the once zealous Mr *** is grown quite indolent, (no very laudable character for a clergyman,) and has entirely laid aſide his tranſlation and improvement of the elegant Dr *Stearne, De viſitatione infirmorum.* He ſhewed me a ſpecimen of it ſome months ago. The tranſlation was ſpirited, and the notes well calculated to ſupply the author's deficiencies.—Nothing perhaps is more wanted, or would be more uſeful, (eſpecially to the clergy,) than a judicious treatiſe on viſiting the ſick, in a neat pocket-volume; but I am ſenſible, there is nothing equally difficult to execute. I never yet ſaw one to my mind.—*The clergyman's companion*, as it is called, is little more than a collection of prayers, with the order of viſitation of the ſick, out of the common prayer, the communion-ſervice, and the office of public and private baptiſm. If methinks ſuch a man as Mr *W*——— of *T*——— could find time to ſet about it, it would be done effectually, becauſe he is a moſt experienced Chriſtian, and has long been accuſtomed to the chambers of the ſick, and would write from facts, and his own knowledge of the human mind.—I would not give a ruſh for a jumble compiled from different authors.—That

* When this gentleman was at *Weſton*, Mr *Hervey* (as he walked with him in the garden) plucked a roſe, and deſired him to preſent it to his wife, to put her in mind of the *Roſe of Sharon.* She paid that regard to the giver and the gift, as to put it into a frame with a glaſs.

That is the labour of the head, and not the feeling of the heart, and can never produce the effects I wish to see.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, Jan. 8, 1757.*

MANY thanks for your last letter, indeed it delighted and edified me. Think no more of making me any present from your collection of books. It is in your power to give me a greater gratification, from the good treasure of your heart.

I am particularly delighted with your interpretation of שית שא לבו. Your sense is grand and inexpressibly important; and without your sense, methinks the whole translation is like a magnificent portal, without a hinge to turn upon.——I am edified and comforted with your analysis of the whole verse. A most encouraging and truly-evangelical representation of the covenant of grace! I am sorry you are diverted from enlarging upon so excellent a subject. Let this work not be laid aside, but only postponed.

I am much pleased with your remarks on Dr ***'s sermon. I saw it sometime ago, and thought with you, that he entirely mistook the meaning of his text; that his views of the gospel were very dim, and his account of that miracle of grace, salvation by Christ, very lame. I had also the happiness to be thoroughly of your opinion, with regard to his injudicious outcries against reason. I declare, I look upon my religion to be reason in its highest refinement. My reason says, *Prove all things*; admit nothing without a satisfactory proof, and when any thing is proved to be revealed by God, receive it as an oracle.——I cannot but think likewise, that every part of our religion (though absolutely undiscoverable by reason) is, when discovered and understood, perfectly rational, as it comports with the attributes of the Godhead, suits the state of man, and is most admirably adapted to display the divine glory, and redress human misery. Whatever is formed with such a tendency, to this my reason most readily subscribes, and pronounces worthy of all acceptance.

I hope, by the time of the arrival of the inclosed frank, you will have a freight ready for the vessel: and to me, I assure you, it will be more precious than the merchandise of silver or the gain of fine gold.

You have taken an effectual method, to make me (enervated as my arm is, and languid as my spirits are) more punctual for the future in my correspondence. If this hand has strength to hold a pen, it shall not be tardy in executing this office, or rather in discharging this debt any more.

I am entirely of your opinion, with regard to the aspect of the times; there seems to be a black cloud hanging over the Protestant world. I fear, we have abused our privileges. Now, perhaps, the Lord is going to take his fan in his hand, and thoroughly purge his floor. Prepare us, blessed Jesus! be our strength in an hour of trial! be our light in a day of darkness!

I have had some thoughts of publishing a couple of sermons, preached on the two preceding fast-days, relative to this important point; one upon *Ezek.* xviii. 27. the other upon *Heb.* xi. 28. Of these two discourses, contrary to my usual method, I happened to take notes. They pretend to nothing refined or extraordinary, they affect neither soaring sentiments nor lofty style; they are studiously plain; only I think, they enlarge more upon Christ our sanctification, our redemption, our only refuge, than most of the discourses which I have seen written on that occasion. Will you give me your advice, and put up a prayer for the divine direction?

I long for the arrival of your precious cargo; to me it is peculiarly precious, as it makes evident, that life and immortality were known in ancient times, and revealed in the ancient scriptures. It seems to me a strange, and worse than an useless attempt, to controvert, and endeavour to overthrow this truth.——May you, dear Sir, have much of the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, to discover the truth; much of the Spirit of counsel and of might, to display, defend, and establish the truth, even the truth as it is in Jesus.

Yours affectionately and gratefully, &c.

LETTER CLXXXVII.

Dear Sir. *Saturday Morning.*

I Find by the papers, that your old friend Dr *** the physician is dead!——What a call to us to get our lamps trimmed, and our souls ready for their exit!——what a forcible admonition to do good to immortal souls, while we have opportunity!—May the God of glory be ever with you, and bless you all with spiritual blessings!

I greatly wish that those in the practice of physic, would study St *Paul* as well as *Hippocrates*,——and attend occasionally to the religious wants of their patients, when they are consulted as to their bodily disorders. This would be acting the part of Christian physicians.——This would be endeavouring to copy after the compassionate physician of mankind, who, while he cured the body, cured the soul.

Being totally and continually silent at the patient's bedside, is, I think, in some measure, denying or being ashamed of the divine Redeemer, who bought us with his blood.——Is it not, as it were, refusing to embark in his cause? How many sick might be improved and comforted by a physician, without any hindrance to his prescriptions, detriment to his character, or loss of his time?—Oh! that these masters of the healing art would set the Lord always before them, and then he would direct their paths!

I was looking the other day into the life of Sir *Philip Sidney*, who wrote the *Arcadia*, in Queen *Elisabeth*'s time;—and I find it recorded of him, that, "being shot in "the thigh in encountering the *Spaniards* near *Zutphen* "in *Holland*, and parched with thirst, a bottle of liquor "was procured for him;—and just as Sir *Philip* was a-"bout drinking it, a poor soldier in the same condition, "bleeding and ghastly, was carried along by him, and "cast up his dying eyes at the same bottle; which Sir "*Philip* perceiving, took it from his own mouth, and "gave it the poor man, with these words, *Thy necessity, "honest friend, is yet greater than mine.*"——He told the surgeons when they cut him, "that they had indeed a "man under their hands of a sensible and delicate na-"ture, yet one to whom the great Redeemer had given "power above himself, either to DO, or SUFFER; and "therefore desired they would not throw a blemish on "their art, through over tenderness."

His last words were, "Love my memory:—cherish "my friends:—their fidelity to me may assure you they "are honest:—but above all govern your own will and "affections, by the will and word of your Creator and "Saviour; in ME beholding the end of this world, and "all its vanities." I will warrant you the soldiers remembered these words of their general; and so would the

the ſick, in like manner, long remember the words of their phyſician, if he would now and then introduce a few religious hints, and drop occaſionally a ſtriking ſentence or two, with propriety and ſeriouſneſs.

Worldly craftineſs is a bad guide; I wiſh you may have religious diſcretion for yours, as *Telemachus*, had the diſcreet *Mentor*,—and that you would begin (inſtead of paying court to the great) to court ſouls for the everlaſting Bridegroom.——This is your true intereſt,—and will avail you, when every worldly conſideration will be found ineffectual.

As ſoon as I had read Mr ***'s letter, I burnt it according to your deſire.—Who can now retrieve the ſyllables, ſentences, and words? Thus are the ſins, all the ſins of them that believe in the divine Jeſus, done away. What a privilege! what a bleſſing! ſhould not our ſouls exult in it? ſhould not our diſcourſe dwell upon it?

Adieu, dear Sir;—and believe me, with great reſpect, and hearty wiſhes for your preſent and eternal welfare,——

Yours, &c.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

Weſton-Favell, April 16, 1757.

Dear Sir,

BElieve me your letters are far from fatiguing me; they refreſh me even under my greateſt weakneſs. They tell me of Jeſus which was crucified, the only cordial for my drooping ſoul.

What do you think is the meaning of—*But this ſhall be with burning and fuel of fire, Iſ.* ix. 5.? Is מאכל a ſubſtantive? I ſhould rather take it for an adjective, agreeing with אש. Let the interpretation of this place fill the caſe of your letter.

I am raiſed indeed from my bed, but not releaſed from my chamber, after a violent fever. The two preceding Sundays I have been enabled to officiate for myſelf; and my diſorder has left upon me ſo grievous a cough, as makes my days, eſpecially my nights, become labour and ſorrow.——Pray favour me with the continuation of your thoughts. They chear and comfort me, in my languid eſtate.—The two ſermons we tranſcribed, before this ſickneſs ſeized me. And, ſince I have your encouragement, they ſhall ſoon (if my life is prolonged) be put to the preſs. I propoſe to entitle them, *The time of danger*, and *The way of ſafety*.* The Lord God omnipotent accompany them with his bleſſing! Mean they are, as the ſtones from the ſhepherd's ſling; but I remember it is written, *They ſhall ſubdue with ſling-ſtones*. In this word do I truſt, in this word do I comfort me.—May our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and God even our FATHER, give you, dear Sir, everlaſting conſolation, for all the kindneſs you have ſhewed to

——Your truly-affectionate friend.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

Weſton-Favell, May 19. 1757.

My dear Friend,

ACcept my beſt thanks for your welcome and valuable letter. It found me juſt releaſed from the chamber of ſickneſs; the fever removed, the cough

* See theſe ſermons above, p. 473, &c.

abated, but my ſtrength like the bruiſed reed. And now my mind is a fellow-ſufferer with my body; this being enervated, that is enfeebled.

However, as I am delighted with your criticiſms, give me leave to propoſe another text to your conſideration, which puzzled me much, as I was reading yeſterday; you will find it in *Zech.* xiv. 6. 7. The *Hebrew* of the ſixth verſe ſeems to be uncommonly difficult.

A ſermon or two I am ſtill inclined to publiſh. In this and in all our ways, may the God of all wiſdom direct us, and the God of all grace proſper us, through Jeſus Chriſt.

I have not the honour of Lord *D*——'s acquaintance; but I hear that he is full of grace, and valiant for the truth; a lover of Chriſt, and an ornament to his goſpel.—Lady *F*—— is alive and full of good works, and I hope grows up in him in all things who is the head. Dr *S*—— (whom you inquire after) ſtill reſides at *N*——; is in high repute as a phyſician, and, I truſt, does not forget or neglect the one thing needful; tho' the world, the ſmiling world, is a *Syren*.—Lord, ſtop our ears againſt its inchanting ſong, and let our eyes be blind to its inveigling charms.—Mr *Moſes Browne* executes his miniſtry at *Olney*, with much acceptance, I am informed, and with a good deal of ſucceſs.—About ten days ago Mr *P**** took a family-dinner with me.—Our converſation turned partly upon points of literature, partly upon evangelical ſubjects. O! that we may taſte the ſweetneſs, feel the energy of the latter, and count all things as droſs in compariſon of their tranſcendant excellency!—Is not your interpretation of *Zech.* xvi. 6. 7. rather too forced? Is not the following ſomewhat more natural and eaſy, if not more juſt?

It ſhall come to paſs in that day, there ſhall not be light, full and ſtrong, in oppoſition to the gloom of night; but now effulgence and clearneſs of viſion, anon obſcurity and dimneſs of viſion; *Yet it ſhall be one* real, determinate *day*; whoſe duration, whoſe properties, and all whoſe circumſtances, are known to the Lord. Thus much he hath graciouſly revealed by his prophet, that, during the firſt periods, the morning and the noon of this wonderful diſpenſation, it ſhall not be entire day nor entire night, but a mixture or interchange of both. Sometimes grace triumphant, ſometimes ſin rebelling in the hearts of believers. Sometimes calamity darkening, ſometimes proſperity brightening the ſtate of the church. However, at the even-tide, when ſuch an appearance is leaſt expected, it ſhall be unmixed, prevailing, perfect light. Then *the light of the moon ſhall be as the light of the ſun, and the light of the ſun, as the light of ſeven days. Then the earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and his people ſhall be all righteous.*

Freely cenſure, ſolidly correct this interpretation, if you think it improper; and give me leave to expect, according to your own appointment, a monthly letter for the comfort and edification of,

Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate friend and ſervant, &c.

LETTER CXC.

Weſton-Favell, Aug. 6. 1757.

My dear Friend,

I Have been too tardy in acknowledging the receipt of your letter, which was very valuable, and deſerved thanks, as ſpeedy as they are ſincere.—The true cauſe of my delay is this; I have been preparing two or three ſermons for the preſs, which, to my enervated hand, is

really a work of toil. Yesterday I sent them to *London*, and hope to see them in print, within the space of a fortnight. I purpose to have some upon neat paper, for the use of the gentry, if God shall incline the hearts of any such persons to look into them; and others upon worse paper, for the benefit of the poor, and the conveniency of giving away.—As soon as they appear, you will give me leave to send you a copy; and if you should like to give them among the poor, I will send you a considerable number.—With them I intend to put into your hands a treatise lately published, under the title of *Letters on Theron and Aspasio* in two small volumes. The author is a *Scotchman*, I presume, because they were printed at *Edinburgh*, and he gave orders for a set to be sent to me from *Edinburgh*. He conceals his name, and none that I am acquainted with, are able to discover whose work it is *.

There are some strictures on my performance; but by far the greatest part of the book is very wide from this mark. Some things are truly excellent, and some animadversions upon me are perfectly just, but others (if I mistake not) are unfair and disingenuous †. The manner of writing is by no means despicable, rather elegant and spirited, than coarse or dull. But there is such an implacable bitterness of spirit, and such an unchristian virulence of censure, against many of the best men that ever lived, and best authors that ever wrote, as much surprises and greatly offends me. I think, I never saw a notion of faith more lax, nor an idea of grace more exalted, than in this book. However, I will not forestall your judgment, but will desire your acceptance of the piece, and your remarks upon it.

If your account of the ancient believers and their knowledge of Christ be right, then the opinion of the generality of divines is wrong; they suppose, that the devout *Jews* saw in their sacrifices, not barely a nobler sacrifice to be offered up by the Saviour, but the Saviour himself, suffering, bleeding, and dying. How will you reconcile with your scheme, St *Paul*'s declaration, *The gospel was preached unto them*, explained by his definition of the gospel, *Christ died for our sins? Heb.* iv. 2. 1 *Cor.* xv. 3.——You say, "Does רזיו any where signify effulgence?" In *Job* xxxi. 27. you will find נפ bearing this signification; yet I must confess, I am not thoroughly satisfied with my own interpretation, it is too low and restricted.—For the prophet is evidently foretelling a state of things and a stock of knowledge, greatly superior to any thing enjoyed under the *Jewish* dispensation; and to this last, I think, my exposition is most suitable. I hope you have a long letter ready, and will not punish my delay, according to the rigour of the law of retaliation.

I am, with unfeigned gratitude,

And cordial affection, yours, &c.

Pray favour me with your dissertation on *Job*, his time, his country, and religion. They are very curious subjects, and you will enrich them with evangelical truths.

LETTER CXCI.

My dear Friend, *Weston-Favell, Sept.* 3, 1757.

MANY thanks for your last; I shall read it, and read it again, and the Lord give me a right understanding of that most precious and important chapter.

I hope you will accompany my sermons with your prayers to God, for a blessing on them, the reader, and the writer; and I shall be truly thankful for the communication of any remarks, corrections, or improvements, that may occur in your perusal of them. This and any other of my writings I should be glad to have rectified, where they are wrong, enriched where they are impoverished; because, though such improvements may come too late to take place while I live, they may, when I am dead, be admitted, and enable me to speak more usefully.

What think you of the method taken by a modern critic, to interpret *Psal.* lxviii. 30.? *Hoc in loco, ferra arundinis, cœtus robustorum, et juvenci, sunt leones, tauri, pecudesque lascivientes, sive tyranni feroces insolentesque; quibus, continuata translatione, addit psaltes* מתרסם ברצי כסף, *hoc est,* [Here a word is wanting in the original, and not knowing what author is referred to, we could not supply it from thence], *que de industria conculcantes et turbantes argenteos rivos, ardentes nimirum et vastantes vicinorum Judæorum bona.*—The author queries, whether רץ from רץ *currere*, may, consistently with the propriety of the *Hebrew* language, be interpreted a river? Might he not also query, whether כסף is ever, among the *Hebrew* writers, and by way of adjective, used to describe the colour of the waters? *Homer*, I remember, has

——Πολιὴν ἅλα μακρὸν ἀυτὴν.

But I am not certain, that any such expression gained admittance into the school of the prophets. Your sentiments upon this criticism, will entertain, instruct, and oblige,

Dear Sir,

Your truly-affectionate friend and servant.

LETTER CXCII.

My dear Friend, *Saturday Morning.*

HOW fares it with you?—Overwhelmed I find with business!—but still, I trust, remembering Christ, and eternal ages.

I think you reason well, and very strongly on what you propose.—May the wisdom, from which nothing is hid, direct you in all your undertakings! may the power, to which nothing is impossible, prosper your prescriptions for my benefit, and that of others! I assure you I shall steadily persevere in the use of them, and intend to begin very soon: though a continual cold and an unexpected journey, have hitherto unfitted me from taking any medcines of this sort.—Mr ***, of whom you inquired after me yesterday, told me you imputed to the journey my neglect in not having yet sent your prescription to the apothecary's; and I am obliged to your candour for ascribing it to that cause, and not to any disregard of your advice: for I am persuaded,

——*Si qua Pergama dextra*
Defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent.
Virg. Æn. II.

I have just been reading *Gerhard*'s *Christian support under*

* The author is Mr *Robert Sandeman*, a congregational preacher at *Edinburgh*, a disciple of Mr *John Glas*. See Mr *Cudworth*'s answer to his book, above, p. 435.

† See above, p. 505. note.

der all afflictions; and a moſt excellent book it is.—If your medicines have not the deſired effect, I muſt ſeek relief from HIM.—From HIM do I ſay!—from a fellow-mortal:—Ah! what are all the conſolations that all the creatures in the univerſe can afford, in compariſon of that grand conſolation of our condeſcending Lord's, *Ye are my friends*, John xv. 14. *Come and inherit the kingdom prepared for you*, Matth. xxv. 34. *Where the inhabitants ſhall no more ſay, I am ſick*, Iſ. xxxiii. 24.—*And where there ſhall be no more death nor ſorrow*, Rev. xxi. 4.

I am, my dear friend, with great eſteem, and under a due ſenſe of many obligations.

Moſt affectionately, and moſt ſincerely yours.

LETTER CXCIII.

My dear Friend, *Saturday Morning.*

IF you have any law-books by you, I wiſh you would look into the indexes, and ſee what laws have been made to ſecure the Lord's-day from profanation. 'Tis pity that theſe * ſhould be unknown to the common people; and ſtill a greater pity, that our juſtices of peace ſhould not exert themſelves vigorouſly in an affair of ſuch conſequence to the preſent and eternal welfare of their fellow-creatures. I wiſh a ſpirited pamphlet was judiciouſly drawn up and publiſhed on this occaſion; ſetting the ſins of OMISSION in a true light.—It grieves me to think how much good might be done, eſpecially by gentlemen who have leiſure and abilities to plan ſchemes for the public benefit: but ſo far are they from applying themſelves in good earneſt to promote religion, that they too generally ridicule or diſcourage any attempts of this kind.—Ah! how little do they reflect, that the night is coming on a pace when no man can work, *John* ix. 4. and that for all theſe things God will bring them into judgment.

Can you tell me who was the author of THE DUTY of REPROOF? The moſt material objections againſt reproving are there conſidered:—ſome cautions and directions are added,—and in ſuch a manner, as may facilitate the ſucceſsful diſcharge of this duty.—A duty too much neglected, though injoined us by no leſs authority than the ſcripture itſelf, which is profitable for reproof. *Reprove one that hath underſtanding*, ſays *Solomon*, *and he will underſtand knowledge*, Prov. xix. 25. And the Apoſtle *Paul* urges *Timothy* to *reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all long-ſuffering and doctrine*, 2 Tim. iv. 2.—Indeed, my dear friend, you are very deficient in this duty of reproof, though you have ſo many opportunities of doing it with the utmoſt propriety.—Pray read this little pamphlet over and over again.—Weigh it thoroughly.—You will then, through the grace of God, be zealous in reproving others, and will readily pardon the freedom I have occaſionally taken in reproving you whom I ſo much love and value. You remember Sir *George Lyttelton*'s lines.

Some merit's mine to dare to be ſincere,
But greater yours ſincerity to bear.

Dr Sherlock's *Defence and Continuation of his diſcourſe concerning the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and our union and communion with him*, was put into my hands the other day; but in my opinion it is far from being a ſatisfactory * defence. *Antiſozzo* † is an unanſwerable book; and Dr *Sherlock* never was ſo gravelled in all his life, as he was by the publication of that witty, keen, and ſolid performance.

Do you know any one who has got *Schmidius*'s *Greek Concordance* to the *Greek Teſtament*? I am told it is well executed, and it muſt be very ſerviceable, as it ſhews at one view in what ſenſe the ſame word is uſed in different paſſages. I will buy it, but ſhould be glad to ſee it firſt, if you can borrow it for me.

Biſhop *Patrick* on *Contentment and reſignation*, I here return you; as likewiſe Dr *Barrow* on the ſame ſubject.

Baxter on *Univerſal and ſpecial Redemption*, I muſt beg to keep a little longer, eſpecially as you tell me your ſentiments and his are nearly the ſame.—Our friend Mr *** highly eſteems this book; and he has ſent me *Baxter*'s *Aphoriſms on juſtification*, which he has deſired me, as they are explanatory of each other, to read at the ſame time.—*Baxter* in theſe pieces, he tells me, ſteers a middle courſe between the *Scylla* of *Arminius*'s ſyſtem, and the *Charybdis* of *Calvin*'s.—When I have read them with due attention, I ſhall, without reſerve, communicate my remarks to you.

Oh! my dear friend, what need have we for prayer to be guided aright amidſt ſo many different opinions, even of great and good men. *Arminius*, *Calvin*, *Baxter*, all excellent men in their way! yet how divided in their notions!—but Jeſus, that eternal ſource of love, will, I would charitably hope, bleſs all who ſincerely deſire to magnify his holy name, notwithſtanding their different apprehenſions on theſe points.—God, of his unerring wiſdom,

* All perſons, who profane the Lord's-day, are liable to the following penalties; and it is much wiſhed that the magiſtrates would determine to put theſe laws in execution with the utmoſt ſtrictneſs.

By doing or executing any buſineſs or work of their ordinary callings on the Lord's-day, or any part thereof, (works of neceſſity and charity only excepted), under which head is included ſhaving on *Sundays*, which is a moſt ſhameful and notorious cuſtom,	By the 29th *Car.* II. *cap.* 7. perſons convict hereof by view of a juſtice of the peace, confeſſion of the party, or witneſs, are to pay 5s. or be put in the ſtocks two hours: licenſed houſes beſides forfeit their licences.
By public crying, or expoſing to ſale any wares, merchandiſe, &c.	By the ſame act it is forfeiture of goods ſo expoſed to ſale.
By idling, or wandering in time of divine ſervice,	By the ſame act 5s. or ſtocks two hours.
Alehouſe-keepers, vintners, inn keepers, permitting tippling in their houſes,	By 1ſt *Jac.* I. *cap.* 9. if convict of ſuch permiſſion, are to pay 10s. and if convict of drunkenneſs, diſabled to keep an alehouſe for three years, by 21ſt *Jac.* I. *cap.* 7.

* Dr *Sherlock* in his *Defence, &c.* page 513. ſays, "I am charged with maintaining the *Socinian* notion of juſtification, but it is no other than what the church of *England* owns and aſſerts.—I have," ſays he, page 516. "already vindicated moſt of thoſe expoſitions which my adverſaries charge with *Socinianiſm*, as I have occaſionally met with them; but Mr *Ferguſon* in his *Intereſt of Reaſon*, &c. page 475. has put together ſome texts which he thinks I have ſo expounded, as to deſtroy their evidence for the Godhead of Chriſt." *To which charge* Sherlock replies.—Again, page 534. "I have taken notice of every thing which was material in my adverſaries, and of too many things which were not. I have not particularly taken notice of ANTISOZZO, becauſe there was no need of it; but whatever is conſiderable in it is anſwered in this my defence." And he concludes, page 535. "I am reſolved this controverſy ſhall never end in a trial of wit."—A prudent reſolution! for *Sherlock* well knew, great as his talents were, that *Aeſop*, the writer of *Antiſozzo*, excelled him both in wit and argument. See letter 207.

† See letter 207.

wiſdom, aſſiſt us in all our determinations! God, of his infinite mercy, defend us from all error, and grant, that we may be true followers of our Lord and Saviour, who is *a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Iſrael!* What a comfortable conſideration is it that there is ſuch a light for my dear friend, and for

His moſt affectionately,

and moſt inviolably.

LETTER CXCIV.

My Dear Friend, *Wedneſday Morn.*

I Thank you, for remembering me before the throne of grace. Let your prayers be for my chearful reſignation to the divine good pleaſure, and for clear manifeſtations to me of Jeſus Chriſt. My life has long been a burden to myſelf, and is now become unprofitable to others.—Your intention to viſit me is kind; but I am not fit for company, unable either to carry on or reliſh converſation; beſt when alone; therefore don't give yourſelf the trouble of coming ten miles.—I accept the will for the deed.—As to your tranſlation of *Zimmermanus* * *De eminentia cognitionis Chriſti*, I will, if my languid ſpirits can bear the taſk, carefully read it over, which I have never been able to do ſince I ſaw you in *London*. I lent it to Mr ***. When he has done with it, deſire him to convey it to me; you ſhall then have (if the Lord will) the reſult of my renewed peruſal of that piece, which I formerly was ſo deſirous of having tranſlated by you. May the Lord of all power make you ſtrong to labour in his ſacred ſervice, and crown your labours with abundant ſucceſs.

I am

Your truly affectionate brother in Chriſt.

LETTER CXCV.

My dear Friend, *Saturday Morn.*

I Have no heart to take any medicines. All but Chriſt is to me unprofitable; bleſſed be God for pardon and ſalvation through his blood: Let me preſcribe this cordial for my dear friend.

May your health be renewed as the eagle's, though mine has long been fading as a leaf! and may we both from our hearts adore the diſpenſations of our God and Saviour, which, tho' to usward very different, are in all reſpects very good.

We were drinking tea yeſterday; and I heard one of the company ſay, to whom you had given Biſhop *Wilſon on the ſacrament*,—This is Dr S**'s gift. Oh! that God may give him to eat of the fleſh, and drink the blood of Chriſt! and to live by faith on the unſearchable riches of a Redeemer!—Then we ſhall, 'ere long, eat bread and drink new wine together, in the kingdom of our Father.

I have not yet wrote to *Biddeford*; but the affair you deſired me to inquire about, ſhall not be forgot when I next write thither.——Can you excuſe my dilatory proceeding? Buſineſs to my languid ſpirits, is like the ſons of *Anak* * to the *Iſraelitiſh* ſpies, ſo forbidding and ſo formidable.

The reaſons you urged, I have conſidered; I really know not how to act.—May the unerring God vouchſafe to guide a poor ſinner.—Now, where is my faith in that divine promiſe, *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy paths?* 'Tis ſcarcely ſo much as a grain of the ſmalleſt ſeed; bleſſed Jeſus, increaſe it in us both.

—Do you, as you formerly did, commit your way unto the Lord, and beſeech him to bring it to paſs? My dear friend, let us look more unto God; for we have a Friend in the court of heaven; we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.

Ever and inviolably yours, &c.

LETTER CXCVI.

*Dear Mr ***,* *Weſton-Favell, Jan.* 3, 1758.

I Received your welcome valuable letter in due time; but almoſt as ſoon as I received it, I was ſeized with a violent illneſs; ſo violent, that the current report was, "*Hervey* is dead."—Near to death I certainly was; and God almighty knows, I am, according to human appearance, not far † from it even now: but pray let me, if I live, expect the continuation of your remarks.—Your letters are ſuch as I ſhould delight to read, even in my laſt moments.

I wiſh you many a happy *new year* on earth, and at the laſt an abundant entrance into the *New Jeruſalem*,—where the voice of joy and health is perpetually heard.

Weak I am, very weak, and much out of order; inſomuch that I have not been able to go to church, ever ſince *Chriſtmas*. But your writings refreſh and delight, inſtead of fatiguing me!—Your fourth paragraph has moſt exactly ſtated the difference, which ſubſiſts between yourſelf and *Aſpaſio*, relating to faith. The forbearance and candour, with which you treat this difference, does not give up a jot or tittle of your own opinion, yet it tends very much to conciliate favour and eſteem in its behalf.

Your *viſion* is very grand and quite ſtriking; I love ſuch ſtrokes of imagination, they keep attention awake, and impart pleaſure together with profit.——*Aſpaſio* is doubly obliged to your pen, formerly for correcting, now for defending his work.—You obſerve, my enemy is yours. He has attacked your generous vindication. In reply to this attack, you have ſpoke my very ſentiments ‡.

Mr *Weſley*, you will find, is angry with me, on the oppoſite ſcore, for ſpeaking too much, and, as he thinks, too openly on the ſide of election and particular redemption. Pray favour me with your free opinion, and whereever you think he charges me juſtly, or I have expreſſed myſelf improperly, ſpare not to ſpeak the naked truth.

* This was a favourite book of Mr *Hervey*'s,—and he deſired Mr *Moſes Browne* to tranſlate it from the *Latin*, and promiſed to write an introduction to it, which he never lived to perform. See lett. LXII. LXXII. LXXV. CLXXIV.

* See Numb. xiii. 28.

† Mr *Hervey* died the *December* following.

‡ This refers to the remarks (made by this gentleman to whom Mr *Hervey* here writes) on the *Scotch* author [Mr *Sandeman*] who wrote the letters on *Theron and Aſpaſio*.

He

He has lately publiſhed a large book, price ſix ſhillings ſtitched, on the doctrine of *original ſin*: great part of which is an abridgment of Dr *Watts*'s *ruin and recovery*; and of another treatiſe, wrote by Mr *Hebden*. In this he takes occaſion to quote two or three paſſages from *Theron and Aſpaſio*, one from p. 151. col. 2. which he thus introduces:

"To explain this a little farther in Mr *Hervey*'s words, "By fœderal head I mean, what the apoſtle teaches, "*&c.* That as *Adam* was the firſt general repreſenta- "tive (of *this kind*, ſays *Aſpaſio*, but Mr *** makes him "ſay) *of mankind*, Chriſt was," *&c.* "Far from reſting "upon a ſingle text," *&c.* he goes on to the bottom of the page, then turns back to the upper part, repreſents me as forming a concluſion in theſe words: "All theſe "expreſſions demonſtrate, that *Adam* (as well as Chriſt) "was a repreſentative of *all mankind*; and that what he "did in this capacity, did not terminate in himſelf, but "affected all whom he repreſented."——This is a very injurious repreſentation. One ſentence is a palpable miſquotation *. Would it be proper to take any notice of it? I am ſometimes apprehenſive, that he would draw me into a diſpute about particular redemption. I know he can ſay ſtartling and horrid things on this ſubject; and this, perhaps, might be the moſt effectual method to prejudice people againſt my principal point.

I am, dear Sir,

with much gratitude and true affection,

Yours in Chriſt.

LETTER CXCVII.

My dear Friend, *Weſton-Favell, June* 23. 1758.

I Little thought, when I put Mr *Weſley*'s manuſcript into your hand, that I ſhould ſee it in print ſo ſoon. I took very little notice of it, and let it lie by me ſeveral months, without giving it an attentive conſideration. It ſeemed to me ſo palpably weak, dealing only in poſitive aſſertions and poſitive denials, that I could not imagine he would adventure it into the world, without very great alterations. But it is now come abroad, juſt as you received it, in a two ſhillings pamphlet, entitled, *A preſervative from unſettled notions in religion.* Of this pamphlet what he has wrote againſt me makes only a ſmall part. Now then the queſtion is, Whether I ſhall attempt to anſwer it? Give me your opinion, as you have given me your aſſiſtance, and may the Father of mercies give you an increaſe of knowledge and utterance, of peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt.---Ill I have been, and ill I am; torn almoſt to pieces by a cough in the night, which admits of no remedy; whatever is taken to aſſuage, exaſperates it. Of all men living, that are not abſolutely confined, ſurely I am the weakeſt. If by ſuch weakneſs, the Lord Jeſus will vouchſafe to glorify his name, how tranſparent, how effulgent will be the glory of power!---I have not ſeen Mr *P* ** this many a day, no, nor this many a month; how I fear, leſt the world has beguiled him! Bleſſed be the Lord, for ſetting our affections on a happier ſtate; bleſſed be his grace, for giving us ſome knowledge of Jeſus, as the way to immortal manſions. There we may be citizens, here only ſojourners.

I am, with true gratitude,

and ſincere affection,

Yours in Chriſt Jeſus.

‡ See *Aſpaſio vindicated*, above p. 430.

LETTER CXCVIII.

Madam, *Weſton-Favell, Feb.* 22. 1758.

I Received the favour of your letter, and found no ſmall pleaſure in peruſing its contents. It gave me a ſingular ſatisfaction, to ſee a lady of ſuch fine ſenſe, and in the very bloom of life, mindful of the things which belong to her eternal peace. May this happy diſpoſition increaſe with your increaſing years! and it will be the greateſt bleſſing that you can enjoy, or your correſpondent wiſh.

If my writings have afforded you any entertainment, or been the means of adminiſtering the leaſt improvement, I deſire to adore and bleſs the all-gracious God. For he, Madam, teaches to profit; his Spirit commands ſucceſs; and all our good comes wholly from his heavenly benediction.

I am pleaſed to find this, among your other valuable expreſſions; "I want to have all thoſe heavenly conſo- "lations."——You conſider religion in a right view. It is not a vexatious burthen, or an irkſome taſk; but it is intended to be the comfort of our lives, and the joy of our hearts. God is the God of all comfort, Chriſt is ſtyled *the Conſolation of Iſrael*, and the Holy Ghoſt is called *the Comforter*.——The goſpel is the moſt comfortable report imaginable; it is glad tidings, and the joyful ſound; it aſſures poor ſinners, that God has laid all their iniquities, both great and ſmall, on his beloved Son:—That Jeſus Chriſt has brought in a moſt perfect and everlaſting righteouſneſs, whereby they may be juſtified; and that our firſt, our great, our leading duty is, to believe all this, in our own behalf, for our own benefit.

By the comfort and peace reſulting from theſe bleſſings, it would win our hearts to love the God, who is ſo immenſely amiable and gracious to us; to be ſtudious of doing his pleaſure, who has made ſuch unſpeakably-rich proviſion for our happineſs. The apoſtle prays for his *Theſſalonian converts*, that the Father of everlaſting compaſſions would firſt comfort their hearts, and then, and thereby, eſtabliſh them in every good word and work.

I ſhould make no ſcruple to ſend my faſt-ſermon for your peruſal, if I had one. But it has pleaſed the divine providence to viſit me wtth a violent fever, which has confined me for many weeks. I am ſtill the priſoner of this diſeaſe, ſo that I was incapable of going abroad on the faſt-day. And indeed, if it had been otherwiſe, I ſhould ſcarcely have been able to gratify my own inclination, by complying with your hints; becauſe I never write my ſermons, having accuſtomed myſelf to preach without notes; and it was owing to a particular incident, that thoſe three diſcourſes which I publiſhed, were committed to writing.

Permit me, Madam, to wiſh, that you may be ſtedfaſt and immoveable in your preſent turn of mind, which is ſo truly wiſe and noble, that by him who ſitteth in heaven, and beholds all the children of men, it may be ſaid of Miſs ***, as it was formerly ſaid of another excellent perſon; *Mary has choſen that good part, which ſhall not be taken from her.*

To theſe wiſhes, allow me the additional pleaſure of being, Madam,

Your moſt obedient,

humble ſervant.

LETTER CXCIX.

Dear Mr **, *Weſton-Favell, March* 4. 1758.

I Have a long letter, containing two or three ſheets, from Mr *Weſley*.——It conſiſts of animadverſions on

my Dialogues and Letters, which I ſhould be glad if you would peruſe, and favour me with your opinion. He wrote me one before, more ſtinging and ſarcaſtic than this. I have taken no notice of either, being very unwilling to embark in controverſy; but for your judgment on the laſt, which is written with candour and temper,* I ſhould be much obliged, and have an additional reaſon to be,——

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend.

LETTER CC.

Weſton-Favell, March 11, 1758.

Madam,

I Am much obliged for your benevolent wiſhes, relating to my health. By way of return, permit me to wiſh, that your ſoul may proſper, may flouriſh, may bloſſom as a roſe; that you may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

From this paſſage we may obſerve, that the way to advance in true holineſs of heart and life, is to advance in the knowledge of Chriſt.——It is for want of knowing Chriſt, that the generality of mankind are ſo captivated by trifles, and enſlaved to tranſient gratifications. It is for want of knowing Chriſt more thoroughly, that many Chriſtians have ſo little peace and joy, and many go mournfully in their way to eternity.

By his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many.—By giving them the knowledge of himſelf, of his divine dignity and ineſtimably-precious work; of that grand price, which he paid for the redemption of ſinners, which delivers them from the wrath to come, and entitles them to *the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.*

The divine power, ſays St *Peter*, *has given us all things pertaining to life and godlineſs.*——How? *Through the knowledge of him, who has called us to glory and virtue*; through the knowledge of Chriſt, as calling us to the enjoyment of eternal glory, which he has procured for us by his blood; and thereby moſt ſweetly leading and engaging us to the exerciſe of every virtue.

I hope *Marſhall on Sanctification* will be bleſſed to your conſolation and edification. If it is not at the firſt reading, it may the ſecond, or it may at the third. I would ſay to the reader of this excellent treatiſe, as the prophet *Elijah* ſaid to his ſervant, who went to the ſea in order to make obſervation, but found nothing worthy of notice, *Go again ſeven times.*

I have ſeen Dr *Glynn*'s poem, entitled, *The day of judgment.* It is not without elegance and beauty, but it wants that energy and pathos, which, on ſo grand and intereſting an occaſion, ſhould alarm, tranſport, and awe our ſouls; but its chief deficiency, in my opinion, is, that it neglects to aſcribe proper honour unto Chriſt. He is indeed very ſlightly hinted at in one choſen line, but he ſhould have made the moſt diſtinguiſhed figure throughout the whole piece. All judgment is committed to him.—It is Chriſt who will come in the clouds of heaven; we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt. This to the believer, is a moſt comfortable and delightful conſideration; "My Redeemer is my "Judge. He who died for me paſſes the final ſentence. "Look how great is his majeſty and glory! So great is "my atonement and propitiation."

Should I ever come to *London*, I will be ſure to do myſelf the pleaſure of waiting upon Miſs ***. In the mean time, what ſhe mentions by way of caution, ſhall be obſerved with all punctuality due to a command,

By her moſt obedient,

Humble ſervant.

* Mr *Hervey* was ever willing to ſpeak the beſt of his adverſaries. But I could not forbear thinking, when I read Mr *Weſley*'s letter, that it was written without either candour or temper.—See Mr *Hervey*'s anſwer to Mr *Weſley*'s letter, above, page 370.

LETTER CCI.

Weſton-Favell, May 13, 1758.

Madam,

I Have too long delayed to acknowledge the favour of your laſt. The reflection gives me uneaſineſs, but the occaſion gives you an opportunity of exerciſing indulgence. If you pleaſe to aſcribe my ſilence to much buſineſs, and little health, you will do juſtice to my proceeding, and to your own candour.

You inquire after the beſt week's preparation for the ſacrament.——I cannot ſay that I much admire any of thoſe books. They are, I think, looſe, rambling, indiſtinct companions; they tend rather to bewilder, than inform the judgment.—For my own part, I prefer the little account of this ordinance in Mr *Marſhall on Sanctification*, to all thoſe prolix treatiſes.—It begins page 298. of the ſixth edition, to which I wrote a recommendatory preface.

If you ſhould want a collection of prayers ſuited to this ſolemnity, or to any other occaſion, there is none, in my opinion, better than Mr *Jenks's* offices of devotion (which has paſſed thirteen editions.) I ſhould far ſooner chuſe to read his two volumes of *Meditations*, than the new *Whole duty of man*. *Jenks* has written another little treatiſe, excellently good, and truly evangelical; it is entitled *Submiſſion to the righteouſneſs of God.* It was one of the firſt books, that gave me an inſight into the truth of the goſpel; or the way of Salvation by the infinitely glorious obedience of our Surety, Jeſus Chriſt.

The word *Amen* has two ſignifications. It denotes an ardent wiſh, Lord, let it be according to my humble petition.——It denotes likewiſe a firm faith, Lord, I am perſuaded, that thou wilt fulfil thy promiſe, to grant my petition.

If you love entertainment, my next ſhall recommend a book, that is as entertaining as a novel* or a play, yet edifying as a ſermon.—I believe, Madam, you would have no reaſon to repent of the purchaſe, if you was to buy Mr *Boſton's Human Nature in its fourfold ſtate*; of which as I have given a character in the ſecond volume of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, I need not ſay any thing more in this place.

As God is ſending forth his word and renewing the face of material nature; ſo may he ſend forth his bleſſed Spirit, and reveal Chriſt, and renew the ſtate of our ſouls! This will make us to differ from our former ſelves, as much as the preſent bloom and verdure of the creation differ from the rugged deſolations of the winter.

I wiſh you, Madam, the continual preſence of this divine Comforter,

And am,

Your moſt obedient humble ſervant.

* The book here meant is *De Foe's Family-Inſtructor.*

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LETTER CCII.

Weſton-Favell, Aug. 5. 1758.

Dear Sir,

HErewith I ſend two other ſheets of my intended work. Be ſo good as to examine them with rigour, and correct them with freedom.

I am afraid, leſt the weakneſs of the advocate, ſhould injure the bleſſed cauſe.——I am the more ſolicitous, becauſe the unexpected acceptance of my faſt-ſermons will probably open a pretty wide door of admiſſion for this piece. Beſides ſix thouſand printed in *London*, an edition was printed in *Scotland*, which was ſpeedily ſold off; and I was deſired, by a ſociety eſtabliſhed for giving away religious books among the poor, to grant them leave to print an impreſſion for this purpoſe. In *Ireland* they have been printed. Into *Dutch* they are tranſlated; and a letter, received laſt week from ſome pious and ingenious ſtranger in *America*, informs me, that they have been reprinted there, and found much acceptance; all this will be a kind of recommendatory preface to this projected piece. The good Lord grant I may ſpeak and write ſound words, ſuch as cannot be reproved!——My prayer is, that you may be of quick underſtanding in the fear of the Lord, always and on all occaſions, and more eſpecially when you are ſifting and improving the writings of,

Dear Sir,

Your truly affectionate and

much obliged friend.

LETTER CCIII.

Weſton-Favell, Sept. 4. 1758.

Madam,

BE ſo good as to preſent my very affectionate compliments to your excellent friend Mr *Kennedy*. Inform him, that my intended work has for a long ſeaſon, on account of my great infirmities, been like the ſun in *Gebeon*, and like the moon in the valley of *Ajalon*. I ſhall be particularly pleaſed and thankful to receive his thoughts on that important ſubject, the aſſurance of faith. Mine are much the ſame as Mr *Ebenezer Erſkine*'s in his valuable ſermons, and as Mr *Boſton*'s in his moſt judicious notes on *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*.

Pray, Madam, favour me with a long extract from Mr *Kennedy*'s * letter; I do aſſure you, I admire his writings; they have a beauty which is quite natural and artleſs; joined with a piety, which is very affecting and edifying.

A book has lately appeared, in two ſmall volumes, entitled, *Letters on Theron and Aſpaſio*. I cannot ſay I would recommend it to your peruſal, but I ſhould be glad, if you would mention it in ſome converſation with your learned and devout viſitants, in order to know their opinion. For my own part, I hardly can tell what opinion to form. The author conceals his name †, and it ſeems difficult to diſcover his principles or his aim. Some things are excellent, written with ſpirit, and in a ſtrain truly evangelical; in ſome things I ſtand corrected by him. I kiſs the rod, and, far from being diſpleaſed, am thankful for his animadverſions; though, in ſome inſtances, he has acted a diſingenuous part; not conſulting the moſt correct edition of my book, not adverting to my own explanation of my meaning, and making me approve the whole of a perſon's works †, where I only commend ſome particular part. But what gives me the greateſt diſguſt, and will, I believe, offend every candid reader, is, a bitter vein of contempt and invective againſt ſome of the beſt of men that ever lived, and ſome of the beſt authors that ever wrote. I once thought, the apoſtle *James*'s queſtion implied an impoſſibility; but it ſeems to be reduced to real fact by the pen of this critic, and in the *Letters on Theron and Aſpaſio*, where the *fountain ſends forth* at the ſame place, in the ſame performance, *ſweet water and bitter* ‡.

I hope you will not act with Mr *Kennedy* according to the exact rules of retaliation; but though he has been ſlow to write, you will be ſwift to anſwer, that he may the more ſpeedily improve and delight yourſelf, Madam, and

Your very humble ſervant.

* Mr *Kennedy*, whom Mr *Hervey* ſo highly and juſtly reſpected, is miniſter of the *Scots* church in *Rotterdam*, formerly miniſter at *Cavers* in *Scotland*.

In the laſt letters Mrs *C*— received from Mr *Hervey* are theſe words: "I received yours with good Mr *Kennedy*'s letter incloſed. "It ſpeaks the very ſentiments of my heart, much better than my "own tongue or pen could expreſs them. I don't perceive a ſingle "ſentence, to which I ſhould make any objection. With other "believers in Jeſus Chriſt, I would be of one heart, but with Mr "*Kennedy* I have the pleaſure to be of one mind.—I beg you to "preſent my moſt affectionate reſpects to the worthy writer, and "deſire him to give us a continuation of his thoughts."

LETTER CCIV.

Dear Sir, *Friday Night.*

I Have ſent you the following letter for your inſpection, and ſhall make no remarks on it myſelf, leſt I miſlead your judgment. The gentleman who wrote it means well, and is deſirous of promoting the intereſt of the goſpel in the way which he apprehends to be right; but he thinks differently from you and me, not only in his notions of imputed righteouſneſs, but of other evangelical peculiarities.——I have tranſcribed his letter, and concealed his name, that you may communicate your remarks with more freedom, than, perhaps, you would have done, had I not taken theſe precautions to prevent your diſcovery of my correſpondent.

My dear Friend, *Oct.* 7. 1758.

*W*ltherſpoon's Eſſay on the *connection between the doctrine of juſtification by the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt and holineſs of life*, dedicated to you, was lately put into my hands.——You know that I have an unconquerable diſlike to your favourite expreſſion, *The imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt*. I would on no account have uſed it in any of my own writings; and I wiſh it was univerſally laid aſide, particularly by every miniſter in his pulpit; becauſe I apprehend, the notions which the generality of people conceive of the *imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt*, has done as much miſchief, eſpecially among the lower ſort, to the cauſe of Chriſtianity, as the writings of Infidelity

* See letter 190.

† Mr *Hervey* did not think himſelf under an obligation to defend every particular ſentiment of an author, whoſe treatiſe he might approve in general.—And here it may be proper to obſerve, that his own candour, and the frequent ſolicitations of others, induced him to be more indulgent than he ought, and to give rather too favourable an opinion. For which he has been miſrepreſented by the artful, and abuſed by the malevolent.

‡ See above, p. 505. note.

lity have done amongſt thoſe of a higher rank.—This is my ſettled opinion.—Infidels may be, and often have been convinced; but perſons of weak minds, habituated to the ſound of the IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST, (a ſatisfactory definiton of which very few can give,) are not only ſteeled againſt all conviction, but are too apt to diſregard morality; and to cenſure and deſpiſe every preacher and writer, who from principle, or any other cauſe, diſapproves of this CANT TERM. Pardon me, for I really think it ſo, and therefore cannot call it otherwiſe; yet I own myſelf a great admirer of *Witherſpoon's* eſſay; I think it the beſt defence of the doctrine of redemption that I have ever ſeen.——My principal and almoſt only objection is againſt the phraſe *imputed righteouſneſs*. It appears to me quite unſcriptural to ſpeak of the *righteouſneſs of Chriſt being imputed to us*; it is liable to great abuſe, and it is not eaſily underſtood; —nor am I ſatisfied to uſe it, notwithſtanding all you have ſaid in its defence; and all that ſo judicious and excellent a man as Dr *Doddridge* (in his ſermons on *ſalvation by grace*) has ſaid to explain it.——I fall in, however, with *Witherſpoon's* ſentiments, though I do not uſe his particular phraſes;—and you will obſerve he himſelf often intermixes others to the ſame purpoſe, as page 17. the Saviour's merit.—Page 21. vicarious ſufferings. —Acceptance of the goſpel, page 23. Doctrine of Chriſt crucified,—his atonement,—page 29.---Flying to the propitiation of Chriſt,—page 36. the doctrine of Chriſt's mediation, *&c. &c.*——By theſe it appears, that it is not the phraſe, but the thing,—juſtification by Chriſt alone, on which he lays the ſtreſs, ſee page 70. line 47. and his arguments will be equally forcible on any man's principles, who is not a *Socinian*.---I believe the doctrine, as he has ſtated it, page 15. though I ſhould not chuſe to uſe ſome of his expreſſions.——His remark, page 61. line 18, *&c.* is, I think, very juſt, and confirmed by many melancholy facts.—Page 63, 64, 65. is perhaps too ſtrong.---The ſame may be ſaid of other ſyſtems of morality:---they who embrace them, and live unſuitably, are hypocrites, page 65. line 2 and 3.

Upon the whole, I heartily wiſh every Chriſtian, eſpecially every miniſter in the kingdom, would carefully read this very uſeful treatiſe of *Witherſpoon's*, and act accordingly;—and if I had any acquaintance with him, though I am hopeleſs of bringing *you* over to my ſentiments, I would endeavour at leaſt to prevail on *him* to aboliſh the phraſe IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS in the next edition,—and then his book would be more extenſively uſeful.

I am, my dear friend, (notwithſtanding our different opinions in ſome religious points,) with much real eſteem,

Moſt affectionately, and

Moſt ſincerely yours, *&c. &c.*

So far my correſpondent, whoſe letter I ſhall forbear to anſwer till I hear your ſentiments; which I ſhall expect by the firſt opportunity.——I am ſure if the phraſe *imputed righteouſneſs* were not ſtrictly defenſible on ſcriptural grounds, it ſhould never be uſed, either in the pulpit, or in the writings of,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged friend and ſervant.

LETTER CCV.

My Dear Friend, *Weſton-Favell, Oct.* 24, 1758.

LET me repeat my thanks for the trouble you have taken, and for the aſſiſtance you have given me, in relation to my controverſy with Mr *Weſley*. He is ſo unfair in his quotations, and ſo magiſterial in his manner, that I find it no ſmall difficulty, to preſerve the decency of the gentleman, and the meekneſs of the Chriſtian, in my intended anſwer: May our divine Maſter aid me in both theſe inſtances, or elſe not ſuffer me to write at all.

I have juſt been reading *Hab.* iii. 13. עד יסוד עראה selemed difficult to clear; one of the metaphors referring to an animate, the other to an inanimate ſtructure; I ſhould be glad to know, how you underſtand, and how you would explain the paſſage. Perhaps, at your leiſure, you will conſider the whole chapter; and when I aſk for a deſcant upon one, give me an elucidation of twenty verſes.

I have certainly a very great eſteem for Dr *Gill*, yet I never could aſſent to his notion of eternal juſtification. I am very much obliged to you for pointing out to me the paſſage in *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, which ſeems to favour, or proceeds upon ſuch a tenet.—It ſhall be altered in the next edition.

My dilatory proceedings you will aſcribe to the real cauſe, ſickneſs; then you will not deal with me according to the law of retaliation, but according to that law of kindneſs, which the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has written upon your heart.

Indeed I think your arguments are unanſwerable. If ſo, don't you think there are ſome things in my third Dialogue exceptionable? I wiſh you would examine it, bring it to the touchſtone of your laſt letter, and where it is wrong, correct it.

I ſhould like to have *Theron* object ſomething in your way of argumentation, and *Aſpaſio* frankly confeſs, that he has overſhot the mark. Such an acknowledgment endears the character of the ſpeaker, and ſuch a circumſtance makes the ſentiment more impreſſive on the reader.

I have often thought the ſecond verſe of *Pſalm* cxxxi. very difficult, and have been at a loſs to find out the propriety of the compariſon. Why compoſed and quiet as a weaned child? when we know, that the time of weaning children is always a time of diſappointment, often of diſeaſe. At this ſeaſon, they are particularly froward and peeviſh. The very reverſe, therefore, of that frame of mind, which the *Pſalmiſt* ſeems to be illuſtrating.—This was the beſt ſolution, which occurred to my thoughts. A child, weaned from his mother, is diſquieted and fretful. Such is my natural, and ſuch would be my habitual temper, was I not influenced and calmed by grace; but, through divine grace, my mind is reſigned and quiet as the weaned child, when brought back to the mother, and lulled to reſt על חזה on that ſoft and warm boſom, where it had often lain, with the greateſt delight: but from which it had been, for a ſeaſon, withdrawn.—You ſee, I would tranſlate על חזה *in pectus ſive gremium matris ſuæ*. But whether my tranſlation be warrantable, or my paraphraſe ſuch as ſuits the tenor of the pſalm, I ſubmit to your determination.

Accept my ſincere thanks for your valuable correction of a paſſage in my ſermon; ſuch improving animadverſions will always be more acceptable than the inebriating voice of applauſe,—far more acceptable to

Your truly-affectionate friend.

LETTER CCVI.

My dear Friend, *Weſton, Oct.* 19, 1758.

YOU ſome time ago ſent me a poem, with which I was much delighted, notwithſtanding the uncouth metre

metre and obſolete words; I mean *Fletcher*'s *Purple Iſland**, to which were ſubjoined ſeveral other of his poetical pieces; one particularly I remember to his brother *G. Fletcher*, on his poem entitled, *Chriſt's victory in heaven and on earth*; and his *Triumph over, and after death*.

I happened to mention *Fletcher* to a gentleman lately, who has ſince lent me this very poem, which I longed to ſee, as the title pleaſed me ſo much.---He tells me, that *Phineas Fletcher* was not only an excellent poet himſelf, and the ſon of a poet, (namely of *John Fletcher*, a celebrated dramatic writer in the reign of Queen *Eliſabeth*), but brother to two eminent poets, of which this *G. Fletcher* was one, and a young ſtudent at *Cambridge*, when he wrote this poem.

I wiſh any bookſeller could be prevailed with to reprint *The Purple Iſland*, and add to it *Chriſt's victory*, &c. in one neat volume.———I believe it would ſell, if properly reviſed and altered.—It grieves me to think theſe pieces ſhould be loſt to the world, and be for ever buried in obſcurity.

I have folded down ſeveral paſſages in *Chriſt's victory and triumph*, for your inſpection; and if they meet with your approbation, I hope you will join your intereſt with me in endeavouring to preſerve the work from periſhing.———The *Purple Iſland* is to be ſure a ſuperior poem, and abounds with pictureſque, uſeful, and ſtriking ſentiments; but with that you are well acquainted, as it has ſo long been a favourite with you.

I am now ſo very ill, that I ſcarce think I ſhall live to ſee the approaching * *Chriſtmas*.---Had I been in perfect health, and diſengaged from other employment, I queſtion whether I ſhall not have retouched the poetry, changed ſeveral of the obſolete words, illuſtrated the obſcure paſſages by occaſional notes, and run the riſk of publiſhing the whole at my own expence. To this I ſhould have been more particularly inclined, as there are ſo few poems of the ſcriptural kind, wrote by men of genius; though no ſubjects can be equally ſublime and inſtructive, or more entertaining; witneſs *Milton*'s *Paradiſe Loſt* and *Pope*'s *Meſſiah*.

Could not *Rivington* get ſome one to make theſe neceſſary alterations? Or if he does not care to engage in it, would not *Dodſley* undertake it, who is himſelf a poet, and very capable of abridging it in ſome places, enlarging it in others, and thoroughly correcting the whole? —Do you know Mr *Joſeph Warton* of *Trinity* college, *Oxford*, who tranſlated *Virgil*?—He is very capable of doing this; and as he is a clergyman, I ſhould imagine he would think his time well employed, in thus contributing to our bleſſed Maſter's honour.

Methinks if a ſubſcription to modernize valuable authors, and thus reſcue them from the pit of oblivion, was properly ſet on foot by ſome men of eminence, and the propoſals well drawn up, it would meet with due encouragement. I have often wondered, that ſuch an attempt has never yet been made. How many excellent books of the laſt century are now out of print, whilſt ſuch a number of uſeleſs and pernicious writings are continually publiſhed?

I now ſpend almoſt my whole time, in reading and praying over the Bible. Indeed, indeed you can't conceive, how the ſprings of life in me are relaxed and relaxing. *What thou doſt do quickly*, is for me a proper admonition, as I am ſo apprehenſive of my approaching diſſolution.—My dear friend, attend to *the one thing needful*.—With this I ſend you my heart, its warmeſt good wiſhes, and moſt tender affections; and till it ceaſes to beat, I ſhall never ceaſe to pray for your abundant happineſs, or to be,

My dear Sir,
Your ſincerely-affectionate friend,
JAMES HERVEY.

* *The Purple Iſland*, or *Iſle of Man*, wrote by *Phineas Fletcher*.

† Mr *Hervey* died on *Chriſtmas* day, according to his own ſuppoſition.

Some of the paſſages mentioned in the preceding letter to have been folded down by Mr *Hervey* were as follow.

In the three following ſtanzas, the poet ſpeaks of man, as deſtitute of all hope and remedy without Chriſt.

Should any to himſelf for ſafety fly?
The way to ſave himſelf, (if any were),
Is to fly from himſelf.—Should he rely
Upon the promiſe of his wife? what there,
What can he ſee, but that he moſt may fear,
A ſiren, ſweet to death?---Upon his friends?
Who what he needs, or what he hath not lends!
Or wanting aid himſelf, aid to another ſends.

His ſtrength? 'tis duſt.—His pleaſure? cauſe of pain.
His hope? falſe courtier.---Youth or beauty? brittle.
Entreaty? fond.---Repentance? late and vain.
Juſt recompence? the world were all too little.
Thy love? he hath no title to a tittle.
Hell's force? in vain her furies hell ſhall gather.
His ſervants, kinſmen, or his children rather?
His child (if good) ſhall judge; if bad, ſhall curſe his father.

His life? that brings him to his end, and leaves him.
His end? that leaves him to begin his woe.
His goods? what good in that which ſo deceives him?
His gods of wood? their feet alas! are ſlow
To go to help, which muſt be helpt to go.
Honour, great worth? ah, little worth they be
Unto their owners.—Wit? that makes him ſee,
He wanted wit, who thought he had it wanting thee *.

In another place repentance and faith are thus deſcribed:

SHE † in an arbour ſat
Of thorny brier, weeping her curſed ſtate,
And her before a haſty river fled,
Which her blind eyes with faithful penance fed,
And all about, the graſs with tears hung down its head.
Her eyes, tho' blind abroad, at home kept faſt,
Inwards they turn'd, and look'd into her head,
At which ſhe often ſtarted as aghaſt,
To ſee ſo fearful ſpectacles of dread;
And with one hand her breaſt ſhe martyr'd,
Wounding her heart the ſame to mortify;
The other a fair damſel ‡ held her by,
Which if but once let go, ſhe ‖ ſunk immediately.

In another place is ſhewn the ſufficiency of Chriſt and impotency in man.

What hath man done, that man ſhall not undo,
Since God to him is grown ſo near akin?
Did his foe ſlay him? he ſhall ſlay his foe:
Has he loſt all? he all again ſhall win.
Is ſin his maſter? he ſhall maſter ſin.
Too hardy ſoul with ſin the field to try,
The only way to conquer was to fly;
But thus long death hath liv'd, and now death's ſelf ſhall die.

Chriſt is a path, if any be miſled;
He is a robe, if any naked be;
If any chance to hunger, he is bread;
If any be a bondman, he is free.
If any be but weak, how ſtrong is he?

* Chriſt. † Repentance.

‡ Faith. ‖ Repentance.

To dead men, life he is;—to ſick men, health;
To blind men, ſight; and to the needy, wealth;
A pleaſure without loſs;—a treaſure without ſtealth.

Deſpair, *Preſumption*, *Vain-glory*, &c. &c. are perſonified in different parts of the poem; but the preceding and following ſtanzas, will be ſufficient to give the reader an idea of it; and therefore it would be unneceſſary to quote all the paſſages to which Mr *Hervey* had referred.

Ere long they came near * to a baleful bow'r,
  Much like the mouth of that infernal cave,
Which gaping ſtood all comers to devour,
  Dark, doleful, dreary, like a greedy grave
  That ſtill for carrion carcaſes doth crave.
The ground no herbs but venomous did bear,
Nor ragged trees did leaf, but every where
Dead bones, and ſkulls were caſt, and bodies hanged were.

Upon the roof the bird of ſorrow ſat,
  Keeping back joyful day with her ſad note,
And through the ſhady air the fluttering bat
  Did wave her leathern ſails, and blindly float;
  While with her wings the fatal ſcreech-owl ſmote
Th' unbleſſed houſe; there on a craggy ſtone
CELÆNO † hung, and made a direful moan,
And all about the murdered ghoſts did ſhriek and groan.

Like cloudy moon-ſhine in ſome ſhadowy grove,
  Such was the light in which DESPAIR did dwell,
But he himſelf with night for darkneſs ſtrove,
  His black uncombed locks diſhevell'd fell
  About his face; thro' which, as brands of hell
Sunk in his ſkull, his ſtaring eyes did glow,
Which made him deadly look;—their glimpſe did ſhow
Like cockatrices eyes, that ſparks of poiſon throw.

Now he would dream that he from heav'n fell,
  And then would ſnatch the air, afraid to fall;
And now he thought he ſinking was to hell,
  And then would graſp the earth; and now his ſtall
  To him ſeem'd hell, and then he out would crawl:
And ever as he crept would ſquint aſide,
Leſt he ſhould be by fiends from hell eſpy'd,
And forc'd, alas! in chains for ever to abide.

Chriſt's triumph over death by his ſufferings on the croſs.

A tree was firſt the inſtrument of ſtrife,
  Where EVE to ſin her ſoul did proſtitute;
A tree is now the inſtrument of life;
  Tho' ill that trunk, and Chriſt's fair body ſuit;
  Ah, curſed tree! and yet oh bleſſed fruit!
That death to him, this life to us doth give;
Strange is the cure, when things paſt cure revive,
And the phyſician dies to make his patient live.

Chriſt's triumph over death by his paſſion in the garden.

So may we oft a tender father ſee,
  To pleaſe his wanton ſon, his only joy,
Coaſt all about to catch the roving bee,
  And ſtung himſelf his buſy hands employ
  To ſave the honey for the gameſome boy:
Or from the ſnake her rancorous teeth eraze,
Making his child the toothleſs ſerpent chaſe,
Or with his little hands her ſwelling creſt embrace.

Thus Chriſt himſelf to watch and ſorrow gives,
  While dew'd in eaſy ſleep dead *Peter* lies;
Thus man in his own grave ſecurely lives,
  While Chriſt alive with thouſand horrors dies,
  Yet more for ours than his own pardon cries:
No ſins he had, yet all our ſins he bare;
So much doth God for others evils care,
And yet ſo careleſs men for their own evils are.

The treachery of *Judas* is thus repreſented:

See drowſy *Peter*, ſee where *Judas* wakes,
  Where *Judas* kiſſes him whom *Peter* flies;
O kiſs, more deadly than the ſting of ſnakes!
  Falſe love more hurtful than true injuries!
  Ah me! how dearly God his ſervant buys!
For God his man at his own blood doth hold,
And man his God for thirty pence hath ſold:
So tin for ſilver goes, and dunghill-droſs for gold.

The ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, are very poetically deſcribed in the following ſtanza.

No ſorrow now hangs clouding on their brow;
  No bloodleſs malady empales the face;
No age drops on their hairs his ſilver ſnow;
  No nakedneſs their bodies does embaſe;
  No poverty themſelves and theirs diſgrace;
No fear of death the joy of life devours;
No unchaſte ſleep their precious time deflow'rs;
No loſs, no grief, no change wait on their winged hours.

* The habitation of Deſpair deſcribed.

† One of the Harpyes.—See *Virgil*, *Æn.* III.
Inſulæ Ionio in magno: quas dira CELÆNO
Harpyiæque colunt aliæ.

LETTER CCVII.

Weſton-Favell, *Nov.* 7, 1758.

Rev. and dear Sir,

I Should be very ungrateful, if I did not thank you for your late preſent; and for the many obliging things you are pleaſed to ſay of me and my writings in your valuable letter.——I hope they will be ſucceſsful advocates for the furtherance of the goſpel; and I am very ſorry to hear by you, as well as from ſeveral other of my correſpondents in *Scotland*, that the gentlemen of letters in that kingdom are deplorably gone off from the ſimplicity and truth of the ſcriptures, and that the *Socinian* tenets are gaining ground apace.——I could wiſh, methinks, at this critical juncture, that *Alſop*'s * *Anti-Sozzo*, which made its firſt appearance in 1675, was judiciouſly abridged; and, in the neat *Glaſgow* type, reprinted

* *Anti-Sozzo*, or againſt *Socinus* (*Fauſtus*,) a native of *Sienna*, whoſe *Italian* name was *Sozzo*.—He wrote a book about 1575, entitled *De Jeſu Chriſto Servatore*, and died 1604; but his ſect was far from dying with him.—He held, that the *Arians* had given too much to Jeſus Chriſt; and aſſerted, that he was mere man, and had no exiſtence before *Mary*.—He denied that the Holy Ghoſt was a diſtinct perſon, and alledged that the name of God given to Jeſus Chriſt ſignifies no more than that God the Father had given him a ſovereign power over all his creatures; and that, in conſequence of this privilege, men and angels ought to adore him. He denied the redemption of Chriſt; affirming, that what he did for men, was only to give them a pattern of heroic virtue, and to ſeal his doctrine by his death. He held likewiſe other pernicious and erroneous tenets; which are too tedious here to mention.

printed in a duodecimo volume;——though 'tis almoſt a pity to abridge it, (unleſs it was well executed), as the whole is ſo intereſting, and might be contained in two duodecimo volumes, or even in one octavo volume, if printed at *Glaſgow*.——It is, I can aſſure you, a very ſmart book, and one of the beſt defences of the evangelical doctrines I ever ſaw, or ever expect to ſee, even if my life, which now draws very near its end, could be prolonged to the next century.——In ſhort, I think it an unanſwerable performance; and divines of every denomination would do well, to make themſelves thoroughly maſters of this ſpirited and entertaining writer; as they would then be able to defend the truth as it is in Jeſus, againſt all kind of opponents, how witty, keen, ſubtle, or malignant ſoever the attack might be. I would therefore beg you to recommend this book as a ſpecific againſt *Socinianiſm*; and uſe your intereſt to have it forthwith reprinted at *Glaſgow*.

Glad I am to be informed, that you are ſo very zealous for the honour and intereſt of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.——What can make mankind happy, but his goſpel?—What is worthy of our ſedulous application, but his intereſt?—What will be a ſubſtantial reward, but his acceptance, favour, and love?

I am now reduced to a ſtate of infant weakneſs, and given over by my phyſician.——My grand conſolation is to meditate on Chriſt; and I am hourly repeating thoſe heart-reviving lines of Dr *Young* in his fourth night.

THIS,—only THIS ſubdues the fear of death;—
And what is THIS?—Survey the wondrous CURE!
And at EACH STEP left higher wonder riſe!
1. Pardon for infinite offence!—2. and pardon
Through means that ſpeak its value infinite!—
3. A pardon bought with blood!—4. With blood divine!—
5. With blood divine of him I made my foe!
6. Perſiſted to provoke!—7. Tho' woo'd and aw'd,
Bleſs'd, and chaſtis'd, a flagrant rebel ſtill!—
8. A rebel 'midſt the thunders of his throne!—
9. Nor I alone!—10. A rebel univerſe!—
11. My ſpecies up in arms!—12. not one exempt!
13. Yet for the fouleſt of the foul he dies!—
14. Moſt joy'd, for the redeem'd from deepeſt guilt!—
15. As if our race were held of higheſt rank;
And Godhead dearer, as more kind to man.

Theſe amazingly-comfortable lines, I dare ſay, you will treaſure up in your heart; and when you think of them, will think of me; and I hope, dear Sir, pray for me, that I may not diſgrace my miniſtry, or diſhonour the goſpel of my Maſter in my laſt moments by unbelief;—baſe provoking unbelief!—This probably is the laſt time you will ever hear from me: for indeed 'tis with ſome difficulty I have wrote now, but I ſhall not fail to remember you in my interceſſions for my friends at the throne of Chriſt; and I humbly beg of God Almighty, that the love of his Son may ſweetly conſtrain you; and that his promiſes may be ever operative on your mind.——I am, with great gratitude and much eſteem,

Reverend and dear Sir,

Your affectionate brother in Chriſt.

LETTER CCVIII.

Dear Sir, *Friday Morn.*

YOU aſk me what I think of you, in caſe it ſhould pleaſe God to take you out of the world, in the perplexed ſtate you have deſcribed to me.—An anſwer to ſuch a queſtion, is much more difficult than you ſeem to be aware of; and therefore I muſt beg leave to decline paſſing any ſentence.——We miniſters are to teach, warn, comfort, and exhort every man, according to God's moſt holy word;—but after death comes the judgment on each of us. For alas! how little, how very little do we know of one another, or of ourſelves? The moſt amazing, perhaps, and one of the moſt humbling conſiderations too, which can well be offered to the human mind, is, that, though we cannot form a tolerable judgment of any man's real condition, yet God ſhall judge the world, the whole world, in equity; not ſo much as one ſingle caſe, how intricate ſoever it may ſeem to us, will he miſtake.—He was, is, and ever ſhall be omniſcient and omnipreſent.—And yet, ſhort-ſighted creatures as we are, how often do we uſurp this prerogative, and preſume to judge our fellow-creatures?

A certain author, whoſe name I forget, (though I regiſtered to the following effect from him in one of my old diaries), has obſerved, "that it is impoſſible for us "mortals to form an equitable judgment of the ſtate of "any one individual; becauſe God alone knows all the "circumſtances he has been, and now is in.——He a-"lone can be the proper judge of his abilities and "powers;—what opportunities he had of improving "himſelf,

mention.—In the reign of King *Charles* II. theſe *Socinian* tenets were gaining ground in *England*, when Mr *Alſop*, one of the wittieſt as well as one of the beſt of men in that age, wrote this book which he called *Anti-Sozzo*, in oppoſition to the fundamental errors then maintained by ſome eminent divines, and in vindication of the great truths of the goſpel.—His own words extracted from his preface to that work (which he ſigned *N. N.* merely to avoid the diſcovery of his true name) are as follow. "If the *Socinians* "oppoſe, every true Chriſtian ſhould defend the goſpel of Jeſus "Chriſt; for the diſpute is not now about decency and order; "about fringes and phylacteries; about the tithing of mint, aniſe, "and cummin; but about the influence of the righteouſneſs of "Chriſt's life, and the ſacrifice of his death, upon our acceptance "with God, about the intereſt of the bleſſed Spirit in the glorious "work of the new creation; whether Chriſt be a proper Prieſt, "or not; whether as a Prieſt he offered himſelf as a proper ſacri-"fice to God, or not? whether God and man are reconciled, and "we redeemed from the curſe of the law by the blood of Jeſus, "or not?—whether we are juſtified before the juſt and holy God "by our own righteouſneſs, or by the righteouſneſs of a Mediator? "—and in a word, whether the death of Chriſt be the proper and "immediate cauſe of any one ſingle bleſſing, great or ſmall, of the "covenant of grace? In which the concerns, all the eternal hopes "of every Chriſtian are wrapt up; and wherein that he may not "miſtake, and ſo finally miſcarry, as it is the unfeigned deſign of "my writing this book, ſo it is my earneſt prayer."

Mr *Vincent Alſop*, and Mr *William Sherlock* (afterwards Doctor and Dean of *St Paul's*), were pupils at *St John's* college, *Cambridge*, under the ſame tutor.

But when *Sherlock*, in a *Socinian* book, printed in 1674, improperly entitled, *A diſcourſe concerning the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and our union and communion with him*, had in drollery uſed ſuch indecent expreſſions as the following, *viz.* (page 46, of the ſaid book), "That the juſtice of God had glutted itſelf with revenge in the "death of Chriſt, and ſo henceforward we are ſure he will be very "kind, as a revengeful man is when his paſſion is over;" and in the next page, expreſſed himſelf, ſtill more indecently, by ſaying, that "the ſum of which is this, that God is all love and patience, "when he has taken his fill of revenge, or, as others uſed to ſay, "the devil is very good when he is pleaſed;" when Mr *Alſop* read theſe paſſages, he was ſhocked; and ſeeing Dr *Sherlock* had no more reverence to the Majeſty of God, no more regard to the authority of ſcriptures, than to write as above, Mr *Alſop* was determined to attack him, and to plead for Chriſt and his truth here at the foot-ſtool, who pleads for us, according to his truth, at the throne. Nor was any man better qualified than himſelf, either to give a check to a man of *Sherlock's* talents and imperious diſpoſition; or to the growing petulancy of the then daily encroaching profaneneſs.—On grave ſubjects, he appeared, as he was, the truly-Reverend Mr *Alſop*, and wrote with a becoming ſeriouſneſs, (ſee his *Practical godlineſs the ornament of religion*, octavo, publiſhed in 1696); but where wit might properly be ſhewn, he diſplayed his to great advantage, as may be ſeen in his *Anti-Sozzo*. He died much reſpected and lamented, in *May* 1703.

" himself, and of doing good;—what were the force " of his temptations;—what difficulties he had to strug- " gle with;—what portion of divine grace was given " to him;——what natural understanding he had;—— " acquired knowledge was or could be obtained by him; " and in short, what the true state of his case was.—— " Nor will he condemn any one unjustly or arbitrarily. " ——How comfortable a reflection is this! especially " to one who is cruelly persecuted, or unjustly censured, " —that God should judge the world in equity,—and " yet,—what a tremendous thought is it, that every day " we live we provoke this Judge of all men, and in- " crease our heap of sin,----which swells into such a " frightful size, such a stupendous mountain of guilt, as " will make us one day stand amazed at the sight of it. " —But *what art thou, O thou great mountain? before* Ze- " rubbabel *thou shalt become a plain*, Zech. iv. 7.—*We have* " *an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous,* " *and he is the propitiation for our sins.* ——Oh! that I may " have a devout and lively faith in him, as it is by him " alone my sins can be cancelled.———May the cry of " his blood drown their clamour.——We are, most just " God, the children of thy wrath, and he is the Son of " thy love, who died to save us, and through whom thou " art willing to receive us.———Yet what a distrustful " fainting of mind comes over me, on the remembrance " of former transgressions, which neither a reflection on " God's ineffable goodness, nor on the unbounded va- " lue of the sacrifice of Christ, can effectually relieve?— " Hear me, O Lord God, in this my hour of heart-felt " distress, nor take thou vengeance of my sins: spare " thy creature, O Lord, spare him, whom thou hast re- " deemed with thy precious blood; let thy mighty Spi- " rit fit me for mercy and acceptance, and be not, oh! " be not angry with me for ever."

With this prose-quotation, I send you a copy of verses on the renovation of a sinner; which will, perhaps, at this time, be neither unacceptable nor unseasonable.—— It was wrote by a very particular friend of mine, and is as poetical as it is instructive and consolatory.

I.

WHEN with mind devoutly press'd,
Dear Saviour! my revolving breast
Would past offences trace;
Trembling I make the black review,
Yet pleas'd behold, admiring too,
The pow'r of changing grace.

II.

This *tongue*, with blasphemies defil'd,
These *feet*, to erring paths beguil'd,
In heav'nly league agree;
Who would believe such *lips* could praise,
Or think my dark and winding ways
Should ever lead to thee?

III.

These *eyes*, that once abus'd their sight,
Now lift to thee their wat'ry light,
And weep a silent flood;
These *hands* ascend in ceaseless pray'r,
Oh! wash away the stains they wear
In pure, redeeming blood!

IV.

These *ears*, that pleas'd could entertain
The midnight oath, the lustful strain,
When round the festal board;
Now deaf to all th' inchanting noise,
Avoid the throng, detest the joys,
And long to hear thy word.

V.

Thus art thou serv'd; in ev'ry part
Oh! wouldst thou but transform my *heart*,
That drossy thing refine;
That *grace* might *nature*'s strength controul,
And a new creature,—body, soul,
Be *all*,—be ever thine.

I transcribed these verses, as I hope you'll commit them to your memory; and often repeat them as you ride or walk, till your tongue, lips, eyes, ears, and very heart, are subservient to the great end of your salvation, and that of others.———Exert yourself; be of good cheer, the clouds that darken the face of your affairs, will ere long disperse. He that gave his blood for you, and refused not to bear the racking agonies of the cross for you,—he will not leave you, nor forsake you. God, who is faithful and just, has promised to forgive us our sins through the mediation of his Son.——Lord, believe this, help thou our unbelief.———So wishes and so prays,

Yours very sincerely.

LETTER CCIX.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, Monday Morning.*

I Am much obliged to you for the loan of Dr *Squire*'s *Inquiry into the foundation of the English constitution.*—— The performance seems to be curious, useful, and interesting.—But how interesting soever the subject may be to others, it can be very little so now to me; as my indisposition is daily increasing, and must, in all human probability, soon put an end to my being.

In spite of the sarcastical reflections you say are thrown upon me, I must recommend to every one *Marshall* on *Sanctification.* and *Jenks*'s *Submission to the righteousness of God.*———These are with me the two fundamental books;—these teach vital religion. Do they, who would decry faith, and extol their good works, distinguish themselves by the practice of them? If not, I must beg leave to say, they are self-condemned.———Only observe for the next month (by their fruits you will know them) the conduct of those, who are such loud advocates for the merit, the dignity of man, and the freedom of his action; and of those who rely on the active and passive obedience of Christ. And then tell me ingenuously, which are the people that pay the greatest reverence to the word of God; and in particular to the fourth commandment?———Inquire which of them use family-prayer?—whose conversation is most edifying?—which of them visit and travel on *Sundays?* and which of them pass that holy day as becomes those who have named the name of Christ? I will be bold to say, that, on an impartial examination, the majority will be found on the side of those, who embrace the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness; and who expect salvation by him alone, and not by deeds which they have done.—Yet I should wonder how men of discernment (men who, one would think, should be daily sensible of their innumerable failings) could possibly espouse the opposite doctrines, had I not too many melancholy proofs to the contrary. You may safely confide in this doctrine; for this, dear Sir, is not to be considered as the particular opinion of *James Hervey*, but it is the general opinion of our exemplary reformers; 'tis the doctrine of our articles and our homilies.——Will you say, that our modern moral

Christians

Chriſtians, if I may ſo call them, are to be ſet in competition with men like theſe? I appeal to facts.——Mark the effect of preaching the grace of Chriſt.—But ſo long as the devil is ſuffered to deceive the nations, and ſo long as the heart is unconvinced of ſin, we may aſſure ourſelves, the doctrines of juſtification by Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and ſalvation by free grace, will meet with oppoſition. Therefore St *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* Αγωνιζου τον καλον αγωνα της πιστεως, *to fight the good fight of faith*; it is an addreſs to a combatant, and ſuppoſes a conflict; a noble conflict, καλον, the fineſt word in the moſt expreſſive language, importing all that is good and great; let us not then be aſhamed of the cauſe.

My cough is very troubleſome—I can get little reſt—medicines yield no relief—but my never-failing cordial is the love of Chriſt.

Religion bears my ſpirits up,
A faithful and unchanging God
Lays the foundation for my hope,
In oaths.—in promiſes,†—in blood.‡*

Watts's Hymns, book I.

Staynoe (ſee let. 130.) whom you inquire after, was a good man, a tutor at *Trinity-College, Oxford*, and afterwards Rector of St *Leonard, Foſter-lane*; and, in the year 1704, publiſhed in two volumes octavo, his treatiſe on *ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt*. Mine is the ſecond edition.—It is no contemptible book, though the ſtyle is rather too prolix, and he has ſome peculiar notions.—But who has ever ſeen a faultleſs book?—All writers have their failings, more or leſs.—No mortal is exempted from them; not even *Homer, Virgil*, or *Milton* himſelf.—This ought to teach us candour and humility in ſuch a ſtate of imperfection; and above all it ſhould inſpire us with a reverential admiration of the *book of God*, which alone is free from error; by which we are guided into all truth; and in which we are promiſed eternal life, procured for us by the righteouſneſs, ſufferings, and mediation of Jeſus Chriſt.—I wiſh, moſt heartily wiſh, you may ſufficiently regard this ineſtimable book; and then you will be like the tree planted by the water-ſide, which bringeth forth its fruits in due ſeaſon; and like that happy man of whom it is written by the *Pſalmiſt*, *Look! whatſoever he doth, it ſhall proſper.*

I am, my dear friend,

Affectionately and unalterably yours,

JAMES HERVEY.

* *Heb.* vi. 17. † *Pet.* i. 4. ‡ *Rev.* i. 5.

JACOBI HERVEY

DE

LIBRO JOBI

EPISTOLA

AD

CAROLUM THAYER.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Epiſtle was publiſhed by John Rivington, Mr Hervey's bookſeller, in 1766, and ſold at 6d. The following advertiſement is prefixed to it.

"The deſign of this publication, is to acquaint the reader with the late ingenious Mr *Hervey*'s ſentiments on the book of *Job*; and it is given to the community in the language with which it was penned, as a ſpecimen of this author's *Latin* ſtyle: but as it has never been corrected, it is preſumed, that the candid reader will make proper allowances for its defects.

N. B. *The original letter (without the leaſt variation) was tranſmitted to the preſs, by the Rev. Mr* Robert Knight, *Rector of* Weſton-Favell, *in* Northamptonſhire, *who married Mr* Hervey's *youngeſt ſiſter; and it is now depoſited in the hands of Mr* Rivington, *for the ſatisfaction of ſuch as deſire to be aſſured of its authenticity.*"

The tranſlation of this excellent letter, which now makes its firſt appearance in print, was undertaken by the printer, at the deſire of ſeveral gentlemen, who conceived that the inſerting the Latin copy of it only in our author's works, would be of no uſe to the generality of the encouragers of this edition. Though the tranſlator does not pretend that the tranſlation is any way equal to the original, yet he flatters himſelf he has given the author's meaning, which may be of uſe to the unlearned. Thoſe who are ſkilled in the languages will prefer the original, and cannot be diſpleaſed that Mr Hervey is alſo made ſpeak in Engliſh to thoſe who do not underſtand Latin.

REVERENDO VIRO
CAROLO THAYER
SALUTEM.

Miror equidem, vir ſpectatiſſime, tantam tibi linguæ noſtræ copiam in promptu eſſe. Ni te jamdudum noſſem, uberrima iſta Romani eloquii penus facile me induceret ut crederem, *Tuſculi* * te potius quam *Abingtoniæ* † habitaſſe.—Quod ad me attinet, quum probe ſciam, quam rudis ſim et inexercitatus in hoc ſcribendi genere, paulum abfuit quin ſilentium mihi perpetuum indixiſſem. Per plurimos dies, tenuitatis noſtræ conſcius, manum de tabula timidam cohibui. Verum enimvero pudor reclamavit, animuſque ab ingratitudine abhorrens ſtimulos addidit; atque inde fit ut calamus, impar licet et ineptus, ad epiſtolare munus jam tandem excitatus eſt.

Gratias itaque ago, quantas poſſum maximas, quod plurima mihi notatu digniſſima de Jobo, Jobique libro, pro ſingulari tua humanitate atque eruditione, ultro communicaſti.—Verſionem imprimis ad examen revocas. Nitida ea eſt, elegantiarum ferax, vimque Hebræarum vocum, ſupra quod ſperari potuit, vix imminutam tradit. Addas licet, novam eam eſſe in plurimis, ſed quæ auctoritatem ſuam ſecum afferat, et legentium ſuffragia primo ſtatim ab intuitu adſciſcit.—Notas deinde ſagaci percurris oculo. Quas qui legit relegitque, haud facile eſt dicere, utrum plus ſit reportaturus utilitatis, ex ampliſſima orientalis eruditionis ſegete; ceu potius oblectamenti, a dulciſſimo illo criticæ artis flore. Adeo non friyola ſunt et futilia quæ ubique annotantur, ut vocabulorum emphaſin, argumentorum pondera, ſenſuum ſublimitatem, colloquii denique telam pulcherrimo ordine deductam, manu limatiſſima admota colluſtrant. Imo, tanto affuſo lumine colluſtrant, ut vel mihi hebetioris ingenii viro pateſcant, et patefacta placeant. Quid multis? eum ipſum, puto, commentatorem nactus eſt Jobus, quem præ omnibus aliis optaſſet, ſi ſuperſtes adhuc inter homines verſaretur.

De Jobi ævo, quo vixit, non conſtat inter doctos, neque opinor conſtabat unquam. Atqui veriſimillima videtur quam tu aliique tuentur opinio. In veſtras partes non invitus tranſeo. Illuſtrem hunc principem non niſi poſt Abrahamum floruiſſe certo certius eſt. Qui enim nomen terræ dedit, quam alter amicorum coluit, Temanitidi, is inter Eſaui poſteros numeratur. Prohibet porro inſignitissimum iſtud encomium quo cohoneſtatur a Spiritu ſancto, ne ſuſpicemur eum diebus patriarcharum Iſaaci aut Jacobi vitam tranſegiſſe. Vix potuit vere dici בי אין משתו באדץ niſi poſt funera Joſephi. Inter hunc igitur morte ablatum, et Moſen ex ephebis exceſſum, omnino ſtatuenda videtur æra Jobi.

De ſcripto ipſo, profluxiſſe illud ab alia quam Jobi manu nullus dubito. Is quippe inter Arabas nutritus, atque Arabum linguæ aſſuefactus, vix tanta fuit Hæbraicarum literarum peritia imbutus, quanta opes erat ad res tales tali verborum nitore et concinnitate conſignandas chartis. Si Moſi authori librum aſcribere quis maluit, quod Anglicana noſtra in obſervationculis ſuis margini affixis editio innuit, tum demum arbitror ante Iſraelitas per deſerta traductos confectum eſſe. Legiſlator ille celeberrimus dum tanto agmini ducem ſe rectoremque præbuit, vix potuit ad hiſtoriam poeticam contexendam animum appellere. Ingens præterea rerum quotidie agendarum multitudo atque onus, ne tale aliquid moliretur, mentum ſine dubio abſtraherent. Nulla autem ea potuit opportunior eſſe occaſio, quæ illi obtigit, dum exul inter Medianitas commoratus eſt. Ruſticabatur tunc temporis; otiabatur; omnia habuit indulta, quæ poetæ ingenium ſtimulare atque accendere ſolent. Huic inſuper ſententiæ adſtipulatur, quod in eas regiones relegatus, omnia quæ ad Jobum finitimiæ terræ incolam, pertinerent, ediſcere potuit uberius. Gnaviter quoque pro tali conjectura militat frequentior exotici idiomatis uſus, phraſiumque varietas Arabicam indolem plane redolentium.—Warburtonus noſter omni niſu id agit, ut Eſræ, ſcriptorum ſacrorum ultimo, theſaurarium hoc theologiæ, philoſophiæ, atque omnigenæ fere doctrinæ acceptum referamus. Quæ quidem hypotheſis ſpecioſa licet, et rationibus neutiquam contemnendis ſuffulta, fidem apud me non obtinent. Signa enim ſunt (ni vanus auguror) et criteria, paſſim per librum ſparſa, quæ ætatem longe antiquiorem ſubindicant. Ad legem latam aut res geſtas Iſraelitarum ne alluſum eſt, quod mihi videre contigit, uſpiam. Nullibi vel mentio fit miraculorum in Ægypto et per deſerta editorum. Quæ tantam cuivis poemati conciliarent decus, tantum porro Judæis ſolamen ſuppeditarent, ut a nemine cordato intacta prorsus relinquerentur. Inter alia quæ ſcripſiſti pulcherrima, ~~ut videtur~~ toti huic hiſtoriæ adſtruis. Adeo non eſſe aſſeris, aſſertumque probas, fictitium quendam pii ingenii luſum, ut omnia e contra revera agerentur. Proinde non debere aliquem inter legendum putare, ſibe ante oculos eſſe ejus ſolius quod fieri potuit figmentum, ſed genuinam ejus quod fuit narrationem. Me jam antea hic opinioni accedentem, fecerunt quas protuliſti rationes, ut ei arctius adhæream.—Etſi vero hiſtoriæ veritatem ſibi vindicet, dramatici tamen operis lepores præ ſe fert. Voces ſi ſpectes, ornatiſſimæ illæ cultiſſimæque, non tam enarrant, quam res conſpiciendas ferme exhibent. Senſibus autem, nihil gravius, grandius, ſublimius, Deo inſpirante dignius, aut humano generi magis ſcitu neceſſarium. Characterum interea diverſitas mira; quodque artis eſt ſummæ, ad vivum depicti ſinguli, et ſibi invicem undique conſtantes.—Altera inſuper venuſtatis ſpecie gaudet Jobæis noſtra, quæ artificioſis dramaticorum commentis decori eſt atque ornamento. Non ſumum ex fulgore, quod monuit criticus, ſed ex fumo lucem edit. Sermone pedeſtri orditur. Inde pedetentim progreditur ad altiores dicendi modos. Et cothurno induto, ſenſibus quoque aſſurgit. Rerum major naſcitur ordo. Vehementiores congreſſus. Acriora conflictantium certamina. Uſque dum nihil amplius aut fortius hinc illinc dici potuit. Tum demum intervenit moderator. Quæ prave dicta ſunt utrinque ſubacto penſitat judicio, debitaque reprehenſione caſtigat. Summa, ſi fieri poteſt, ope nititur, ut fervidos diſputantium animos componat, litemque diu agitatam dirimat. Sed fruſtra. Major ineſt nodus, et difficilioris longe ſolutionis, quam ut juveni remonſtranti cedat. Deus, ecce Deus adeſt! quidquamne auguſtius excogitari poſſit? Qui circuitus cœlorum perambulat, in arenam quaſi (conſtet ſumma reverentia dicto) deſcendit. Quique aſtra per inane volventia librat, ILLE IPSE controverſiæ hujus momenta et pondera æqua quaſi bilance trutinat. Deo autem orante cauſam, ut ferocientes animi ſubſidunt! reniti ceſſant. Manus dant. Obmuteſcunt, Jobus ipſe, quem lautiores de ſua puritate tumidique nimis conceptus, ultra quam par erat, vexerant, erroris convictus, iniquitatas manifeſtus, pudore ſuffunditur, arma projicit, ad pedes infinitæ miſericordiæ venerabundus devolvitur. Noſcit ſeipſum; pœnitentiam agit; cedendo vincit; eumque, ſimul atque ſe coram Deo humillime deprimit, calamitatis ſortitus eſt exitum, quem nefas eſſet expectare, dum inculparam ſibi integritatem temere nimis arrogavit. Omnia ſua, non ita pridem miſere deperdita, cumulatiſſima manu reponit, auget, ſtabilitque numen propitium. Palmæ ad inſtar, preſſus reſurgit; quumque omnes de felicitate ſua conclamatum iri arbitrabantur, tum demum rediviva evaſit, multoque, quam olim, lætius efflоruit.—Quam ſubitanea atque inſperata prorsus cataſtrophe! quam jucundus malorum finis! quam pulchra coronis toto operi ſuperinducta!

Leviter hæc tetigiſſe ſufficiat. A rebus curioſæ ſpeculationis, tuo ductus exemplo, ad utiliora longe mentem calamumque verto. Quæ fidem vacillantem ſuffulciant, praximque errabundam nimis, gubernatoris ſolertis ritu ad clavum aſſidue ſedentis, corrigant dirigantque, ea nunc conſiderando occurrunt.—Quod prudenter mones, de ediſcenda animi fortitudine ex Jobo afflictionum agminibus laceſſito, nec tamen fracto aut proſtrato; de petendis inſuper ad patientiam incitamentis ex Jobo mala acerbiſſima paſſo, atque humiliter ſe et ſummiſſe ferendo oneri accingente; id avide arripio; memoria defixum teneo; Deumque precor ut in ima atque intima cordis tranſeat.—Nobiliſſimum illud quod reſurrectioni * mortuorum perhibetur teſtimonium, te eo remittente meditationes noſtras, libenter adeo. Quumque aliqui, de re Chriſtiana non bene meriti, monumentum illud ære perennius, auro pretioſius convellere ſatagunt, pergratam ſane operam navat interpres noſter, dum validiſſimis rationum viribus id ſibi ſtabiliendum accipit. Non te latet fuiſſe inter eruditos, qui pulcherrimam hanc Jobinæ fidei confeſſionem aliorſum detorquere ſtudent; et de fortunis ſolummodo redintegratis ut intelligatur velint. Quem quidem errorem radicitus avulſum et funditus delerum, nonc ſine gaudio et gratulatione, in lucubrationibus hiſce accuratiſſimis con-

templari

* *Tuſculum*, urbs Italica, ubi villa Ciceronis.

† *Abingtonia*, oppidulum prope Northantoniam.

* Vide Jobi cap. xix. 25.

templari datum eſt.—Quod mihi de Redemptore גאל ſuggeris, id profecto arridet magnopere, et toto pectore amplector. Vellem de quocunque ſacrorum voluminum libro dicere, quod olim Auguſtinus optime, "Sunt ſcripturæ tuæ deliciæ meæ." Nulla eſt inter codices divinos pagina, quæ non aurifondiuis ſit præſtantior; nulla vel minutiſſima inſpiratæ veritatis portiuncula, quin melle Hyblæo dulcior longe. Quæ autem de CHRISTO vaticinantur; CHRISTUM ſive venturum ſpondent, ſive adventum depingunt; CHRISTUM, ægris medelam, lugentibus ſolatium, vicariam pro ſontibus victimam, ἀπλυτρον, ἀπλυχον, ea apud me, infinitum quantum! palmam præripiunt. Renident ea margaritarum inſtar hinc inde coruſcantium; ſive, ut cum poeta loquar, velut inter ignes luna minores. De his colloquia apud ædes privatas, de his pro roſtro conciones, de his denique contemplationes domi, foris, inſtituere geſtirem. Imo in his totus eſſem, atque immorarer jugiter, niſi corruptela, proh dolor! naturæ inſita obſtaret; vagæque ac inſtabiles cogitationes mentem in contraria identidem deflecterent. Hæc enim edidiciſſe, ſapientia eſt; his fidem adhibuiſſe, ſalus. Qui hæc ad unguem callet, bonus evadet theologus; quique animo penitius imbibit, Chriſtianus.

At quo feror? In quæ ſpatia effuſus, trans limites epiſtolaris commercii excurro? Reprimo me tandem. Unum duntaxat, præ aliis eximium, e verſione antea laudata, locum ſeligere liceat. Ea erit ſcriptiunculæ hujus noſtræ meta, et patientiæ tuæ laſſæ plus ſatis et defatigatæ levamen. Verum ibi priſtinumque ſenſum, acerrimo ingenii acumine e tenebris erutum, et non ſine magno ſanæ doctrinæ commodo repoſitum, lætus aſpicio. Pericopam, ſi vacat, videre eſt cap. iv. 17. Num mortalis *a* (non *prâ*, ut noſtra ſe habet hic ſaltem malefida verſio) numine juſtus erit? Haud memine legiſſe me, aut narrando accepiſſe, ab ullo unquam eo impudentiæ deventum iri, ut juſtiorem ſe Deo, perfectionis omnimodæ fonte ac norma, venditare auſit. Vix igitur, imo ne vix quidem operæ pretium fuiſſet, tanto cum conamine dictorum et pompa reſellere, quod in nullius quotquot ſunt mortalium cogitationes introire potuit. Neque aliud quam nugatorem agit ſcriptor divinus, ſi fidem redditioni receptæ habes; ſin vero Schultenſii admittas, non item. Exhibet iſta nodum Deo vindice dignum. Errorem perſtringit jugulatque, quo nullus alius exitialior, quive importunius ſeſe in mentes noſtras ingerit. Speciem omnem humani, quod vocatur, meriti tollit, convellit, conculcat. Neque ſinit, ut minima vel ſanctiſſimis hominum, aut ſua jactandi, aut ſe juſtificandi, anſa ſit relicta. Quin omnes omnino, utcunque pietatis puritatiſque encomiis per terras nobilitatos, coram ſupremo judice reos, αναπολογητους, ſiſtit. Nullos proinde poſſe a tremendo illo tribunali pœnarum expertes abire, niſi gratuito iis condonentur peccata, et CHRISTI Mediatoris juſtitia iis in ſalutem imputetur. Ecce revera evangelicum ante evangelium! Qui non cutem ſolam œconomiæ iſtius ſalutiferæ inveniſſet palpando, ſed in ipſiſſima viſcera et medullas quodammodo penetraſſe viderur. Felices nos noſtroſque, ſi eandem fidem medullitus hauſiſſe detur! Amo mehercule hominem, qui feliciter commentando hæc tam luculenta ευαγγελια Jobo, Chriſtianiſmo, nobiſque etiam, aut inſcitia Hebraicæ dictionis aut incuria interpretum ablata, inſtauravit demum ac reſtituit. Te vero impenſius, vir reverende, amo atque colo; dulciſſima cujus amicitia, plus una alteraque vice experimento cognita, fecit, ut ampliſſimam ex ea voluptatis atque emolumenti meſſem ſperare, ac mihimet ipſi polliceri audeam. Ut vivas, valeaſque, ex animo optat.

Tibi devinctiſſimus,

JACOBUS HERVEY.

P. S. Si qua in rete tibi, ſalute recuperata, prodeſſe potero, id ne dicam rogee, ſed jubeas velim.

TO

THE REV. MR CHARLES THAYER.

RESPECTED SIR,

TRULY I am ſurpriſed, that you have ſo ready a faculty of expreſſing yourſelf in a language which is not your mother-tongue, and which is baniſhed from modern converſation. Unleſs I had been intimately acquainted with you long ago, that fruitful fund of Roman elocution would eaſily induce me to believe, that you had dwelt at Tuſculum *, rather than at Abingdon †. As to myſelf, well knowing my rudeneſs and want of exerciſe in this kind of writing, I was on the point of impoſing a perpetual ſilence on myſelf. For ſeveral days, ſenſible of my own incapacity, I with-held my timorous hand from the deſk. But indeed ſhame remonſtrated, and a mind extremely averſe to ingratitude egged me on; and hence it is, that my pen, though unequal and ill-fitted for the taſk, is now at laſt excited to give you the trouble of a letter.

I render you my greateſt thanks for your voluntarily communicating to me, out of your ſingular humanity and erudition, many remarks worthy of the higheſt notice, concerning Job, and his book. In the firſt place, you bring the verſion to the touchſtone. It is neat, replete with elegance, and gives the force of the Hebrew phraſes, in their full ſtrength, beyond any man's expectation. Add to this, that though it is new in moſt inſtances; yet it is what carries its authority in its boſom, and gains the reader's aſſent at the very firſt ſight. Then you run over the notes with a ſagacious eye. Which whoever reads and reads over again, it is not eaſy to ſay, whether he will carry off more profit from that very large crop of eaſtern learning, or rather delight from that moſt agreeable flower of the art of criticiſm. So that the remarks every where interſperſed are not trifling or unimportant, as they, with great ingenuity and ſkill, illuſtrate the emphaſis of the words, the weight of the arguments, the ſublimity of the meaning, and the thread of the diſcourſe laid out in a moſt beautiful order. Nay they ſhine with ſo glaring a light, that they are clearly underſtood even by a man of a dull apprehenſion, and being underſtood pleaſe me. In ſhort, Job, I fancy, has got the very commentator, which he would have preferred to all others, if he himſelf had been now living and converſant among men.

As to the age in which Job lived, the learned are not agreed, nor I ſuppoſe ever will. But that opinion which you and others maintain, ſeems to be moſt probable. I willingly go over to your ſide. Nothing is more certain, than that this illuſtrious hero lived after Abraham. For he who gave a name to the country which one of his friends, the Temanite, inhabited, is reckoned among the poſterity of Eſau. Moreover, that very remarkable encomium with which he is honoured by the Holy Spirit, forbids us to imagine that he lived in the days of the patriarchs Iſaac or Jacob. It could ſcarce be truly ſaid, that there was none like him in the earth, unleſs he had lived after the death of Joſeph. The time of Job ſeems therefore to be truly placed between the deceaſe of Joſeph and the manhood of Moſes.

As to the writing itſelf, I have no doubt that it proceeded from any other hand than that of Job. For he had been educated among the Arabs, and uſed to their language, he had ſcarce ſo great ſkill in the Hebrew learning, as was neceſſary for conſigning to writing ſuch important matters in ſo neat and elegant a ſtyle. If any chuſe to aſcribe the book to Moſes as its author, as our Engliſh edition has intimated in the notes on the margin, then I ſuppoſe it was wrote before the paſſage of the Iſraelites through the wilderneſs. While that celebrated lawgiver was employed as the guide and ruler of ſo great a company, he could ſcarce apply his mind to write a poetical hiſtory. Beſides, the great number and weight of the matters he had to do every day, would, without doubt, divert his mind from ſo great an undertaking. And no time could be more favourable to him, than that which he enjoyed, while he lived as an exile among the Midianites. He dwelt in the country at that time, had much leiſure, and had all conveniencies which uſe to ſtimulate and fire the genius of a poet. What further ſtrengthens this opinion, is, that being baniſhed into thoſe countries, he could have full information of every thing relating to Job, who dwelt in the neighbouring land. The frequent uſe too of

* *Tuſculum*, a town of *Italy*, where *Cicero*'s country-houſe ſtood.

† *Abingdon*, a little town near *Northampton*.

of a foreign idiom, and a variety of phraſes plainly ſmelling of the Arabian genius, plead ſtrongly in behalf of ſuch a conjecture.—Our countryman Dr Warburton labours hard to prove, that we are indebted to Ezra, the laſt of the ſacred writers, for this treaſure of divinity, philoſophy, and all kind of learning. But this hypotheſis, however ſpecious, and ſupported by reaſons nowiſe deſpicable, does not command my aſſent. For unleſs I gueſs wrong, there are marks and characters ſcattered every where through the book, which denote a much more ancient period. There is no where any alluſion, ſo far as I could obſerve, to the promulgation of the law or the exploits of the Iſraelites. In no place is there any mention of the miracles performed in Egypt or through the deſerts. Which would have given ſo great a dignity to any poem, and afforded ſo much comfort to the Jews, that they could never have paſſed unnoticed by any wiſe man. Among other very beautiful things that you have wrote, you eſtabliſh the genuineneſs of this whole hiſtory. Conſequently you do not aſſert it to be, and prove what you have aſſerted, a certain fictitious amuſement of a pious genius, but that on the contrary it was a real tranſaction: that therefore no one, in reading, ought to imagine, that he has before his eyes a fiction of what might have been done, but a genuine narrative of what actually happened.

I was formerly of this opinion, and the reaſons you have brought forth, make me adhere more cloſely to it.—But although it claims the truth of a real hiſtory, it diſplays all the pleaſant entertainment of a dramatic performance. If you conſider the words, which are moſt elegant and ornate, they don't ſo much relate, as exhibit to view the ſeveral tranſactions. And nothing is more important, more grand, more ſublime, more worthy of an inſpiring God, or more neceſſary for mankind to know. Mean time there is a ſurpriſing diverſity of characters, and, what is the higheſt attainment of art, they are every one painted to the life, and every where conſiſtent with one another.—Moreover, our hiſtory of Job is diſtinguiſhed by another ſpecies of elegance, which is a decoration and ornament to the artificial romances of dramatic writers. He does not bring ſmoke from a flaſh, as a critic has obſerved, but light from ſmoke. He begins with proſe and then in a trice he proceeds to the higher modes of ſpeaking; and putting on a buſkin, riſes up to the ſenſes. A greater order of things commences; more vehement conferences; more fierce attacks of the diſputants; until nothing more important or more forcible can be ſaid on either ſide. Then at laſt a mediator comes in. The perverſe ſayings of each party he weighs with a deliberate judgment, and chaſtiſes with due reprehenſion. He endeavours with his utmoſt might, if poſſible, to calm the warm ſpirits of the diſputants, and decide a controverſy that has been long litigated. But in vain. The difficulty is greater, and of far harder ſolution, than to yield to the remonſtrance of a youth. A GOD, behold a GOD appears! Can any thing more majeſtic be contrived! He who traverſes the circuits of the heavens, deſcends (let me ſpeak with the utmoſt reverence) as it were to the ſand. And he who balances the ſtars that roll through the empty air, HE HIMSELF weighs the importance and weight of this controverſy, as it were in an impartial balance. While God pleads the cauſe, how do their fierce ſpirits ſubſide! They ceaſe to reſiſt. They give up their weapons. They are mute. Job himſelf, whom too ſplendid and ſwelling conceptions of his own purity had tranſported beyond due bounds, being convinced of his miſtake, and ſenſible of his iniquity, is covered with ſhame, throws down his arms, and in a worſhipping poſture falls proſtrate at the feet of infinite mercy. He knows himſelf; exerciſes penitence; overcomes by ſubmiſſion; and as ſoon as he moſt humbly falls down before GOD, he obtains an end of his calamity, which he could not lawfully have expected, ſo long as he too raſhly arrogated to himſelf an unblamable integrity. The propitious Deity with a moſt liberal hand replaces, augments, eſtabliſhes, all his effects which had been not long ago miſerably loſt. Like the palmtree, being preſſed down he riſes up; and when all were going to congratulate him upon his felicity, then at laſt it revived, and flouriſhed much more plentifully than before. How ſudden and unlooked for a cataſtrophe! How joyful a period of his diſtreſſes! How beautiful a concluſion brought to the whole work!

Let it ſuffice to have touched theſe things ſlightly. Led by your example, I turn my mind and pen from matters of curious ſpeculation, to things of greater utility. Thoſe things which ſupport a tottering faith, and rectify and direct a practice too apt to wander, like a ſkilful pilot who continually ſits at the helm, are now to become the ſubject of conſideration. What you diſcreetly admoniſh of, as to learning fortitude of mind from Job teaſed with a troop of afflictions, yet not broken or diſpirited; as to fetching incitements to patience from this man who ſuffered the moſt bitter evils, and yet prepared himſelf humbly and ſubmiſſively to bear the burden; that I greedily catch at; I hold it fixed in my memory, and I pray to God, that it may penetrate into the loweſt and innermoſt receſſes of my heart.—I chearfully proceed, upon your remitting my meditations thither, to that moſt noble teſtimony which is given to the reſurrection * of the dead. And while ſome, who have not deſerved well of Chriſtianity, labour to deſtroy this monument more laſting than braſs, and more precious than gold; our interpreter performs a truly-acceptable ſervice, while he undertakes to eſtabliſh it by the moſt powerful arguments. You are not ignorant, that there have been ſome among the learned, who endeavoured to pervert to a different meaning this moſt beautiful confeſſion of Job's faith; and would have it underſtood only of the reſtoration of his eſtate. Which error indeed I obſerved, with no ſmall joy and congratulation, to be plucked up by the roots and entirely overthrown in theſe your moſt accurate lucubrations. As to what you ſuggeſt to me concerning the Redeemer, it truly pleaſes me very much; and I embrace it with my whole heart.—I would wiſh to ſay concerning every book of the ſacred volumes, what Auguſtine long ago ſaid excellently, "Thy writings are my delight." There is no page in the divine books which is not more excellent than mines of gold; there is not even the moſt minute portion of inſpired truth, but is ſweeter than the ſweeteſt honey. But what they propheſy concerning CHRIST; whether they promiſe CHRIST to come, or deſcribe his advent; CHRIST, medicine for the ſick, comfort to mourners, a vicarious ſacrifice for the guilty, a ranſom for us, giving his life for us, theſe things, how infinitely great! carry away the prize. Theſe things ſhine like pearls ſparkling on every ſide, or, to ſpeak with the poet, as the moon among the leſſer ſtars. Concerning theſe I would rejoice to hold conferences in private houſes, in the pulpit, in my family, and when abroad. Nay I would be wholly employed about them, unleſs the inbred corruption of nature, O grief! oppoſed; and wandering and unſettled thoughts now and then diverted my mind to contrary objects. For to learn theſe, is wiſdom; to believe them, is ſalvation. He who underſtands theſe things exactly, will become a good divine; and he who drinks them into his mind, will become a Chriſtian.

But whither am I carried? Into what excurſions tranſported, do I run beyond the limits of epiſtolary correſpondence? I repreſs myſelf at length. Let me be permitted to ſelect one place at leaſt, excellent above others, from the verſion before extolled; which will put a period to this little writing of mine, and relax your patience too much tired and wearied out. There with pleaſure I behold the true and ancient meaning, by a very briſk effort of genius, reſcued from darkneſs, and reſtored not without conſiderable advantage to ſound doctrine. You may ſee the defect, if you be at leiſure, chap. iv. ver. 17. "Shall mortal man be juſt *before* God?" not more juſt *than* God, as our verſion, unfaithful here, at leaſt has it.—I don't remember to have read, or to have received by report, that any one ever arrived to ſuch a pitch of impudence, as to dare to boaſt that he was more juſt than God, the fountain and rule of all manner of goodneſs. Hardly therefore, nay ſcarcely would it have been worth while to confute, with ſo great energy and pomp of words, what could enter into the thoughts of no mortals whatſoever. Nor does the divine writer act otherwiſe than as a trifler, if you believe the received verſion. But if you admit that of Schultens, he acts quite the reverſe. That verſion diſcovers a difficulty worthy of a God to unravel. It decyphers and deſtroys an error, than which there is none more deſtructive, or that inſinuates itſelf with greater importunity into our minds. It takes away, it refutes, it tramples upon every ſpecies of what is called human merit. Nor does it ſuffer even the leaſt handle to be left to the holieſt of men, either to boaſt of their own deeds, or to juſtify themſelves. Nay it repreſents all men, however dignified through the world by the praiſes of piety and purity, as wholly guilty, and without excuſe before the ſupreme Judge: and ſhews that none can go away from that tremendous tribunal free from puniſhment, unleſs their ſins are freely forgiven them, and the righteouſneſs of CHRIST the Mediator be imputed to them for their juſtification. Behold an evangeliſt indeed before the goſpel! who by feeling found out not the ſum only of that ſaving œconomy, but ſeems in a manner to have entered into the very bowels and marrow of it. Happy we and our people, if it be given us to draw forth the ſame faith from the marrow. Truly I love the man, who, by ſuch a happy comment, has at laſt renewed and reſtored theſe bright goſpel-tidings to Job, to Chriſtianity, and to us too, removing either unſkilfulneſs in the Hebrew diction, or the careleſſneſs of interpreters. But, Rev. Sir, I love and reſpect you the more ardently, whoſe moſt amiable friendſhip, which I have experienced on trial once and again, has cauſed me to hope for from it a more abundant harveſt of pleaſure and advantage, than I durſt promiſe myſelf. That you may live and proſper, is the hearty wiſh of.

Your much obliged

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S. If, upon the recovery of my health, I can be of any ſervice to you in any buſineſs, I don't ſay you ſhould aſk it, but command it.

* See Job xix. 25.

PRE-

PREFACE

TO

JENKS's MEDITATIONS.*

WHEN I conſider the practice of recommending books, as implying ſome reſpectable regard to a man's own judgment, I undertake it with reluctance. But when I conſider it as exerciſing an act of friendſhip to my fellow ſtudents in the ſchool of CHRIST, I execute it with pleaſure.

There are thoſe, I am informed, who blame me for commending the works of others; or, which is much the ſame thing, for commending them with any degree of zeal or affection; ſince cold commendation, or faint applauſe, is juſtly reputed an artful ſlight. To theſe perſons I ſhall only reply, that, if their own actions or their own compoſitions were concerned, I verily believe they, even they, would *forgive me this wrong.*†

Far from obtruding myſelf into the chair of *Moſes*;‡ far from preſuming to dictate, to preſcribe, or ſo much as to direct; I would only imitate the four *leprous men, at the entering in of the gate of* Samaria.‖ Having found ſilver, and gold, and raiment, they could not forbear proclaiming the news, and communicating the ſpoil, to their fellow-citizens. When I find a treatiſe incomparably more precious; when I find a teacher of wiſdom, and a guide to glory; why ſhould I hold my peace? why ſhould I enjoy theſe benefits myſelf alone? why ſhould I not, like thoſe honeſt, though calamitous exiles, tell the glad tidings in the city, and invite my neighbours to partake of the bleſſings?

Theſe bleſſings, through the divine goodneſs, I have found in JENKS's Meditations. Which are, I think, the moſt diſtinguiſhed among all his valuable writings.§ Level to an ordinary capacity; yet capable of entertaining a refined taſte. Not void of beauty and delicacy; yet more eſpecially adapted to enlighten the underſtanding, to impreſs the conſcience, and build up the ſoul in faith, in holineſs, and in joy.

The *method*, in which our author proceeds, is to me, peculiarly pleaſing. Firſt he collects the moſt weighty and ſublime truths. He then forms them into a cloſe and animated addreſs to the ſoul; and concludes all with a ſhort but fervent ſupplication to GOD. Which very much heightens the tenderneſs and ſolemnity of the whole. It is ſomewhat like pointing the arrow, not with poliſhed ſteel, but with celeſtial fire. Perhaps the reader will recollect, on this occaſion, the ſtory of the angel, appearing to *Manoah*. When the ſacrifice was laid on the rock, and kindled into a burnt-offering, the ſeraph mingled himſelf with the ſacred oblation, and aſcended to heaven in the flame.*

In the *language*, we have a noble plainneſs, and a happy perſpicuity; in the *ſentiments*, we have the force of perſuaſion, quickened by the glow of devotion. If, in ſome few ſentences, we meet with an obſolete expreſſion or inelegant phraſe, methinks it is only like a hair adhering to a fine ſuit of velvet, or like a mote dropped upon a globe of cryſtal. I will not offer ſuch an affront to the diſcernment and generoſity of the reader, as to ſuppoſe him requiring an apology for ſo ſmall a blemiſh; which, when magnified by the ſevereſt cenſure, is no more than a *ſpeck*; when viewed with the allowances of candour and benevolence, is a mere *nothing*.

The ſeveral meditations may be regarded, as ſo many ſtriking ſermons, on the moſt intereſting ſubjects of our holy religion; or rather, as a *judicious abridgement* of various excellent ſermons, on almoſt every branch of Chriſtianity. In each of which, we have the ſpirit and energy of a copious diſcourſe, contracted within the ſmall compaſs of two or three pages. For which reaſon, I cannot but apprehend, they may be particularly ſerviceable in the family, as well as in the cloſet. That one of theſe ſhort eſſays, diſtinctly or repeatedly read

" lively devotion, for which the author was ſo eminently (I had
" almoſt ſaid ſingularly) remarkable; but alſo, as I hope the ex-
" ample there given, might lead the reader into a method of turn-
" ing into prayer, many paſſages of ſcripture in ſomething of a
" like manner; and thus peruſed, thus improved, the ſcriptures
" would be made doubly profitable.—There are likewiſe in this
" book ſeveral intereſting conſiderations ſuggeſted on the birth of
" Chriſt, on the ſacrament, on the crucifixion, reſurrection, and
" aſcenſion: and to render the whole ſtill more extenſively uſe-
" ful, the author has added a ſhort, affecting, and judicious ex-
" planation of the creed, Lord's prayer, and ten commandments."

Submiſſion to the righteouſneſs of God; or, the neceſſity of truſting to a better righteouſneſs than our own; opened and defended, in a plain and practical manner. Third edition, twelves. Price 10d.

* Heaven opened, tranſlated from the Latin, with various improvements, twelves. Price 2s.

Serious thoughts on the wonderful God.

The glorious victory of chaſtity, exemplified in *Joſeph's* hard conflict, and happy eſcape. Price 1s.

* Referred to in Mr HERVEY's life.

† 2 Cor. xii. 13. ‡ Matt. xxiii. 2. ‖ 2 Kings vii. 3, 8, 9.

§ Mr JENKS's writings, as far as I am able to collect, are as follow: thoſe marked in this manner,* are at preſent out of print; but it is to be hoped, they will not long continue ſo.

* The liberty of prayer aſſerted, and guarded from licentiouſneſs, octavo, third edition. Price 2s.

* Two letters written to a gentleman of diſtinction, guilty of common ſwearing. To which is added, a third letter to another gentleman in the commiſſion of the peace; exciting him to the performance of his part in executing the act againſt curſing and ſwearing. Price 1s.

* A ſermon preached at Henely in Shropſhire, Dec. 2. 1697, being the day of public thankſgiving for the peace; and for his Majeſty's return. Quarto.

* The bell rung to prayers, being an earneſt perſuaſion to the daily worſhip of God in every family, calling upon all houſes to be houſes of prayer. Price 1s.

Prayers and offices of devotion for families, and for particular perſons upon moſt occaſions. Twelves, thirteenth edition, corrected and amended. Price 3s.

Every man's ready companion. Twelves. Price 1s.——As I have taken the liberty to ſpeak my ſentiments concerning the *Meditations*, let my friend and phyſician Dr STONHOUSE, be permitted to ſpeak the merit of this performance. His teſtimony, I queſtion not, will give pleaſure to the reader, as it has done juſtice to the author. See the SUPPLEMENT to Dr STONHOUSE's ADVICE to a patient, page 67, of the ſeventh edition.

" JENKS's Every man's ready companion, conſiſts of reflections
" on ſome of the moſt important texts of ſcripture, with ſuitable
" prayers. I would earneſtly recommend this little piece not only
" on account of its being ſo cheap in proportion to the variety of
" excellent inſtruction it contains, and the ſtrain of rational and

* Judges xiii. 20.

amongſt our domeſtics, may be more advantageous, than the haſty peruſal of a much larger compoſition.

There is ſcarce any circumſtance of the Chriſtian life, which ſolicits the aſſiſtance of a ſpiritual phyſician, but may be accommodated with ſeaſonable and ſuitable relief, from this ample diſpenſatory of *edification, exhortation, and comfort.*† Here are (if I may purſue the medicinal alluſion) cordials, to chear the drooping; reſtoratives, to heal the backſliding; ſtimulatives, to quicken the ſupine; with lenitives, to eaſe the anguſh of conſcience, and make *the bones, which ſin has broken, to rejoice.*‡—Neither are we clogged with a tedious multiplicity of remedies, in any caſe of diſtreſs; nor wearied with a dry detail of all that can be ſaid, upon any point of inquiry. On the contrary, the moſt ſpirited doctrines, and the moſt ſovereign conſolations, are both ſkilfully ſelected, and pertinently applied; with this well-judged deſign of improving and exhilarating the mind, without overcharging or burdening the memory.

I would ſubmit it, with the utmoſt deference, to the conſideration of my *younger* brethren in the miniſtry; whether it might not be a very profitable exerciſe, to purſue the hints, and enlarge the plan, of theſe compendious treatiſes: whether, by digeſting them into proper diviſions; and introducing, under each diviſion, a more full and circumſtantial diſplay of the ſubject; we might not form popular and uſeful diſcourſes for the pulpit. Such a practice, I perſuade myſelf, might conſiderably facilitate our preparations for the public ſervice; would ſtock our own minds with a ſet of the moſt important and affecting truths; and render our miniſtrations more acceptable to others, yet in no reſpect diſhonourable to ourſelves. As ſuch a *tranſformation* is very different from a *theft;* and the moſt likely way to commence originals, is, to work upon ſuch excellent models.

Let me only add,—That I know one perſon, to whom theſe books have been highly delightful, and eminently beneficial; have very much contributed to exalt his apprehenſions of divine grace, and to eſtabliſh his faith in the divine JESUS. That they may be equally, or rather more abundantly, beneficial and delightful to the public, is the wiſh, the hope, the prayer of

Their obliged,

Weſton-Favell, *near* Northampton, October 30, 1756.

Humble ſervant,

JAMES HERVEY.

† Cor. xiv. 3. ‡ Pſalm li. 8.

ON THE DEATH OF THE REVEREND MR JAMES HERVEY.

ON vulgar marks death long had meanly ſpent
His loaded quiver, and his bow full bent;
Monarchs, who had been great but for a crown,
Stateſmen and heroes, ſons of high renown;
When lo! in heav'n this awful mandate paſt,
"To-morrow's dawn be ſome fam'd mortal's laſt."
The tidings, to our world officious ſent,
Through ALBION's iſles on wing of lightning went:
Impiety, her heart by vipers ſtung,
Again blaſphemes with loud audacious tongue;
Vice ſtalks abroad, each late retreat forſook,
With her bold effrontery of look:
But ah! while theſe malignant triumph ſhow,
Far other boſoms other feelings know!
The muſe in vain conceals her weeping eye,
And each tear learning anſwers with a ſigh!
Religion ſtarts, though arm'd with tenfold ſhield,
And Virtue ſhrinks, though ſhe diſdains to yield:
—The arrow ſped, death took his aim too well,
The mitred pontiff liv'd, and HERVEY fell.

EPITAPH ON THE REVEREND MR JAMES HERVEY.

HERE HERVEY's precious duſt is laid;
Here peaceful reſts his ſacred head;
Whoſe honeſt fame and works divine,
Shall ever live, ſhall ever ſhine;
By all admired ſhall remain,
Where genius, taſte, and virtue reign.

His ſoul by heav'nly grace inſpir'd,
With love to God and goodneſs fir'd,
Made nature vocal to proclaim
Religion's excellence ſupreme:
And though he never dipp'd his pen,
To court the empty praiſe of men;
Yet oft his ſmooth harmonious ſtyle
Would ev'n the gay to bliſs beguile.
Each virtue in his boſom found,
With chaſte humility was crown'd.
Acknowledging his ſins were great
'Gainſt God, in this imperfect ſtate;
He check'd each riſing ſpark of pride,
And on his Saviour ſtill rely'd.

Upon the conſecrated morn *
On which our bleſſed LORD was born,
HERVEY ſerenely clos'd his eyes,
While angels waft him to the ſkies.
Now loſt in ecſtaſy and love,
He turns the harp in heav'n above.

* He died on Chriſtmas-day, 1758.

TO

TO THE MEMORY OF

THE LATE PIOUS AND INGENIOUS

MR JAMES HERVEY.

AS rapt in thought the muſing mind ſurvey'd
The vain of life, and walk'd the deep'ning ſhade;
O'er Care's broad empire caſt its trembling view,
And mark'd the flying traits that Fancy drew:
Her magic hand at once transform'd the ſcene,
And ſhew'd the ſpot where HERVEY ſleeps ſerene;
Stretch'd where lone Silence haunts the ſolemn gloom,
Where Thought's keen eye explores the peaceful tomb,
Where Pleaſure's glitt'ring dreams at laſt are o'er,
And Love's ſoft muſic charms the ſoul no more.
Thrill'd as I view'd, the ſtreaming tears o'erflow,
From the big boſom burſt the ſighs of woe:
Her friend * now loſt who taught the muſe to ſing,
Check'd her wild flight, and prun'd her trembling wing,
Whoſe gen'rous with with eager hope inſpir'd,
Whoſe cenſure chaſten'd, and whoſe genius fir'd;
Abaſh'd ſhe ſtood,---her bold eſſays were vain,
Nor tun'd the harp, nor pour'd the plaintive ſtrain.
When lo! unfolding from the blaze of light,
A form all beauteous flaſh'd upon the ſight!
The robes of heav'n involv'd his dazzling frame,
And his eyes ſparkled with celeſtial flame!
High o'er his brow the waving radiance play'd,
An orient crown inclos'd his beamy head;
His lip with Beauty's deep vermilion glow'd,
And flowers ſpontaneous bloſſom'd as he trod.
'Twas GENIUS:—pauſing o'er the ſacred dead,
His bright eye languiſh'd and the roſes fled,
His moan re-murmur'd o'er the echoing vale,
His heav'n-wove robe hung looſen'd on the gale:
He ſnatch'd the lyre, and pour'd the melting lay,
That ſteals the heart, and charms the ſoul away.
Dull Night ſat liſt'ning on her cloud-wrapt throne,
And white-lipp'd Anguiſh curb'd the burſting groan;
On Care's wild thought the tuneful accents flow,
And ſounds melodious thrill'd the ear of Woe.
"O call'd at laſt th' Almighty's praiſe to ſing!
Where oft thy genius tow'r'd with daring wing!
Plac'd where no cares th' exulting wiſh controul!
Bleſs'd with the joys that fir'd thy kindling ſoul!
Though ſmiles no more the placid eye ſerene;
Nor rove the graces o'er ſome pictur'd ſcene;
Though ſnatch'd from all thy boundleſs hope deſign'd,
When life's full ſummer cheer'd thy ripening mind:
Yet theſe no more the plaintive muſe detain,
Thy friend, thy country claims the mournful ſtrain;
Since loſt each nobler plan thy ſoul had wrought,
Since ſtopt the ſtream of ſweet, perſuaſive thought,
Fled the bright noon thy burſting blaze had giv'n,
And mute the voice that rapt the ſoul to heav'n.
"Strow'd o'er thy page what beauteous treats appear!
What melting muſic ſteals the liſt'ning ear!
'Twas I whoſe power the living picture caught,
'Twas I whoſe pencil ting'd the glowing draught:
Through Death's black gloom I trac'd thy dubious way,
That kindred gloom where Fancy loves to ſtray!
Then led thee, circled with the laughing hours,
Where ſports young Zephyr o'er the waſte of flow'rs,
With richer ſtrokes the warm deſcription wrought,
And touch'd with tranſport all the ſprings of thought.
Mine was the ray on Night's dim curtain thrown,
And mine the glaſs where gay Creation ſhone;
Mine the bold wing that ſhot where tempeſts riſe,
And mine the flight that reach'd the ſtarry ſkies."
He ceas'd,—for ſudden on the wond'ring gaze
From heav'n's broad concave burſt the rapid blaze;
At once deſcending from the realms on high,
An angel-ſhape arreſts the dazzled eye!
Looſe o'er her limbs the floating garment roll'd,
Her ſparkling pinions flam'd with beamy gold,
Her eyes like lightning glanc'd a piercing ray,
And all th' illumin'd æther gleam'd with day:
Near as ſhe came, ſuperior, though reſign'd,
Her form majeſtic aw'd the dubious mind;
With heighten'd grace her bloomy features glow'd,
Free on her robe the mazy ringlets flow'd;
Her balmy breath ambroſial ſcents perfume,
And o'er her cheek was pour'd celeſtial bloom.
Pale Sorrow bright'ned as RELIGION came,
And ſlow-pac'd Time ſtood trembling at the name;
Rage dragg'd in triumph, ſwell'd her ſolemn train,
And Death behind her groan'd, and clank'd his chain.
She paus'd,—and muſing o'er the fun'ral bier,
Sigh'd deeply ſad, and pour'd a tender tear:
Then check'd its courſe, and bright'ning as the ſun,
She look'd to heav'n ſerene, and thus begun:
"Hail, thou eſcap'd to yonder worlds above!
Hail, join'd to ſaints that melt in ſtrains of love!
At laſt 'tis come! the bright transforming day!
Th' exulting ſpirit burſts and ſoars away!
Looſe are its bars! and gain'd th' immortal prize!
It breathes of heav'n ſublime, and walks the ſkies!
But late my hand yon beauteous ſcenes diſplay'd,
And led thy ſteps through life's perplexing ſhade;
The vivid wiſh a diſtant proſpect brought,
The rapt ſoul trembling o'er the verge of thought!
Yet then what tranſport raught thy hope to ſoar!
How flam'd the kindling look that glanc'd it o'er!
How Fancy's touch the glowing draught refin'd!
And light celeſtial pour'd upon the mind.
"A race unborn thy genius ſhall inſpire,
And ſouls yet darken'd catch ſublime deſire.
When to thy page, in ſome ſequeſter'd bow'r,
Calm muſing Thought devotes the ſerious hour;
Juſt when *Aſpaſio*'s ſtrain has warm'd the breaſt,
When white-rob'd Quiet lulls its cares to reſt:
Then ſhall my hand ſuperior power impart,
Then Love's perſuaſive lay ſhall melt the heart;
Then ſhall Religion's pureſt beams be giv'n:
Now reſt in peace." She ſaid, and ſoar'd to heav'n.

J. O.

* *This alludes to ſome perſonal favours which the author had the honour to receive from Mr Hervey.*

amongſt our domeſtics, may be more advantageous, than the haſty peruſal of a much larger compoſition.

There is ſcarce any circumſtance of the Chriſtian life, which ſolicits the aſſiſtance of a ſpiritual phyſician, but may be accommodated with ſeaſonable and ſuitable relief, from this ample diſpenſatory of *edification, exhortation, and comfort.*† Here are (if I may purſue the medicinal alluſion) cordials, to chear the drooping; reſtoratives, to heal the backſliding; ſtimulatives, to quicken the ſupine; with lenitives, to eaſe the anguſh of conſcience, and make *the bones, which ſin has broken, to rejoice.*‡—Neither are we clogged with a tedious multiplicity of remedies, in any caſe of diſtreſs; nor wearied with a dry detail of all that can be ſaid, upon any point of inquiry. On the contrary, the moſt ſpirited doctrines, and the moſt ſovereign conſolations, are both ſkilfully ſelected, and pertinently applied; with this well-judged deſign of improving and exhilarating the mind, without overcharging or burdening the memory.

I would ſubmit it, with the utmoſt deference, to the conſideration of my *younger* brethren in the miniſtry; whether it might not be a very profitable exerciſe, to purſue the hints, and enlarge the plan, of theſe compendious treatiſes: whether, by digeſting them into proper diviſions; and introducing, under each diviſion, a more full and circumſtantial diſplay of the ſubject; we might not form popular and uſeful diſcourſes for the pulpit. Such a practice, I perſuade myſelf, might conſiderably facilitate our preparations for the public ſervice; would ſtock our own minds with a ſet of the moſt important and affecting truths; and render our miniſtrations more acceptable to others, yet in no reſpect diſhonourable to ourſelves. As ſuch a *tranſformation* is very different from a *theft*; and the moſt likely way to commence originals, is, to work upon ſuch excellent models.

Let me only add,—That I know one perſon, to whom theſe books have been highly delightful, and eminently beneficial; have very much contributed to exalt his apprehenſions of divine grace, and to eſtabliſh his faith in the divine JESUS. That they may be equally, or rather more abundantly, beneficial and delightful to the public, is the wiſh, the hope, the prayer of

Their obliged,

Weſton-Favell, *near* Northampton, October 30, 1756.

Humble ſervant,

JAMES HERVEY.

† Cor. xiv. 3. ‡ Pſalm li. 8.

ON THE DEATH OF THE REVEREND MR JAMES HERVEY.

ON vulgar marks death long had meanly ſpent
His loaded quiver, and his bow full bent;
Monarchs, who had been great but for a crown,
Stateſmen and heroes, ſons of high renown;
When lo! in heav'n this awful mandate paſt,
"To-morrow's dawn be ſome fam'd mortal's laſt."
The tidings, to our world officious ſent,
Through ALBION's iſles on wing of lightning went:
Impiety, her heart by vipers ſtung,
Again blaſphemes with loud audacious tongue;
Vice ſtalks abroad, each late retreat forſook,
With her bold effrontery of look:
But ah! while theſe malignant triumph ſhow,
Far other boſoms other feelings know!
The muſe in vain conceals her weeping eye,
And each tear learning anſwers with a ſigh!
Religion ſtarts, though arm'd with tenfold ſhield,
And Virtue ſhrinks, though ſhe diſdains to yield:
—The arrow ſped, death took his aim too well,
The mitred pontiff liv'd, and HERVEY fell.

EPITAPH ON THE REVEREND MR JAMES HERVEY.

HERE HERVEY's precious duſt is laid;
Here peaceful reſts his ſacred head;
Whoſe honeſt fame and works divine,
Shall ever live, ſhall ever ſhine;
By all admired ſhall remain,
Where genius, taſte, and virtue reign.

His ſoul by heav'nly grace inſpir'd,
With love to God and goodneſs fir'd,
Made nature vocal to proclaim
Religion's excellence ſupreme:
And though he never dipp'd his pen,
To court the empty praiſe of men;
Yet oft his ſmooth harmonious ſtyle
Would ev'n the gay to bliſs beguile.
Each virtue in his boſom found,
With chaſte humility was crown'd.
Acknowledging his ſins were great
'Gainſt God, in this imperfect ſtate;
He check'd each riſing ſpark of pride,
And on his Saviour ſtill rely'd.

Upon the conſecrated morn *
On which our bleſſed LORD was born,
HERVEY ſerenely clos'd his eyes,
While angels waft him to the ſkies.
Now loſt in ecſtaſy and love,
He turns the harp in heav'n above.

* He died on Chriſtmas-day, 1758.

TO

TO THE MEMORY OF

THE LATE PIOUS AND INGENIOUS

MR JAMES HERVEY.

AS rapt in thought the muſing mind ſurvey'd
The vain of life, and walk'd the deep'ning ſhade;
O'er Care's broad empire caſt its trembling view,
And mark'd the flying traits that Fancy drew:
Her magic hand at once transform'd the ſcene,
And ſhew'd the ſpot where HERVEY ſleeps ſerene;
Stretch'd where lone Silence haunts the ſolemn gloom,
Where Thought's keen eye explores the peaceful tomb,
Where Pleaſure's glitt'ring dreams at laſt are o'er,
And Love's ſoft muſic charms the ſoul no more.
Thrill'd as I view'd, the ſtreaming tears o'erflow,
From the big boſom burſt the ſighs of woe:
Her friend * now loſt who taught the muſe to ſing,
Check'd her wild flight, and prun'd her trembling wing,
Whoſe gen'rous with with eager hope inſpir'd,
Whoſe cenſure chaſten'd, and whoſe genius fir'd;
Abaſh'd ſhe ſtood,—her bold eſſays were vain,
Nor tun'd the harp, nor pour'd the plaintive ſtrain.
When lo! unfolding from the blaze of light,
A form all beauteous flaſh'd upon the ſight!
The robes of heav'n involv'd his dazzling frame,
And his eyes ſparkled with celeſtial flame!
High o'er his brow the waving radiance play'd,
An orient crown inclos'd his beamy head;
His lip with Beauty's deep vermilion glow'd,
And flowers ſpontaneous bloſſom'd as he trod.
'Twas GENIUS:—pauſing o'er the ſacred dead,
His bright eye languiſh'd and the roſes fled,
His moan re-murmur'd o'er the echoing vale,
His heav'n-wove robe hung looſen'd on the gale:
He ſnatch'd the lyre, and pour'd the melting lay,
That ſteals the heart, and charms the ſoul away.
Dull Night ſat liſt'ning on her cloud-wrapt throne,
And white-lipp'd Anguiſh curb'd the burſting groan;
On Care's wild thought the tuneful accents flow,
And ſounds melodious thrill'd the ear of Woe.
"O call'd at laſt th' Almighty's praiſe to ſing!
Where oft thy genius tow'r'd with daring wing!
Plac'd where no cares th' exulting wiſh controul!
Bleſs'd with the joys that fir'd thy kindling ſoul!
Though ſmiles no more the placid eye ſerene;
Nor rove the graces o'er ſome pictur'd ſcene;
Though ſnatch'd from all thy boundleſs hope deſign'd,
When life's full ſummer cheer'd thy ripening mind:
Yet theſe no more the plaintive muſe detain,
Thy friend, thy country claims the mournful ſtrain;
Since loſt each nobler plan thy ſoul had wrought,
Since ſtopt the ſtream of ſweet, perſuaſive thought,
Fled the bright noon thy burſting blaze had giv'n,
And mute the voice that rapt the ſoul to heav'n.
"Strow'd o'er thy page what beauteous treats appear!
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Yet then what tranſport taught thy hope to ſoar!
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J. O.

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CHARACTER OF Mr JAMES HERVEY's WRITINGS.

THE Reverend Mr James Hervey, being now dead, yet ſpeaketh to us in his valuable writings: Writings, which, for importance of ſubject, weight of argument, ſublimity of thought, juſtneſs of ſentiment, and elegance of diction, are equalled by few, and excelled by none.

His ſtrain is truly evangelical; his method inviting, entertaining, and edifying; calculated both to profit and to pleaſe: and a ſpirit of meekneſs, candour, and modeſty, breathes through, and beautifies the whole.

His favourite topic is the *righteouſneſs* and *atonement* of the Redeemer. On this he expatiates with inexpreſſible ſatisfaction, and dwells with rapturous delight. By this he "touches the fineſt movements of the ſoul, and "ſtrikes all the inmoſt ſprings of action, with the moſt "perſuaſive, the moſt commanding energy," and ſweetly conſtrains to the obedience of love.

He ranſacks the manſions of the dead, turns the grave into a pulpit, and makes putrefaction and mortality preach leſſons to the living.——He ſurveys, with Newtonian exactneſs, the *ſtarry expanſe*, and the countleſs radiant worlds that roll in the nocturnal ſky; from theſe he inveſtigates the glory and perfections of the creating and ſuſtaining God; and from theſe he enhances the wonders of *redeeming love*. He mounts the believer on the ſummit of creation, as upon a ſtupendous eminence, to enlarge his proſpect, and exalt his conceptions of the majeſty and glory of that God, who *redeemed his church with his blood*. When imagination itſelf, with all the aſſiſtance of ſcience, is loſt in the immenſity and awful grandeur of the works of nature; immediately he contracts the univerſe into a ſpan, and the enormous orbs into fleeting atoms, or the ſmall duſt that remains in the balance, when the works of redemption are brought in view.

Thus, he unites the moſt improved philoſopher with the ſound believer; and makes reaſon and nature *ſubſervient* to faith and revelation. Whilſt he allows reaſon its freeſt enquiry and fulleſt ſcope, he gives up with none of the peculiarities of the goſpel; but holds forth with the cleareſt light, and in various points of view, thoſe truths wherein the *offence of the croſs* conſiſts.

May theſe heavenly doctrines, and precious truths, which flowed in ſuch copious, gladdening ſtreams, from his lips and pen, be tranſmitted pure and unadulterated to the lateſt poſterity; and may that divine Spirit, which gave them their proper energy and influence upon his heart and life, ever accompany them to remoteſt ages.

FINIS.

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N. B. *It may ſeem unaccountable to an* unlearned *reader, that aſtronomers ſhould ſpeak ſuch amazing things; and ſpeak them with ſuch an air of* aſſurance; *concerning the diſtances and magnitudes, the motions and relations, of the heavenly bodies. I would deſire ſuch a perſon to conſider the caſe of* ECLIPSES, *and with what* exactneſs *they are calculated. They are not only foretold, but the very inſtant of their* beginning *is determined. The preciſe time of their* continuance *is aſſigned; aſſigned, almoſt to the* nicety *of a moment; and what is ſtill more ſurpriſing, for the ſpace of* hundreds *or* thouſands *of years to come.—As this is a matter of fact, abſolutely indiſputable; it is alſo a very obvious, yet ſolid demonſtration, that the principles of ſcience, on which thoſe calculations proceed, are not mere conjecture, or precarious ſuppoſition; but have a* real, *a* certain *foundation, in the nature and conſtitution of things.*

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